

Bridging the Gap between GCSE and A-Level English Literature



Studying English Literature at Skegness Academy

Study English Literature at Skegness Academy and you will be set to read a variety of texts from a variety of cultures, perspectives, and eras. You will learn about new critical ideas, which you will use to unearth hidden meanings in prose, poetry, and drama. Furthermore, by the end of the two years, you will have learnt how to write with fluency and flair, setting you up for further academic study in any subject, or even a career in journalism, advertising, editing, or teaching.

What does the course look like?

In the first year, you will study four texts in detail:

- 'Othello', by William Shakespeare.
- *AQA Anthology of Love Poetry Through the Ages Post-1900*.
- *The Great Gatsby*, by F. Scott Fitzgerald.
- *Wuthering Heights*, by Emily Brontë.

At the end of the year, you will take two exam papers on the texts you have studied.

In your second year, you will study more texts, not limited to *The Color Purple*, by Alice Walker and 'A Streetcar Named Desire', by Tennessee Williams.

- You could also watch the films, but only after you have read the book!

How can I prepare?

1. Read, Read, Read, and Read!

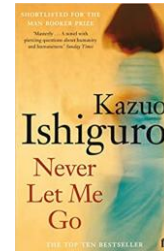
- ✓ Do read the course texts listed above.
- ✓ You are also expected to show the examiner that you enjoy reading and read often. In fact, **one of the Assessment Objectives is to show your wider reading**. Why not choose one from the list below? From vampires to



doppelgangers, the Victorians to the future, from the stony streets of London to the colourful markets of Kabul...I have thought of them all!

Here are Miss Howard's and Mrs Bond's Top Ten!

1. *The Woman in White*, Wilkie Collins
2. *Brick Lane*, Monica Ali
3. *The Kite Runner*, Khaled Hosseini
4. *The Long Song*, Andrea Levy
5. *Dracula*, Bram Stoker
6. *Never Let Me Go*, Kazuo Ishiguro
7. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Thomas Hardy
8. *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe
9. *Brave New World*, Aldous Huxley
10. *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, Arthur Conan Doyle



How can I access free books or resources?

- Hundreds of audiobooks have been released for free on Audible: www.audible.co.uk.
- Open Library also has a great range of academic texts: <https://openlibrary.org/>.
- Project Gutenberg is the place to go for Literature texts: <https://www.gutenberg.org/>.

Poets to Explore

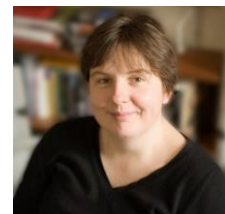
Simon Armitage	ST Coleridge	Emily Dickinson
WH Auden	William Blake	Evan Boland
Elizabeth Barret Browning	Philip Larkin	TS Eliot
Lord Bryon	Geoffrey Chaucer	John Milton
Ted Hughes	Siegfried Sassoon	Christina Rossetti
John Keats	Percy Shelley	Robert Frost

2. Podcasts

Professor Emma Smith is an excellent lecturer at Oxford University. She has uploaded some of her lectures online.

At the very least, please listen to her lecture on 'Othello'.

<https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/people/emma-smith>



Professor Catharine Brown has also uploaded some wonderful lectures on studying literature.

<https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/series/literature-and-form>



3. Research, Research, Research, and Research!

Know your context!

Like GCSE, you are expected to consider how the author's era, or even known personal events and opinions, influenced the overall text. With this in mind, I would encourage you to research the following time periods, before you begin the course.

- 1920s America
- The Elizabethan and Jacobean period
- Victorian Britain

There is marvellous documentary on Netflix at the moment called 'Queen Victoria and her Nine Children'. Watch it!

- WW1
- WW2



Know your critics!

At A-Level, you are required to consider what other academics (critics) have said about the book you are studying. You will need to consider how far you agree with what they saying. Top A-Level Literature answers will maintain an informed, critical, and personal opinion throughout.

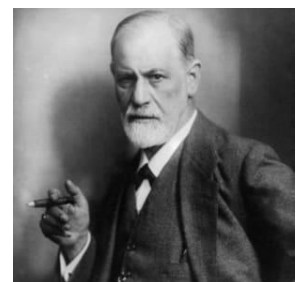
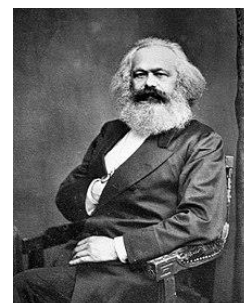
You may also need to think about critical concepts, and what they reveal about the book.

I would recommend researching the following critical concepts:

Psychoanalysis

Feminism

Marxism



4. Brush up on that Vocab!

Revise the subject terminology you have acquired throughout your education so far (eg. metaphors, personification, simile). Then try to learn some new terms.

Here is a useful website to do so:

<https://www.virtualsalt.com/rhetoric.htm>

Perhaps you could create a glossary of new terms to learn over the summer.

5. General Enrichment – Great for Talking Points!

- TED Talks – found easily on YouTube but also on www.ted.com/talks, covering a range of interesting speeches.
- TED-Ed Lessons – similar to TED Talks, but with a lesson focus, with the intent to teach you something rather than voicing an opinion. Easily found on YouTube but also found at: www.ed.ted.com.
- Intelligence Squared – a website dedicated to debate and intelligent ideas: <https://www.intelligencesquaredus.org/debates>.
- Radio 4 – a range of archive material and interesting discussions and podcasts. Some favourites include:
 - Thinking Allowed (a general debate and discussion series on a wide range of topics).
 - In Our Time (a discussion series exploring a wide variety of historical topics).
 - A History of the World in 100 Objects (like it says on the tin: a series discussing and exploring historical objects that reveal something about that time period and/or the world with a focus on one of ten themes: leaders and government; art; religion; money; trade and travel; war; sport and entertainment; death; communication; science and technology; food and farming).
 - Week in Westminster (politics discussions and up to date political news)
 - Smart Consumer (latest discussions and debates around consumer news, stories and complaints)
 - Book of the Week (audiobooks recorded and available in episode chunks for ease, covering fiction, non-fiction and even opera).

English Literature is an exciting and vast field of study, entwining stories with history, psychology, art. It is a chance to uncover voices of the past and present, and to share and develop your own. Most of all, it is the opportunity to appreciate and enjoy the work from some of the greatest writers. I am really looking forward to the year ahead!

If you would like to learn more about the English Literature A-Level, or receive further bridging resources, please message Mrs Bond on Teams.

