



ENGLISH LITERATURE

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Are you thinking about studying English Literature at A level? The activities in this four week preparation for Bede will give you a taste of what might be in store for you as a student of this subject. Some of the activities are short and can be done in a shorter space of time, others, such as reading tasks, are longer and will keep you going over several weeks. You may start the reading activities in week 1 and keep these going until the course starts in September. The activities in weeks 2 to 4 are self contained and can be completed in the suggested time frames.

Week 1: Reading activities

Take as long as you need to read the set texts. Over the next two years you will study six set exam texts. I would suggest you read the first three texts (see below) in preparation for year 12 study. You may read all six just for pleasure (which is the primary aim of any fictional text) before you start detailed study and analysis of them at college. Some poems you will be able to download from the internet – web address provided if this is possible. I would recommend you buy your own copy of each text so that you can annotate it during our class discussions.

1. *Othello* by William Shakespeare: <http://www.gutenberg.org/>
2. *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller
3. John Keats Poems x 3: *Lamia* Part 1: <https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/lamia-part-i/> and *Lamia* Part 2: <https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/lamia-part-ii/>; *Isabella or the pot of basil*: <https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/isabella-or-the-pot-of-basil/>; *La Belle dame sans merci*: <https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/la-belle-dame-sans-merci-original-version/>
4. William Blake Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1934/1934-h/1934-h.htm>
5. *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood
6. *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini

Week 2: Watch an online play/film version

Spend around 2-3 hours on this task.

After you have finished reading the two set plays, *Othello* and *Death of a Salesman*, watch them online. Then complete the tasks below after watching each production. Use YouTube and search for the play, you may want to watch the short Spark Notes or BBC animated versions. Or for *Othello* you could search for the Anthony Hopkins or Laurence Olivier versions and watch them. For *Death of A Salesmen* search for the film version starring Dustin Hoffman.

1. Write a 200 – 400 word review of the play/film. I'd love to read your review so email it to me when you're done
2. What difference does watching the play make to your understanding of it?

Week 3: The Art of the Essay

Spend around 3 hours on this task.

It is quite obvious that a student of Literature will be expected to write essays. You could complete this task to gain a fuller understanding of what is required of you as an A level essay writer. Read the advice on what makes a good essay on the web sites below:

1. <https://interestingliterature.com/2015/01/how-to-write-a-good-english-essay/>
2. https://www.bestessaytips.com/literary_essay.php

Week 4: Adapt one of the texts into a graphic novel

Spend around 4-6 hours on this task.

You may want to experiment with one of the set texts (or one of your GCSE texts) and consider how you could transform it into a graphic novel.

1. If you have never read a graphic novel, do some research first and begin by looking at a graphic novel, the page above is from the graphic novel Macbeth. On the web site that follows there are further examples of prize winning graphic novels that you may want to read: <https://www.wired.co.uk/article/best-graphic-novels>
2. Make notes on your chosen text under the headings:
 - Story
 - Themes
 - Narrative voice
 - The things that make it special or interesting
3. Choose one of the sections from task 2 above and produce it in detail in graphic form. If you have time and are interested in being a graphic artist you could create the whole text in graphic form. You may want to use the suggested templates below for your page or pages.
4. After the completion of the graphic version, consider how well you managed to get across most of the important information. What did you have to leave out?



Week 4 Task: Graphic Novel Templates

We've included two templates for you at the end of this worksheet.



Reading list: extension activities

To further your knowledge of literature, you could read some of the texts suggested below.

- *Great Expectations*, by Charles Dickens
- *Pride and Prejudice*, by Jane Austen
- *Dracula*, by Bram Stoker
- *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, by Robert Louis Stevenson
- *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, by Oscar Wilde
- *Frankenstein*, by Mary Shelley
- *1984*, by George Orwell
- *The Catcher in the Rye*, by J D Salinger
- *Interview with a Vampire*, by Anne Rice
- *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, by Mark Haddon
- *White Teeth*, by Zadie Smith
- *Never Let Me Go*, Kazuo Ishiguro
- Poems by Robert Frost
- Poems by Wilfred Owen
- Poems by Alice Walker
- Poems by Emily Dickenson
- Use the poemhunter.com website to read lots of poetry collections.
- Project Gutenberg is a library of over 60,000 free eBooks. Choose among free epub and Kindle eBooks, download them or read them online: www.gutenberg.org

ONLINE STUDY GUIDES

LitCharts is a great resource for introductions to texts, authors and literary movements with a large archive of freely available resources: www.litcharts.com

Use the site to collate the study guides on our set texts (see week one task for set texts).

WATCH THEATRE ONLINE:

Some of the sites below will give you free access to online plays, others may ask you to subscribe.

- The National Theatre: www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/learning/schools/secondary-and-fe/on-demandin-schools
- Digital Theatre is a subscription site, they are currently offering a 30-day free trial: www.digitaltheatre.com/consumer/productions
Digital Theatre also have a YouTube site www.youtube.com/user/digitaltheatre
- Shakespeare's Globe also has a wide range of plays. Some are free and others can be rented or bought at <https://globeplayer.tv/all>
- National Theatre YouTube youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJgBmjHpqgs7citDojiasj-nMABL_DXku



