

Summer Bridge Work: An Introduction to English Literature

Wider Reading Task

The English Literature course has set texts which, like the GCSE course, you will study with your teachers. However, it also requires you to have an understanding of Literature beyond your set texts. The course covers two key elements: “Love Through the Ages” and “Modern Times: Literature from 1945 to present day”. We have created you a reading list that helps prepare for the second element.

Please select **at least two books** from the list below. Read them carefully and complete the reflection sheet provided below the list.

If you have any queries, please email Mrs Haywood (Head of English)
r.haywood@bishopveseys.bham.sch.uk

Prose Fiction:

Achebe, C., ***Things Fall Apart*** – power, family, prejudice, guilt, punishment, isolation, post-colonial lit

Adichie, C., ***Purple Hibiscus***, ***Americanah*** – identity, place, alienation, relationships, conflict

Ali, M., ***Brick Lane*** – migration, identity, gender/sexuality, love, alienation

*Atwood, M., ***The Handmaid’s Tale*** – oppression, power, morality, dystopia, rebellion

Bernieres, L., ***Captain Corelli’s Mandolin*** – love, war, guilt, multiple narrators, a novel across time

Bradbury, R., ***Fahrenheit 451*** – knowledge vs ignorance, technology, censorship

*Burns, A., ***Milkman*** – conflict, identity, family, relationships, place, transgression, religion

Carter, A., ***The Bloody Chamber*** – love, conflict, gender, sexuality, desire, subversion, rebellion,
power, folklore through a feminist lens, multiple voices/narrators

Doyle, R., ***The Woman who Walked Into Doors*** – conflict, identity, domestic abuse, addiction

*Easton Ellis, B., ***American Psycho*** – violence, truth, materialism, corruption, isolation, truth, unreliable narrator

*Ellison, R., ***Invisible Man*** – the self/identity, prejudice, power, rebellion

*Evaristo, B., ***Girl, Woman, Other*** – identity, sexuality, relationships, intersectionality, multiple narrators

Faulks, S., ***Birdsong*** – war, love, relationships, identity, a novel across time

*Safran Foer, J., ***Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*** – mortality, trauma, guilt, family, language, identity

Franzen, J., ***The Corrections*** – family, gender, mortality, class, technology, insanity

Guterson, D., ***Snow Falling On Cedars*** – place, identity, culture, justice

*Hamid, M., ***The Reluctant Fundamentalist*** – identity, place, prejudice, power, nested/framed narrative, unreliable narrator

*Heller, J., ***Catch-22*** – war, bureaucracy, death, the impotence of language, satire

Hemingway, E., ***The Old Man and the Sea*** – nature, youth and ageing, pride, resistance

Hollinghurst, A., ***The Line of Beauty*** – class, identity, sexuality, conflict, relationships

Hosseini, K., ***A Thousand Splendid Suns***, ***Kite Runner*** – history, memory, shame, family, gender, identity

*Ishiguro, K., **Never Let Me Go** – science/technology, dystopia, love, nostalgia

Kesey, K., **One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest** – power, rebellion, identity, sexuality, insanity

Levy, A., **Small Island** – identity, prejudice, migration, love, class, multiple narrators

*Marquez, G.G., **A Thousand Years of Solitude, Love In A Time of Cholera** – love, ageing, death, disease, time, magical realism

McCarthy, C., **The Road** - dystopia, family, survival, relationships, faith

McEwan, I., **Saturday, On Chesil Beach, Atonement** - family, relationships, love, war, sexuality, identity, connections, crime, class

*Morrison, T., **Beloved** – identity, power, family, language, multiple narrators

Orwell, G., **1984** – isolation, power, oppression, censorship, dystopia

Plath, S., **The Bell Jar** – isolation, alienation, women/gender, prejudice, power, mental health, social expectations/values

*Pierre, D.B.C., **Vernon God Little** – family, generational divide, identity, guilt and innocence

Proulx, A., **Brokeback Mountain** – sexuality, the self/identity, desire, masculinity

*Rhys, J., **Wide Sargasso Sea** – post-colonial, mental health, identity, place, alienation,

Roy, .A., **The God of Small Things** – family, love, relationships, class, hierarchy, guilt

*Rushdie, S., **Midnight's Children** – a novel across time, history, politics, identity, unreliable narrator, Partition, post-colonial lit

*Salinger, J.D., **Catcher in the Rye** – identity, rebellion, unreliable narrator

*Shriver, L., **We Need To Talk About Kevin** – family, guilt, identity, violence, class

Smith, Z., **White Teeth, NW, On Beauty** – identity, prejudice, place, family, values, relationships, social expectations

*Swift, Graham, **Waterland** – place, curiosity, science, family, history, stories, nature

*Vonnegut, K., **Slaughterhouse-Five** – war, death, free will, truth, science fiction, cross-genre

Walker, A., **The Colour Purple** – identity, family, religion, prejudice, violence, self-discovery

*Welsh, I., **Trainspotting** – drugs, identity, conflict, relationships, nihilism, multiple narrators

*Winterson, J., **Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit** – sexuality, morality, religion, desire, family, identity, transgression

*** = novels with clear post-modern features**

Postmodernism is a movement that focuses on the reality of the individual and denies statements that claim to be true for all people [e.g. rejecting the 'grand narratives' of religion, science, political ideology, morality]. It is a form of literature that is characterized by the use of metafiction, unreliable narration, self-reflexivity, intertextuality, and which often explores both historical and political issues.

English Literature Wider Reading

Student name:

Text 1:

Author:

Time period (set/written):

Context: (You could consider the period in which the story is set, author's context, literary context, social/historical context)

Plot:

Characters:

Themes:

Narrative perspective:

Use of language:

Use of structure:

Anything else you found interesting:

Comparisons with other texts you've read: (You may consider typicality/similar themes, characters, style)

English Literature Wider Reading

Student name:

Text 2:

Author:

Time period (set/written):

Context: (You could consider the period in which the story is set, author's context, literary context, social/historical context)

Plot:

Characters:

Themes:

Narrative perspective:

Use of language:

Use of structure:

Anything else you found interesting:

Comparisons with other texts you've read: (You may consider typicality/similar themes, characters, style)