



# English Literature Summer Tasks



First of all, congratulations on selecting a fabulous A Level course! English Literature is a course that is challenging, rewarding and engaging and we hope that you enjoy it as much as we do.

Before we meet as a new class in September, it is important complete some preparatory tasks – you need to commit some time to exploring some of our tasks and topics so that you are ready to start our journey in September.

Additionally, you should make the most of your long summer and enjoy **reading** whatever takes your fancy. **Reading** widely is the best preparation for studying literature. The images above are books that I love; they aren't on the course, but they are great novels to enjoy.

The tasks below are compulsory: they need to be completed and handed in as part of the enrolment process. Don't worry if you find any of the tasks difficult. It is important that you try your best, please, so that we have a clear starting point.

**Please complete work for the specified deadlines – submit via email to [DHudson@hartonacademy.co.uk](mailto:DHudson@hartonacademy.co.uk) to help with assigning course places for September.**

We hope you enjoy the summer and look forward to seeing you in September. If you have any questions about these summer tasks, please feel free to get in touch.

Mr Hudson ([DHudson@hartonacademy.co.uk](mailto:DHudson@hartonacademy.co.uk))

Task	Details
1	<p><b><u>Organisation Task</u></b> Buy a lever arch file and some file dividers. Divide your file into the following sections, in this order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Course info and summer tasks</li> <li>- Narrative Methods</li> <li>- 1A: Drama - 'Othello'</li> <li>- 1B: Drama - 'A Streetcar Named Desire'</li> <li>- 2: Prose – 'The Handmaid's Tale'</li> <li>- 2: Prose – 'Frankenstein'</li> <li>- 2: Prose – Comparing texts</li> <li>- 3A: Poetry – Poems of the Decade</li> <li>- 3B: Poetry – Keats</li> <li>- Coursework</li> </ul>

2	<p><b><u>Poetry Task</u></b></p> <p>Read two poems from our anthology: ‘Genetics’ by Sinead Morrissey and ‘Material’ by Roz Barber (attached below)</p> <p>Consider how these poems explore the themes of relationships and inheritance.</p> <p>Take notes of your ideas – either on the poems or as detailed mindmaps / image boards.</p> <p><i>(This is a thinking, exploring, annotating task – there is no need to write an essay)</i></p>
3	<p><b><u>Drama Task</u></b></p> <p>In Year 12, we will study ‘A Streetcar Named Desire’ by Tennessee Williams. As preparation for this, carry out some research on the playwright. Use the internet and / or your local libraries. Read about the author’s life and times, influences, interests. Take notes / create a detailed mindmap.</p> <p><i>(Please don’t copy and paste chunks of information)</i></p>
4	<p><b><u>Prose Research Task</u></b></p> <p>We will study two novels in Year 12:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Margaret Atwood’s ‘The Handmaid’s Tale’</li> <li>- Mary Shelley’s ‘Frankenstein’</li> </ul> <p>Your work MUST NOT be copied or cut and pasted from the internet and your findings should be written up in your own words. These novels belong to different times and different literary movements. Research the following. You may present your ideas in any way you wish: mindmaps / image boards / notes / PowerPoint / Prezzi / essay style...it’s entirely up to you. Please, though, don’t just copy and paste chunks of text.</p> <p>You should aim to research and discover:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Key dates – when was each novel conceived, written and published?</li> <li>2. Contextually, what was happening in the world at the times of these key dates? Look into the social/historical context.</li> <li>3. Information about the authors: their lives and times</li> <li>4. Genre – research the main ideas and conventions of the following literary genres: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Modernism</li> <li>- Romanticism</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
5.	<p><b><u>Prose Reading Task</u></b></p> <p>Read our two novels, from start to finish, before September:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Margaret Atwood’s ‘The Handmaid’s Tale’</li> <li>- Mary Shelley’s ‘Frankenstein’</li> </ul> <p>If you find understanding these texts hard, use online study guides to help you track the plot. You could read a chapter summary of each section AFTER reading the novel chapter, to check understanding. Use <a href="http://www.yorknotes.com">www.yorknotes.com</a> or <a href="http://www.sparknotes.com">www.sparknotes.com</a> to help you.</p> <p>Some students find it useful to write their own chapter summaries as they go, too – although this takes time, it is an extremely effective way of getting to know your texts in real depth and it provides you with a great revision resource when exams approach.</p>

6	<p><b>Read widely...</b></p> <p>...this summer is a great time for you to explore new books and expand your reading. You should try out new books and have fun with your reading.</p> <p>I am attaching a list of recommended reading. Any of these texts (or texts of similar challenge/quality) would make great choices for your coursework texts. (You have free choice of two texts to study for your coursework, so read as many as possible).</p> <p>Keep a log of your reading to share with your new class in September. Perhaps you could come up with some recommended reading for one another.</p>
7	<p><b>Develop literature skills</b></p> <p>The exam board (Edexcel) has produced some excellent independent study booklets on each of the key skills areas.</p> <p>You should work through the tasks in these booklets. This will really help you to bridge the gap between GCSE and A Level study – and, hopefully, you will find the tasks interesting and engaging, too.</p> <p>Collate all of your work for feedback when you start the course.</p>

## Genetics

My father's in my fingers, but my mother's in my palms.  
 I lift them up and look at them with pleasure –  
 I know my parents made me by my hands.

They may have been repelled to separate lands,  
 to separate hemispheres, may sleep with other lovers,  
 but in me they touch where fingers link to palms.

With nothing left of their togetherness but friends  
 who quarry for their image by a river,  
 at least I know their marriage by my hands.

I shape a chapel where a steeple stands.  
 And when I turn it over,  
 my father's by my fingers, my mother's by my palms

demure before a priest reciting psalms.  
 My body is their marriage register.  
 I re-enact their wedding with my hands.

So take me with you, take up the skin's demands  
 for mirroring in bodies of the future.  
 I'll bequeath my fingers, if you bequeath your palms.  
 We know our parents make us by our hands.

**By Sinead Morrissey**

## Material

My mother was the hanky queen  
when hanky meant a thing of cloth,  
not paper tissues bought in packs  
from late-night garages and shops,  
but things for waving out of trains  
and mopping the corners of your grief:  
when hankies were material  
she'd have one, always, up her sleeve.

Tucked in the wrist of every cardigan,  
a mum's embarrassment of lace  
embroidered with a V for Viv,  
spittled and scrubbed against my face.  
And sometimes more than one fell out  
as if she had a farm up there  
where dried-up hankies fell in love  
and mated, raising little squares.

She brought her own; I never did.  
Hankies were presents from distant aunts  
in boxed sets, with transparent covers  
and script initials spelling *ponce*,  
the naffest Christmas gift you'd get –  
my brothers too, more often than not,  
got male ones: serious, and grey,  
and larger, like they had more snot.

It was hankies that closed department stores,  
with headscarves, girdles, knitting wool  
and trouser presses; homely props  
you'd never find today in malls.  
Hankies, which demanded irons,  
and boiling to be purified  
shuttered the doors of family stores  
when those who used to buy them died.

And somehow, with the hanky's loss,  
greengrocer George with his dodgy foot  
delivering veg from a Comma van  
is history, and the friendly butcher  
who'd slip an extra sausage in,  
the fishmonger whose marble slab  
of haddock smoked the colour of yolks  
and parcelled rows of local crab

lay opposite the dancing school

where Mrs White, with painted talons,  
taught us *When You're Smiling* from  
a stumbling, out of tune piano:  
step-together, step-together, step-together,  
point! The Annual Talent Show  
when every mother, fending tears,  
would whip a hanky from their sleeve  
and smudge the rouge from little dears.

Nostalgia only makes me old.  
The innocence I want my brood  
to cling on to like ten-bob notes  
was killed in TV's lassitude.  
And it was me that turned it on  
to buy some time to write this poem  
and eat bought biscuits I would bake  
if I'd commit to being home.

There's never a hanky up my sleeve.  
I raised neglected-looking kids,  
the kind whose noses strangers clean.  
What awkwardness in me forbids  
me to keep tissues in my bag  
when handy packs are 50p?  
I miss material handkerchiefs,  
Their soft and hidden history.

But it isn't mine. I'll let it go.  
My mother too, eventually,  
who died not leaving handkerchiefs  
but tissues and uncertainty:  
and she would say, should I complain  
of the scratchy and disposable,  
that *this is your material*  
*to do with, daughter, what you will.*

By Ros Barber

## **Recommended Wider Reading (not all of it, of course!)**

- *1984*, George Orwell
- *A Clockwork Orange*, Anthony Burgess
- *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf
- *A Taste of Honey*, Sheila Delaney
- *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, Khaled Hosseini
- *Ada or Ardour: A Family Chronicle*, Vladimir Nabokov
- *Americanah*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- *Armada!*, Wilkie Collins
- *Behind the Scenes at the Museum*, Kate Atkinson
- *Birdsong*, Sebastian Faulks
- *Brick Lane*, Monica Ali
- *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*, Louis de Bernières
- *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, Tennessee Williams
- *Catch 22*, Joseph Heller
- *Cloud Atlas*, David Mitchell
- *Cold Comfort Farm*, Stella Gibson
- *Collected works of Rochester*, John Wilmot
- *Death of a Naturalist*, Seamus Heaney
- *Death of a Salesman*, Arthur Miller
- *Disgrace*, J.M. Coetzee
- *Dispatches*, Michael Kerr
- *Dracula*, Bram Stoker
- *Emma*, Jane Austen
- *Empire of the Sun*, J G Ballard
- *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Ernest Hemingway
- *Foster*, Claire Keegan
- *Hamlet*, William Shakespeare
- *Hard Times*, Charles Dickens
- *Hawksmoor*, Peter Ackroyd
- *Heart of Darkness*, Joseph Conrad
- *Hold Your Own*, Kate Tempest
- *Homage to Catalonia*, George Orwell
- *How to be a Woman*, Caitlin Moran
- *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, Maya Angelou
- *Into The Wild*, Jon Krakauer
- *Into Thin Air*, Jon Krakauer
- *Jerusalem*, Jez Butterworth
- *King Lear*, William Shakespeare
- *Life of Pi*, Yann Martel

- *Light Shining in Buckinghamshire*, Caryl Churchill
- *Lolita*, Vladimir Nabokov
- *London: The Biography*, Peter Ackroyd
- *Mansfield Park*, Jane Austen
- *Mean Time*, Carol Ann Duffy
- *Mister Pip*, Lloyd Jones
- *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, Frederick Douglass
- *Netherland*, Joseph O'Neill
- *Never Let Me Go*, Kazuo Ishiguro
- *Jude the Obscure*, Thomas Hardy
- *Northanger Abbey*, Jane Austen
- *On The Road*, Jack Kerouac
- *Once in a House on Fire*, Andrea Ashworth
- *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's nest*, Ken Kesey
- *Oranges are not the only Fruit*, Jeanette Winterson
- *Othello*, William Shakespeare
- *Poetry of the First World War*, Tim Kendall (published anthology)
- *Rebecca*, Daphne du Maurier
- *Red Dust Road*, Jackie Kay
- *Regeneration*, Pat Barker
- *Room*, Emma Donoghue
- *Roxana*, Daniel Defoe
- *The Handmaid's Tale*, Margaret Atwood
- *Scars Upon My Heart: Women's Poetry and Verse of the First World War*, Ed. Catherine Reilly
- *Selected Poems*, Sylvia Plath
- *Small Island*, Andrea Levy
- *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, William Blake
- *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Thomas Hardy
- Texts written in English by Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Chimamanda
- Ngozi Adichie and Nii Ayikqwi Parkes
- *The Adoption Papers*, Jackie Kay
- *The Autobiography of Malcom X*, Malcolm X
- *The Awakening*, Kate Chopin
- *The Bell Jar*, Sylvia Plath
- *The Bloody Chamber*, Angela Carter
- *The Bluest Eye*, Toni Morrison
- *The Bone Clocks*, David Mitchell
- *The Castle of Otranto*, Horace Walpole
- *The Collector*, John Fowles
- *The Color Purple*, Alice Walker

- *The Crucible*, Arthur Miller
- *The Danish Girl*, David Ebershoff
- *The Dark Room*, Rachel Seiffert
- *The Duchess of Malfi*, John Webster
- *The Fixer*, Bernard Malamud
- *The Glass Menagerie*, Tennessee William
- *The Go-Between*, L P Hartley
- *The Great Gatsby*, F Scott Fitzgerald
- *The History Boys*, Alan Bennett
- *The House Gun*, Nadine Gordimer
- *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Oscar Wilde
- *The Joy Luck Club*, Amy Tan
- *The Killer Angels*, Michael Shara
- *The Little Stranger*, Sarah Waters
- *The Madness of King George*, Alan Bennett
- *The Monk*, Matthew Gregory Lewis
- *The Murders in the Rue Morgue and Other Tales*, Edgar Allan Poe
- *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, Ann Radcliffe
- *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Oscar Wilde
- *The Price of Salt*, Patricia Highsmith
- *The Remains of the Day*, Kazuo Ishiguro
- *The Road*, Cormac McCarthy
- *The Stars My Destination*, Alfred Bester
- The Stories of Edgar Allan Poe (published collection)
- *The Township Plays*, Athol Fugard
- *The Virgin Suicides*, Jeffrey Eugenides
- *The Vortex*, Noel Coward
- *The Waste Land*, T S Elliott
- *The World's Wife*, Carol Ann Duffy
- *The Yellow Wallpaper*, Charlotte Perkins Gillman
- *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe
- *This Side of Paradise*, F Scott Fitzgerald
- *Titus Andronicus*, William Shakespeare
- *Titus Groan*, Mervyn Peak
- *To The Lighthouse*, Virginia Woolf
- *True History of the Kelly Gang*, Peter Carey
- *Union Street*, Pat Barker
- *Waiting for Godot*, Samuel Beckett
- *White Teeth*, Zadie Smith
- *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Jean Rhys
- *Wuthering Heights*, Emily Bronte



- *Trainspotting*, Irvine Welsh
- *Digging to America*, Anne Tyler
- *King Charles III*, Mike Bartlett
- *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour*, Tom Stoppard
- *The Wasp Factory*, Iain Banks
- *The World's Wife*, Carol Ann Duffy
- *Feminine Gospels*, Carol Ann Duffy
- *We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves*, Karen Joy Fowler
- *Vernon God Little*, DBC Pierre
- *A Separate Peace*, John Knowles
- *An Ideal Husband*, Oscar Wilde
- *High Rise*, JG Ballard
- *Rabbit, Run*, John Updike