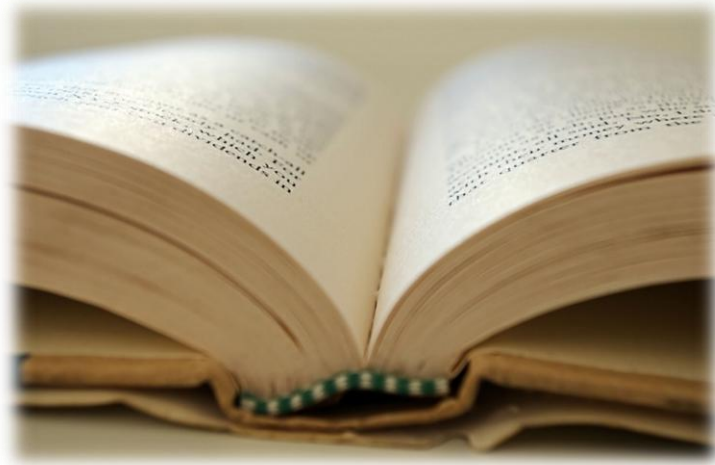


Starting A Level English Literature

Summer Work



Welcome to A Level English Literature. The activities contained in this booklet are designed to help do some of the bridging work between GCSE and A Level. What we want is for you to have some fun with this and enjoy a bit of freedom with your reading.

We have therefore put together a range of tasks. You simply have to pick **one task from each category** to complete before you attend your first lesson in September. You will need to bring evidence of this work **for all three of your chosen tasks** to that first lesson, and details of how to do this can be found underneath the instructions for each task.

Before you pick your tasks and make a start on your reading and exploring, we want to remind you that Literature is very much about your own responses to texts. These tasks therefore help you to do some *thinking* about what you are reading, a skill that will be very important in your A Level lessons. You will see that the novel task may well take you a bit longer, so take this into consideration when organising your time.

Poetry Task Options

1. Let a Poem Brew Over Time
2. Put Together a Short Anthology of 6-10 Poems

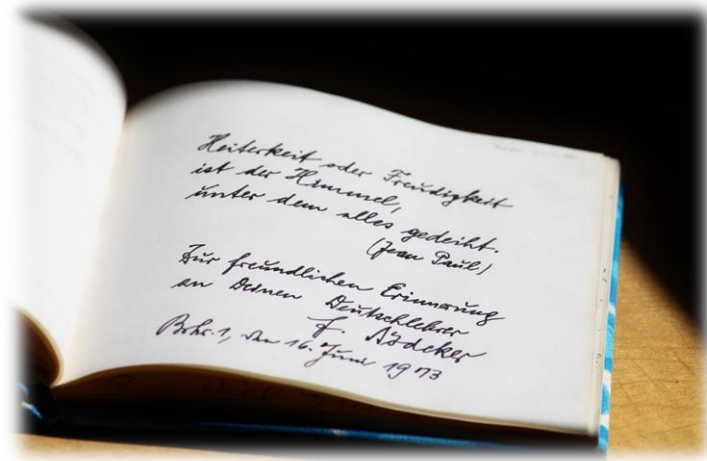
Novel Task Options

1. Read a Prize-winning Novel
2. Take a Risk With Your Reading

'Talking About Literature' Options

1. Explore *emagazine*
2. The World of Literary Podcasts

Poetry Task Option 1 – Let a Poem Brew Over Time



- Choose a poem by browsing the websites listed below:

[Poetry Foundation](#)

[The Saturday Poem](#)

[National Poetry Library](#)

[Poem Hunter](#)

[Poetry By Heart anthology](#)

[Scottish Poetry Library](#)

[Library of Congress Archive](#)

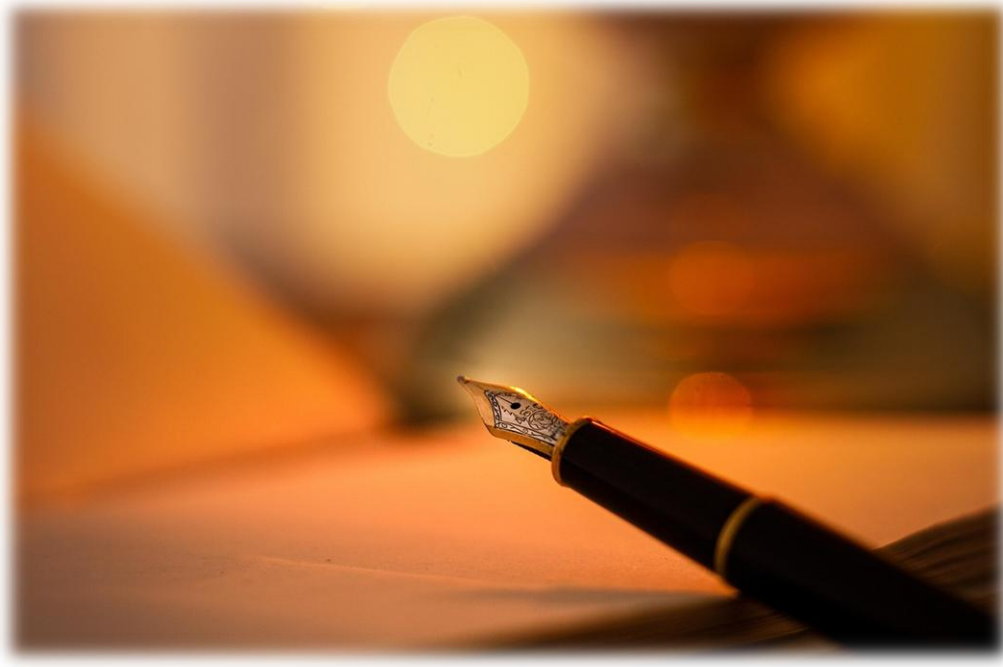
<https://poets.org/>

- Set a timer for 10 seconds.
- Do a 'snapshot' look at the poem for 10 seconds – don't try to read it – and jot down anything you notice about it.
- Do the same again but this time for 30 seconds.
- Now put the poem to one side.
- On three different days over the next week or so, spend about 10 minutes reading the poem and writing about it in any way you want. You might write about what you like or what you are puzzled by or you might just ask questions. It's up to you whether you read over what you wrote on the previous occasion – there are advantages to both ways. Over the course of the next few weeks you could try the activity both ways.
- On the last day, read the poem again, read over all your writing, then make a few notes exploring how your response to the poem changed and developed.

Evidence to bring to your first lesson in September

All of the notes you have taken on the poem at the different stages of the activity.

Poetry Task Option 2 – Put Together a Short Anthology of 6-10 Poems

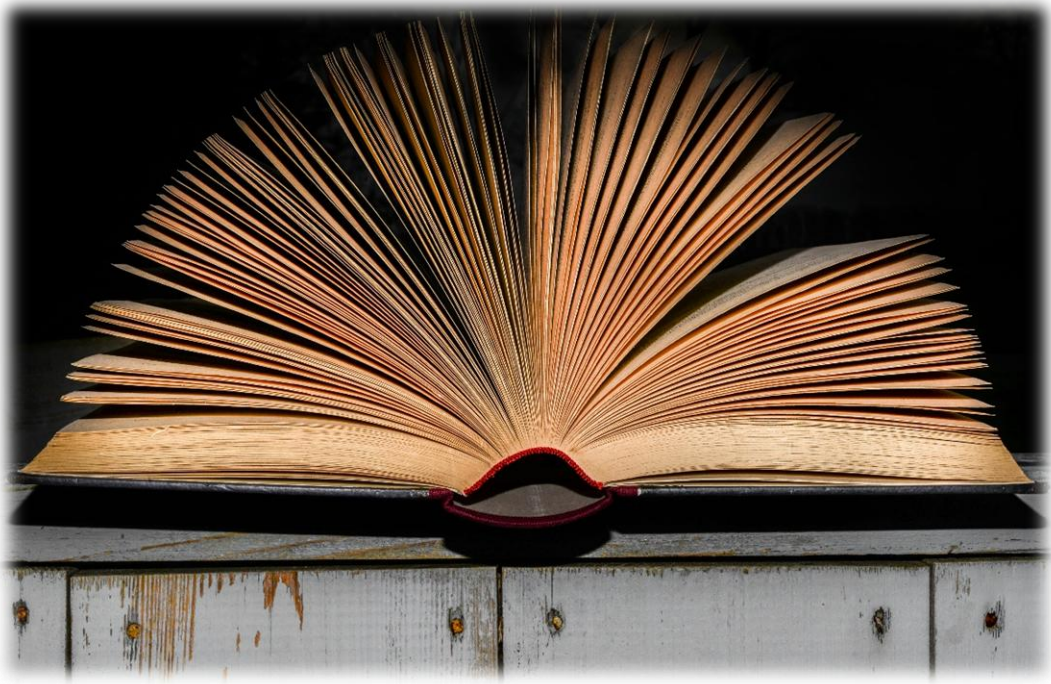


- Begin by spending some time browsing online poetry libraries (using the links on the previous page), to get a sense of what you like and what you are not so keen on. As you read, make a note of any poems that appeal to you and why.
- Decide what the main idea behind your anthology will be, for example:
 - a theme, e.g. love poems across time or cultures
 - a type of poem, e.g. sonnets, lyrics
 - humorous poems
 - poems for reading aloud
 - poems which do something interesting with form and layout
 - poems which ‘speak to each other’ – for example, a poem from the 19th century which pairs well with a more recent one
 - your own favourites.
- Now write a short introduction, to give readers a sense of what the collection offers, picking out something special about each of your chosen poems.

Evidence to bring to your first lesson in September

A list of the poems you have chosen for your anthology, a title for your anthology, and the introduction you have written.

Novel Task Option 1 – Read a Prize-winning Novel



- Have a go at reading a prize-winning novel. You can find lists of novels which have won prizes by using the links below:

[Booker Prize](#)

[Carnegie Prize](#)

[Costa Prize](#)

[Women's Prize for Fiction](#)

[Crime Writers' Association](#)

[Wellcome Book Prize](#)

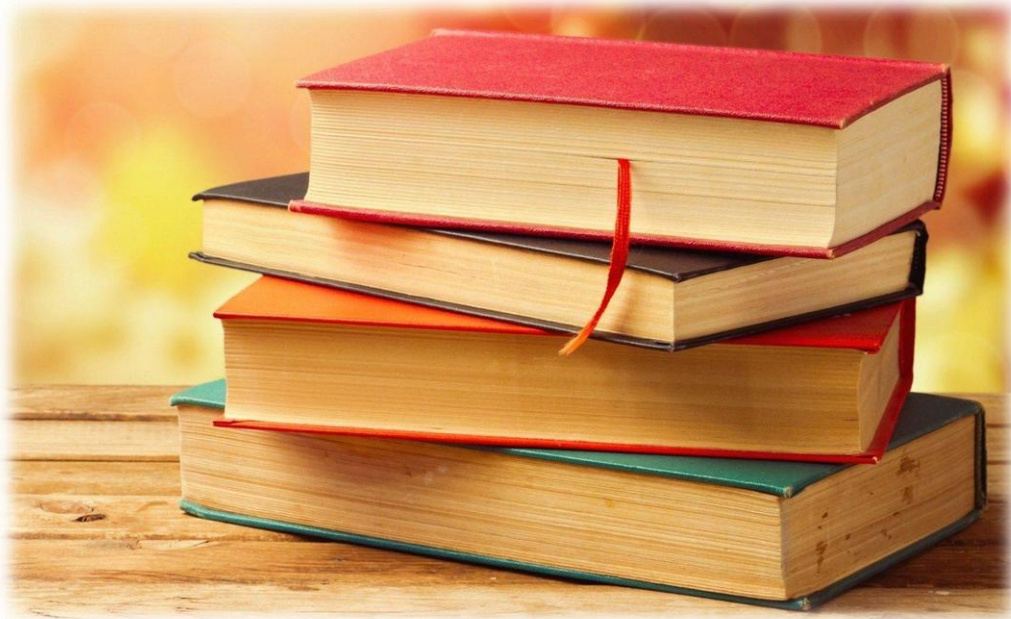
[James Tait Black Memorial Prize](#)

- To help you make your choice, use Amazon's 'Look inside' to dip into some first pages. Search online for reviews. (*The Guardian*, *New York Times*, *Independent*, www.goodreads.com are all good places to find interesting reviews – sometimes more than one for the same book.)
- Choose one to read and find it in your local library or bookshop.
- Read and enjoy it!

Evidence to bring to your first lesson in September

A short piece of writing that responds to the book – this could be a review or something more creative, or just a set of notes and ideas.

Novel Task Option 2 – Take a Risk With Your Reading



- What sort of books do you usually read for pleasure? If you always read the same sort of novel or the same author or have got stuck in a rut of not knowing what to read next, why not try to read something completely different? Always read novels? Why not try a graphic novel? Always read horror? Why not try a novel written in verse?
- How to find your new read:
 - [Look at EMC's list of great 21st Century reads for 6th formers.](#)
 - Ask friends. Ask the people you know who have really different tastes to you.
 - Follow writers, book clubs and book podcasts on Instagram.
 - Read book reviews.
 - Look at lists of 100 best books, for example: [The Guardian 100 Best Novels](#) and [The Guardian Best Books of the 21st Century](#).
 - [Read a book in translation.](#)
- Write a review of your 'out of your comfort zone' read.

Evidence to bring to your first lesson in September

Your review.

'Talking About Literature' Option 1 – Explore *emagazine*



- *emagazine* is a magazine and website for A Level students with articles written by academics, critics, writers, teachers and students on texts and topics set for A Level – and on literature and language more generally.
- You can use the following login details to access the magazine:
 - Website: [EMC Magazines | English & Media Centre](#) (scroll down to *emagazine* User Login)
 - Username: EnglishSub
 - Password: WykeCol
 - Click 'Login to *emagazine*'.
- Log in and spend some time browsing the site, dipping into articles, then choose one that interests you. (It doesn't even have to be on a text you have read.)
- Read the article and pick out three points. These could be ideas you find interesting, that you want to question (perhaps because you disagree, perhaps because you want to find out more), a point you don't understand.
- Take one of the points and add your own ideas to it or write a new point of your own.
- Take notes on the way the article is written – its organisation and development, the style, the voice and what difference that made both to your enjoyment and understanding.

Evidence to bring to your first lesson in September

All of the notes you have taken on the article at the different stages of the activity.

'Talking About Literature' Option 2 – The World of Literary Podcasts



- Listen to a literature podcast. Any of the following would be good places to start. (Try two or three – the styles and approaches are very different.)
 - [The Guardian Books podcast](#)
 - [Not Another Books podcast](#)
 - [The Literary Salon podcast](#)
 - [Anything But Silent - Podcast - Apple Podcasts](#)

Evidence to bring to your first lesson in September

A short piece of writing that responds to the podcast – this could be a review or something more creative, or just a set of notes and ideas.