

English Literature A Level

An excellent A Level English Literature student goes beyond simply understanding a text's plot and demonstrates the ability to think critically about how and why writers create meaning. They use precise textual evidence, selecting short quotations and exploring individual words or phrases in depth to support their interpretations. Strong students develop independent and thoughtful arguments, recognising that literary texts can have multiple meanings and considering alternative perspectives where appropriate. They integrate contextual knowledge naturally into their analysis, using it to deepen interpretation rather than adding historical facts for their own sake. Their essays are conceptual and argument-driven, with each paragraph contributing to a clear overall thesis. Excellent students also demonstrate awareness of critical debate, understanding that interpretations can be challenged and discussed. They often read beyond the specification, engaging with criticism, historical contexts and related texts to broaden their understanding. Ultimately, an outstanding A Level English Literature student approaches texts like a literary critic, combining close analysis, intellectual curiosity and strong written argument to produce perceptive and original interpretations.

Summary of course content

The English Literature A Level syllabus is split into three areas:

Component	What You Study	Assessment
Paper 1: Literary Genres	Choose Tragedy or Comedy . Study 3 texts including a Shakespeare play, another drama text, and one additional text.	2 hr 30 min exam (40% of A-Level)
Paper 2: Texts and Genres	Choose Crime Writing or Political & Social Protest Writing . Study 3 texts plus an unseen extract.	3 hr exam (40% of A-Level)
NEA: Theory and Independence	Study 1 poetry text and 1 prose text using literary theory from the Critical Anthology.	Coursework: 2 essays (20% of A-Level)

You can find the AQA specification here: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/a-level/english-7717/specification>

Weekly:	Completion of set work as outlined in the grid below
Fortnightly:	- Review of recent lessons, learning key terminology, producing revision resources such as cards and mind maps Independent Study Folder (ISF): this will be checked fortnightly by your tutor and logged.
Half termly:	Revision: Review knowledge quizzes. Review topics and produce revision resources, e.g., flashcards, mind maps, posters, etc. Complete planning of past exam paper answers

In addition to those provided for specific tasks by your teacher, resources include:

TEAMS: reading list; knowledge organisers; lesson PowerPoints and reference materials;

Massolit: <https://massolit.io/>

Recommended sites for independent research – see separate list.

Independent Learning Schedule – two hours directed by each of your teachers (subject to change):

Year 12

Week beginning	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
7 th September	Enrolment week	
14	Independent reading (to end) of Ibsen's <i>A Doll's House</i> Massolit: view Ibsen and <i>A Doll's House</i> and <i>A Doll's House</i> on the Victorian Stage (copy and download/print the transcripts)	- Independent reading (to end) of Hosseini's <i>The Kite Runner</i>. - Context project on Hosseini and Afghanistan. - Watch and take notes on Massolit lectures 'intro', 'Ch.1' and 'Ch.2'.
21	Independent reading (to end) of Ibsen's <i>A Doll's House</i> done by now Research Henrik Ibsen Complete unseen essay (following plan) of <i>The Heart Goes Last</i> .	- Independent reading (to end) of Hosseini's <i>The Kite Runner</i>. - KO Q1-20 on <i>The Kite Runner</i> - Watch and take notes on Massolit lectures 'Ch.3' and 'Ch.4'.
28	Read and annotate AQA guide to <i>A Doll's House</i> Complete planning grid on unseen extract Write essay – VIFC timed conditions	- Independent reading (to end) of Hosseini's <i>The Kite Runner</i> - Planning and Writing Practice Task on <i>The Kite Runner</i>. - Watch and take notes on Massolit lectures, 'Ch.5' and 'Ch.6'.
5 th October	Annotate the questions for <i>A Doll's House</i> Act 1 Prepare bullet point notes for the following short assessment [25 minutes]: Mrs Linde: 'You're a child Nora' How is Christine's comment both exemplified, and countered, in the opening two scenes of <i>A Doll's House</i> ? Massolit: view <i>Marriage and The New Woman</i> and <i>Torvald and Masculinity</i> (copy and download/print the transcripts)	- KO Q21-40 on <i>The Kite Runner</i>. - Annotations on methods and elements of political protest writing for selected chapter. - Watch and take notes on Massolit lectures 'Ch.7' and 'Ch.8'.
12	Read and annotate the remainder of Act 1: Nora/Krogstad and Nora/Helmer. Complete the ten questions on Nora and Krogstad – stick the questions into your book and annotate them as we have done before. Bring four questions of your own (with your answers!) about the Nora and Helmer scene of pages 51 – 54.	- Planning and Writing Practice Task on <i>The Kite Runner</i>. - Plan presentation on selected chapter, including relevant methods and elements of political and social protest writing. - Watch and take notes on Massolit lectures 'Ch.9' and 'Ch.10'.
19	Completion of independent essay:	KO Q41 – 62 on <i>The Kite Runner</i>

	'...our home has never been anything but a playroom. I've been your doll-wife' Nora p98. How evident is this in <u>two scenes</u> from Act 1 and/or II? Listen to In Our Time: Songs of Innocence and Experience.	• Revision for timed assessment. • Complete 1 hour timed assessment during QST in SFC on <i>The Kite Runner</i>.
26	Half term	
2 nd November	Fully annotate the PSPW star chart with examples from A Doll's House Acts I and II	• Watch and take notes on Massolit lectures 'Ch.11', 'Ch.12', 'Ch.13' and 'Ch.14'.
9	Massolit: view Criminality and Inheritance (copy and download/print the transcripts) Completion of independent essay: 'If I get thrown into the gutter for a second time, I shall take you with me'. How much do you agree that Nils Krogstad is presented as an outright villain in Acts I and II of A Doll's House?	• Planning and Writing Practice Task on <i>The Kite Runner</i>. • Watch and take notes on Massolit lectures 'Ch.15', 'Ch.16', 'Ch.17' and 'Ch.18'.
16	Massolit: view A Slamming Door: The Play's Ending (copy and download/print the transcripts) Complete key quotation selection and analysis chart.	• Watch and take notes on Massolit lectures 'Ch.19', 'Ch.20', 'Ch.21' and 'Ch.22'. • Complete key moment A4 worksheet, focusing on a moment from the opening chapters of the novel.
23	Fully annotate the PSPW star chart with examples from A Doll's House Act III	• Watch and take notes on Massolit lectures 'Ch.23', 'Ch.24' and 'Ch.25'. • Writing practice task on <i>The Kite Runner</i>.
30	Complete timed completion of unseen PSPW extract: Fahrenheit 451	• Complete key moment A4 worksheet, focusing on a moment from mid-section of the novel.
7th December	Reading and researching: William Blake's Songs of Innocence and Experience William Blake's life, his beliefs etc. View Massolit: Songs of Innocence and Experience – Context and Opposites (copy and download/print the transcripts)	• Plan group presentation on selected chapter, including relevant methods, contexts and elements of political and social protest writing.
14	Review this term's learning about Ibsen and A Doll's House as a protest text. Produce revision resources.	• Revision for timed assessment. • Complete key moment A4 worksheet, focusing on moment from final chapters of the novel. • Complete 1 hour timed assessment during QST in SFC on <i>The Kite Runner</i>.
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4 th January	Complete the ADH grid: How the characters are constructed to <i>represent/reveal/challenge</i> social expectations etc.	• Independent reading (to end) of Miller's 'Death of a Salesman'.

		- Complete context research project on Miller and 'Death of a Salesman'. - Watch and take notes on Massolit lecture 'Miller and the Creation of Death'.
11	Complete the question: "The ending of A Doll's House is ultimately optimistic and hopeful." To what extent do you agree with this view? Pre-read the two Introduction poems from Songs of Innocence and Experience and also the AQA guide document for this text.	- Independent reading (to end) of Miller's 'Death of a Salesman'. - Revise 1-20 of 'DOAS' KO. - Writing practice on DOAS. - Watch and take notes on Massolit lecture 'Structure, Set, and Critical reception'.
18	'Political and social protest writing uses contrasting worlds to present its ideas.' What can you find in the two 'Introduction' poems to help you answer the question above (which you will not be doing as an essay!) <u>Consider:</u> The context that you're aware of The language and imagery within each poem	- Complete annotations and preparation notes on selected episode, focusing on methods and aspects of tragedy. - Complete A4 key moments grid for DOAS A1. - Watch and take notes on Massolit lecture 'The American Dream'.
25	Pre-read, research and annotate both Chimney Sweeper poems Massolit: Likeness and Making Sounds (copy and download/print the transcripts)	- Writing practice on DOAS. - Watch and take notes on Massolit lecture 'Willy, Biff, and Happy'.
1 st February		
8	Pre-read, research and annotate both Holy Thursday and The Nurse's Song poems; Complete themes grid on Holy Thursday in advance of lesson. Independent reading and viewing: William Blake, Radical Abolitionist - JSTOR Daily YouTube - 72. 'Nurse's Song' (Innocence) by William Blake (A-level)	- Revision for timed assessment. - Complete 1 hour timed assessment during QST in SFC on 'DOAS'.
15		
22	Pre-read, research and annotate both The Little Boy Lost poems Massolit: Unorthodox Christianity (copy and download/print the transcripts) Further reading and viewing: https://www.buckingham.ac.uk/english/schools/poetry-bank/boy/ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dz66RLZQPNo	- Watch and take notes on Massolit lecture 'DOAS as a tragedy'. - Complete A4 Key moments grid for DOAS A2.
1 st March	Completion of 'Blake – significance of religion' independent essay	Writing practice on DOAS.
8	Pre-read, research and annotate both The Little Vagabond and The Garden of Love Massolit: Questions and Answers (copy and download/print the transcripts)	Prepare presentation on assigned theme on DOAS.

15	Pre-read, research and annotate both <i>The Lamb</i> and <i>The Tyger</i>	Complete A3 revision grid on characters and themes on 'DOAS'.
22	Pre-read, research and annotate both <i>The Ecchoing Green</i> and <i>London</i>	- Revision for timed assessment. - Complete 1 hour timed assessment during QST in SFC on 'DOAS'.
29	Easter holiday	
5 th April	Easter holidays	
12	Pre-read, research and annotate both <i>Infant Joy</i> and <i>Infant Sorrow</i> <i>The Blossom</i>	Complete A4 Key moments grid for DOAS on <i>Requiem</i>.
19	Completion of independent essay: How does Blake use the idea of childhood to demonstrate themes of protest writing?	Complete reading of selected critical lens from critical anthology and make summary notes.
26	Critical anthology Read the chapter on Ecocritical Analysis Annotate supplied poems using an Ecocritical lens Access Massolit course materials as directed Home learning complete timed Section C PSPW - either question and revise ADH	Complete writing practice on <i>The Kite Runner</i>.
3 rd May	Critical anthology Read the chapter on Literary Value and the Canon Access Massolit course materials as directed Student research task for 'Excluded from the Canon' presentation: Gather biographical material about your writer; Locate one or two poems or an extract from her/his fictional work; Be ready to explain whether you feel this writer should be included in the canon	Complete reading of selected critical lens from critical anthology and make summary notes.
10	Critical anthology Read the chapter on Postcolonial ways of reading Access Massolit course materials as directed	Complete writing practice on <i>DOAS</i>.
17	Read first four texts from the anthology of a post-colonial texts and annotate them using the five questions provided.	Complete revision task on <i>TKR</i>.
24	Read final texts from the anthology of a post-colonial texts and annotate them using the five questions provided.	- Revision for timed assessment. - Complete 1 hour timed assessment during QST in SFC on <i>The Kite Runner</i>.
31	Half term	
7 th June	Revision: eight lesson plan with planned answers completed of Section A and B questions on ADH and Blake.	- Complete mock revision task 1 on <i>The Kite Runner</i>. - Complete annotations and plan for unseen extract (supporting teacher 1 with revision) in preparation for mocks
14	Revision including completion of Section C 2020 question (either) on two of the studied texts.	Complete mock revision task 2 on <i>The Kite Runner</i>.
21	<i>Othello</i> – plot and context reading Massolit Read Act I with independent annotation	Year 12 mocks – revision.
28	<i>Othello</i>	Year 12 mocks – revision.

	Students complete grid – linking Act 1 to the Historical Context of the play Read Act II with independent annotation	
5 th July	Explain Shakespeare's presentation of Iago's character in the play so far: 'stage villain', 'evil genius', 'embittered officer', 'jealous husband', 'amateur philosopher', 'lucky opportunist.'	Independent reading (to end) of Hardy's <i>Tess of the d'Urbervilles</i>.
12	Explain the tragic significance of Act 1 Scene 1. Extract essay	- Independent reading (to end) of Hardy's <i>Tess of the d'Urbervilles</i>. - Complete writing practice on <i>Tess</i>.
19	Othello	Independent reading (to end) of Hardy's <i>Tess of the d'Urbervilles</i>.

Year 13

Week beginning	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
7 th September	Enrolment week - W/B 1/9 Complete questions 1 – 15 on Act 1 of Othello - Complete (free essay i.e. not timed) Act 1 Scene 3 extract question and view three Othello Massolit videos as directed.	
14	- Othello Massolit viewing as directed - Revise A Doll's House using knowledge organiser and character grid	- KO Q1 – 20 on <i>Tess</i>. - Watch and take notes on Massolit lecture 'Victorians, Hardy and the fallen woman'. - Select unseen political and social protest writing extract and annotate AO4 and AO2. Complete AO3 notes ready to introduce to class on designated lesson.
21	- Complete Othello discussion question on Act 1 - Revise A Doll's House by planning against two devised examination questions	- Complete planning and writing practice on 'Tess'. - Watch and take notes on Massolit lecture 'Choices and the Chase'.
28	NEA independent research of poetry with completion of proposal form linking to Critical Anthology	<i>Tess</i> writing practice task. - Complete <i>Tess</i> annotations on selected passages. - KO Q21-40 on <i>Tess</i>. - Annotate unseen extract in preparation for unseen lesson.
5 th October	- Othello KO Acts 2 and 3 - Revision of A Doll's House by viewing the six Massolit lectures (45 mins)	- Watch and take notes on Massolit lecture 'Is there life after sixteen?'. - Complete <i>Tess</i> annotations on selected passages.
12	- Complete Othello extract question – 1 hour timed assessment in SS - Revision of Blake – specified poems	<i>Tess</i> writing practice task. - KO Q41-60 <i>Tess</i>. - Complete 1 hour timed assessment, during QST on Unseen.

19	- Drafting <i>introduction of NEA poetry essay</i> - Revision of Blake – specified poems	- Watch and take notes on Massolit lecture ‘Treacle and oddities’. - Revision for timed assessment on <i>Tess</i>. - Complete 1 hour timed assessment during QST in SFC on <i>The Kite Runner</i>.
26		
2 nd November	- Othello KO Acts 4 and 5 - Revision in advance of assessment week	Prepare assigned presentation on <i>Tess</i>.
9	Assessment week Othello extract question: planning and annotation	- Watch and take notes on Massolit lecture ‘More light than heat’. - Independent reading (to end) of NEA novel. - Annotate and plan unseen extract.
16	Drafting of section 1 of NEA poetry essay: poem #1	<i>Tess</i> and ‘DOAS’ writing practice task. - Independent reading (to end) of NEA novel.
23	- Massolit: viewing and note taking On Blake’s Songs of Innocence and Experience as specified. - Othello character quotation selections and learning	- Watch and take notes on Massolit lecture ‘Endurance among the stones’. - Independent reading (to end) of NEA novel. - NEA key moment 1 annotations made.
30	Drafting of section 2 of NEA poetry essay: poem #2	<i>Tess</i> and ‘DOAS’ writing practice task. - NEA key moment 2 annotations made.
7 th December	- Timed Othello discussion question <i>Pre-read and annotate new Blake poems as specified</i>	- Watch and take notes on Massolit lecture ‘Wandering preachers and fanatics’. - NEA key moment 3 annotations made. - Complete 1 hour timed assessment during QST in SFC on Unseen.
14	- Drafting of section 3 of NEA poetry essay: poems #3 and 4 <i>Pre-read and annotate new Blake poems as specified</i>	- Write proposal for NEA 500 words. - Revision for timed assessment on <i>Tess</i>. Complete 1 hour timed assessment during QST in SFC on <i>The Kite Runner</i>.
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4 th January	Completion of timed Blake and A Doll’s House question	- Watch and take notes on Massolit lecture ‘Fate or Chance or Justice’. - TKR/ DOAS revision tasks. - NEA introduction written.
11	KOs revisited for A Doll’s House and Blake with re-reading of AQA text guides	- TKR Revision task – Writing practice - NEA main paragraph 1 written.
18	- Final edits and revision of NEA poetry essay - Othello character quotation selections and learning	- DOAS Revision task – Writing practice - Revision for timed assessment on <i>TKR</i>. - Complete 1 hour timed assessment during QST in SFC on <i>The Kite Runner</i>.

25	Revision of all three texts using resources provided in advance of trial examinations	<i>Tess</i> Revision task.
1 st February		
8	Trial examinations	NEA main paragraph 2 written.
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22	Trial examinations	- NEA main paragraph 3 written. <i>Tess</i> and 'DOAS' writing practice.
1 st March	- Grouping Blake poems and planning answers to thematic questions - Revision of Blake context	- NEA first draft completed and submitted. <i>TKR</i> writing practice.
8	- Past paper practice: Othello - Othello character quotation selections and learning	NEA revisions.
15	- Past paper practice: A Doll's House - A Doll's House revision of context	- NEA revisions. - Complete 1 hour timed assessment during QST in SFC on <i>Tess</i> and DOAS. <i>Runner</i>.
22	Past paper practice: Blake and A Doll's House Section C [timed]	- NEA revisions. - Complete 1 hour timed assessment during QST in SFC on <i>The Kite Runner</i>.
29	Easter holiday	
5 th April	Easter holidays	
12	Revision – supported by precise resources	TKR/ DOAS/ <i>Tess</i> revision tasks
19	Revision as above	TKR/ DOAS/ <i>Tess</i> revision tasks
26	Revision as above	TKR/ DOAS/ <i>Tess</i> revision tasks
3 rd May	Revision as above	TKR/ DOAS/ <i>Tess</i> revision tasks
10	Study leave begins	
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31	Half term	
7 th June		
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