

## St Paul's Catholic School and Sixth Form



### Transition Work for Sixth Form

"Let your light shine before others." – Matthew 5:16  
*Sixth Form, the St Paul's way — with Christ at the heart of it all.*

## AQA English Literature at St Paul's Catholic School and Sixth Form

The purpose of completing the tasks below is to give you an overview of the key genres in AQA English Literature B Specification. 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 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.

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 (Translated by Michael Meyer)
5. ***The Handmaid's Tale*** by Margaret Atwood

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/>

**Due date: Monday 1st September 2025**

### **Tragedy Genre**

#### **Task**

**1**

Task 1 will include 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**

In Task 2 you are expected to listen to Radio 3's *The Shakespeare Sessions*. It 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**

In Task 3, you are looking at the 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/past-productions)

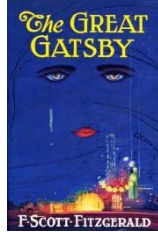
#### **Task**

**4**

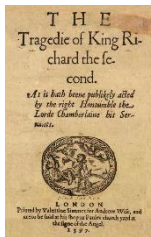
Finally, in Task 4, you are looking at overviews of the tragedy texts. AQA have provided an overview for each text. It is important that you read these short guides as they provide an introductory overview of how the text can be considered through the lens of **Tragedy**:



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



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



<https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/AQA-7717-P1AC-TO-R2.PDF>

## Specification: AQA English Literature B

### Links to websites:

#### Tragedy:

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

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

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

#### Social and Political Protest:

<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/>

<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-SOIE.PDF>

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

**Course Teacher email:** [spancholi-pepper@st-pauls.leicester.sch.uk](mailto:spancholi-pepper@st-pauls.leicester.sch.uk) and [mrossa@st-pauls.leicester.sch.uk](mailto:mrossa@st-pauls.leicester.sch.uk)



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### Task

#### 1

### Social and Political Protest Genre

Task 1 will include research and making notes. 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

For Task 2 you are expected to broaden your understanding by doing further reading and/or watching film versions of the text. 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:

<b>Social Protest</b>	<b>Social Protest (Dystopian Fiction)</b>
<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

For Task 3 you are to read around the genre with non-fiction 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>

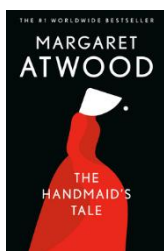
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/03/afghanistan-un-experts-say-20-years-progress-women-and-girls-rights-erased>

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

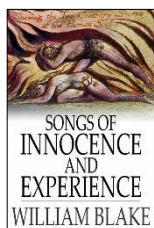
## Task

4

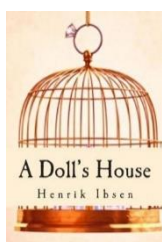
Finally, for Task 4, you are looking at overviews of the tragedy texts. AQA have provided an overview for each text. It is important that you read these short guides as they provide an introductory overview of how the text can be considered through the lens of **Social and Political Protest**.



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



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

