

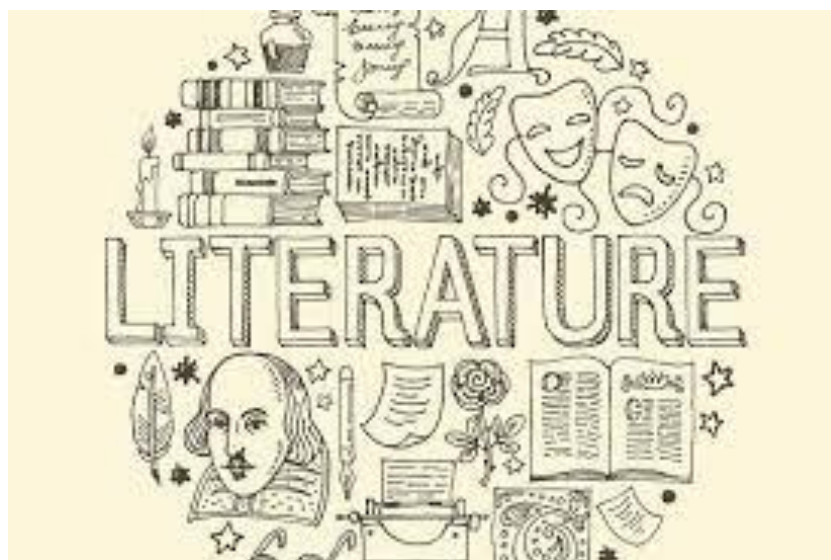


St Paul's Catholic School

AQA A Level English Literature

Specification B

Transition Booklet



Name: _____

Course Overview

Exam board: AQA (Specification B)

This course requires students to respond to texts from a range of literary genre and historical periods. The course aims to develop the candidate as an informed, independent reader who comes to an understanding of meaning through close study of the literary texts. Genre study is at the heart of the AQA English Literature B specification. The A-level course focuses on the genres of Tragedy and Social & Political Protest writing. Study of texts within the chosen literary and cultural genres in the examined topic areas is enhanced by the study of critical theory in the non-exam assessment. The course is examined at the end of Year 13. Students complete two exams and two non-examination assessments which consists of the study of one poetry and one prose text, informed by the critical anthology.

Course content and texts	Assessments
<p>Paper 1: Aspects of Tragedy:</p> <p><i>Othello</i> by William Shakespeare <i>The Great Gatsby</i> by F. Scott Fitzgerald <i>Richard II</i> by William Shakespeare</p> <p>The Exam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One passage based question on Othello (25 marks) • One essay question on Othello (25 marks) • One essay question linking The Great Gatsby and Richard II 	<p>One terminal written exam</p> <p>2 hours 30 mins Closed book 75 marks 40 % of A Level</p>
<p>Paper 2: Political and Social Protest Writing</p> <p><i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> by Margaret Atwood <i>The Doll's House</i> by Henrik Ibsen <i>The Songs of Innocence and Experience</i> by William Blake (Poetry Anthology)</p> <p>The Exam: Section A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One compulsory question on an unseen passage (25 marks) • One essay question on set texts (25 marks) • One essay question which connects two texts (25 marks) 	<p>One terminal written exam</p> <p>3 hours Open book 75 marks 40 % of A Level</p>

Non -Examination Assessment:

Two essays of 1250–1500 words based on one poetry and one prose text and linking to a different aspect of the Critical Anthology.

Within this anthology are several different theoretical perspectives which you can choose to apply to any text, including feminism, Marxism and ideas relating to the literary canon.

25 marks for each essay
50 marks in total
20% of A-level

Set Texts to purchase and read

Please make sure you have your own copies of the texts and that you have read these before the course starts in September:

1. ***Othello*** by William Shakespeare
2. ***The Great Gatsby*** by F. Scott Fitzgerald
3. ***Richard II*** by William Shakespeare
4. ***A Doll's House*** by Henrik Ibsen
5. ***The Handmaid's Tale*** by Margaret Atwood

Study Guides

You may wish to read the online study guides to support you with your reading:

<https://www.sparknotes.com/shakespeare/othello/>

<https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/gatsby/>

<https://www.sparknotes.com/shakespeare/richardii/>

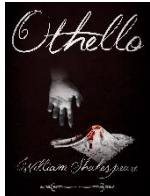
<https://www.sparknotes.com/poetry/blake/>

<https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/dollhouse/>

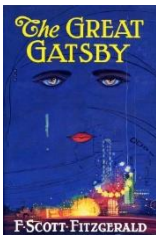
<https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/handmaid/>

Further Reading: AQA Text Overviews

AQA have provided an overview for each text. It is important that you read these short guides as they provide an introductory overview of how the text can be considered through the lens of tragedy and political and social protest.



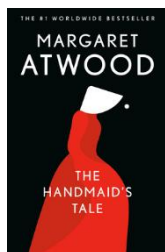
<https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/AQA-7717-P1AB-TO-OO.PDF>



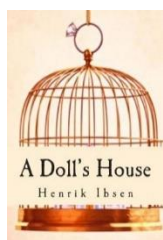
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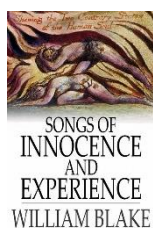
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<https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/AQA-7716-7717-TO-HMAID.PDF>



<https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/AQA-7716-7717-TO-PROTEST-DOLL.PDF>



<https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/AQA-7716-7717-TO-PROTEST-SOIE.PDF>

Genre Study: Tragedy

Task 1: Research

Explore the genre of tragedy by researching some of the following:

- a) What are the features of a literary tragedy?
- b) The tragedies of Ancient Greece
- c) The Greek writer and Philosopher, Aristotle
- d) A.C. Bradley's concept of The Fatal Flaw
- e) The Unities
- f) Shakespeare's Tragic heroes

Task 2: Podcast

Radio 3's *The Shakespeare Sessions* enables you to listen to a full length dramatisation of *Othello*, as well as interesting discussions of race and racism in the play:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0655br3/episodes/downloads>

Task 3: Representation of Othello in Performance

Explore the different portrayals of Othello in drama. Click on the link below and you will see a picture gallery from past productions. Consider the images and the photographs. How are the characters being represented?

[Investigate Past Productions of Othello | Shakespeare Learning Zone \(rsc.org.uk\)](https://www.rsc.org.uk/learning-zone/shakespeare/othello)

Genre Study: Political and Social Protest

Task 1: Research

Explore the genre of political and social protest by researching some of the following elements

- a) Text types: Science fiction, satire, drama, historical, political diatribe
- b) Settings and fictional locations
- c) Which types of characters have power?
- d) Which characters are powerless?
- e) How do characters try to rebel or protest?
- f) What types of corruption can take place?
- g) What roles are attributed to men and women?

Task 2: Further reading and Films

In order to gain a wider understanding of the genre, pick one book from the list below and either read a summary of the text or watch the film. Consider the elements of social and political protest that the text portrays:

Social Protest	Social Protest (Dystopian Fiction)
<i>A Thousand Splendid Suns</i> by Khaled Hosseini	<i>1984</i> by George Orwell
<i>Brick Lane</i> by Monical Ali	<i>Brave new world</i> by Aldous Huxley
<i>The Colour Purple</i> by Alice Walker	<i>The children of men</i> by P.D. James

Task 3: Articles

Read some interesting articles on *The Handmaid's Tale*, ranging from Abortion rights to Women in Afghanistan and Lockdown!

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs-trending-44965210>

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/03/afghanistan-un-experts-say-20-years-progress-women-and-girls-rights-erased>

<https://blog.yorks.ac.uk/englishlit/literature-in-lockdown-dystopia-in-the-handmaids-tale-and-our-own/>

Hope you enjoy your preliminary reading and research- we look forward to welcoming you onto the course!

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the English Department.