



English Literature

Key skills developed in this work:

By completing this work, you will:

- Gain background knowledge about the texts to be studied, particularly their historical and social context.
- Develop your knowledge of the authors and the literary traditions of the texts.
- Improve your ability to read complex texts like classic literature.
- Develop your analysis and essay-writing skills.

Research work:

- The Windrush Generation - find out what the term means and explore the history of this topic, as well as more recent developments.
- Colonialism (especially UK-Caribbean relations).
- Shakespearean Comedy.
- Past productions of *Much Ado About Nothing*.
- Gender in Shakespeare plays.
- Critical theory – find out what the term means and research the following critical literary theories and lenses: Marxist, Historical, Postcolonial, Archetypal, Structuralist and Deconstructionist theory; Feminist.

Website links:

William Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*

- <https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/comedy-tragedy-and-gender-politics-in-much-ado-about-nothing>
- <https://www.rsc.org.uk/much-ado-about-nothing/>
- <https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/an-introduction-to-shakespeares-comedy>
- <https://thanetwriters.com/essay/technicalities/elements-of-shakespearean-comedy/>

General Essay Writing Guidance and Literary Techniques

- <https://literarydevices.net/>
- https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html

Appropriate additional reading:

The three texts you will be studying at AS are:

- *Small Island* by Andrea Levy (McMillan, ISBN: 9781472211064),
- *Much Ado About Nothing* by William Shakespeare (New Cambridge Shakespeare ISBN: 9781316626733) and
- *Skirrid Hill* by Owen Sheers (Seren ISBN: 9781854114037).

Copies of the books will be available for purchase once the school office reopens.

You will want to read other texts by the same author; other authors' texts which share a genre, theme or setting; a wide range of novels, short stories, poetry, drama and nonfiction. Here are some starting points for each unit of the course:

- **Andrea Levy, *Small Island***
 - By Andrea Levy: [Back to My Own Country: An Essay](#), *Every Light in the House Burnin'*, *Never Far From Nowhere*, *Fruit of the Lemon*.
 - By other authors: *White Teeth* by Zadie Smith, *The Lonely Londoners* by Samuel Selvon; *To Sir, With Love* by E. R. Braithwaite; [Windrush Songs by James Berry](#)
- **Owen Sheers, *Skirrid Hill***
 - <https://poetryarchive.org/poet/owen-sheers/>
- **William Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing***
 - Read his other plays and his sonnets here: <https://www.opensourceshakespeare.org/> or <http://www.shakespeare-online.com/plays/>
 - Two good plays to start with are *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest*.
- **Unseen Paper** - Read a range of poems, prose and drama to help you with this part of the course. A few suggestions to start with are listed below (those in bold are from the current AS or IGCSE set text list). Free e-books are available for some; hover over the link to see where.
 - **CIE Songs of Ourselves, Volumes 1 and 2 [poetry]**
 - **CIE Stories of Ourselves, Volumes 1 and 2 [short stories]**
 - *The Penguin Book of the British Short Story: 2: From P.G. Wodehouse to Zadie Smith* UK ed. Edition, Kindle Edition **ASIN: B00YO70ITI**
 - *Poetry Please* Kindle Edition **ASIN: B00ER809SE**
 - ***All My Sons* and *A View from the Bridge* by Arthur Miller**
 - **Selected Poems by Robert Browning**
 - **Selected Poems by Gillian Clarke**
 - [Howard's End](#) by E.M. Forster
 - [Mansfield Park](#) and [Pride and Prejudice](#) by Jane Austen
 - [My Antonia](#) by Willa Cather
 - [Hard Times](#) and [Great Expectations](#) by Charles Dickens
 - ***Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton**
 - ***A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry**
 - *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe
 - *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood
 - [Jane Eyre](#) by Charlotte Bronte
 - *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald
 - *An Inspector Calls* by J.B. Priestley
 - *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley
 - *The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri
 - *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee
 - *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck
 - *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell
 - *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys
 - *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou

Tasks to complete:

- Complete the Commonwealth Essay, which is always a good addition to your CV. This year's topics are all about climate change and the environment. The deadline for entry is 30th June, 2020. See further details [here](#).
- Create a literature timeline from the year 1000AD to the present day and include key authors and texts. Remember to include texts/authors from around the world. You may also wish to include the names of major literary eras or movements, e.g. Romanticism.
- Develop an information page on the following literary genres: gothic, fabliaux, medieval romance, Shakespearean tragedy, Shakespearean comedy, bildungsroman.
- Watch and write a summary of Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* (many of these can be found on YouTube).
- Watch and summarise (including major themes) productions of plays by famous playwrights, particularly William Shakespeare, Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams. Many can be found on YouTube and some theatre companies are currently making selected productions free: <https://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/nt-at-home>; <https://www.rsc.org.uk/at-home-with-shakespeare>; <https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/watch/>;

Other:

Syllabus and materials from CIAE: <https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-international-as-and-a-level-english-literature-9695/>

Look in particular at the Learner Guides for the 2021 examination.