

A level English Literature Summer Independent Learning

Welcome to A Level English Literature. Please complete the following tasks ready for your first day at New College:

1. Read the poem below and annotate, identifying any technical decisions the poet has made in terms of language, structure and form, and how these decisions affect the possible meaning of the poem:

Ash

I had a heart like an upturned ashtray.

I spoke smoke. People held their breath.
When I found you, ash was all
I had to pile at your feet.

I did not know what you would do
with my dire, dirtying heart
crumbled there, burning.

Would you brush it off, blow it out,
heap it, beating, in your palm
offend the wind with it?

No, you found soil, seeded it.
You poured my heart in, stirred
what I had wasted. And we waited.

Now here's a sapling. Soon, an ash tree.

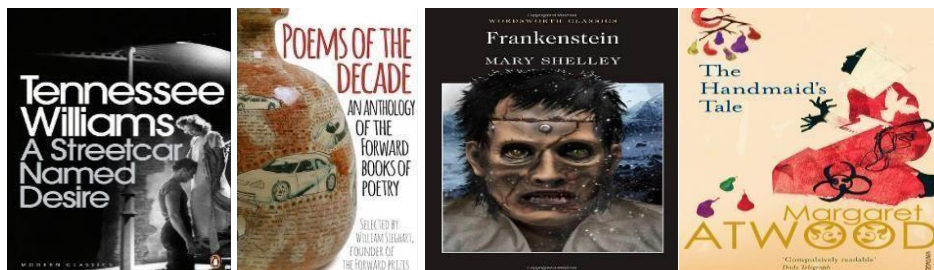
2. You need to purchase the following texts for the first term:

A Streetcar named Desire (ISBN: 9780141190273)

Poems of the Decade (ISBN: 9780571325405)

The Handmaid's Tale (ISBN: 0099740915)

Frankenstein (ISBN-13 9781853260230)



3. Read *Frankenstein*, by Mary Shelley and refer to the 'Frankenstein Initial Reading Notes', below. You should:

- summarise each chapter in brief, bullet-point form
- select two quotations from each chapter and describe in detail the effect of Shelley's use of language for each quotation. You might want to consider tone, lexis, connotations, symbolism, imagery and sound, depending on the quotation selected.

4. Read *The Handmaid's Tale*, by Margaret Atwood and refer to the 'The Handmaid's Tale Initial Reading Notes', below. You should:

- summarise each chapter in brief, bullet-point form
- select two quotations from each chapter and describe in detail the effect of Atwood's use of language for each quotation. You might want to consider tone, lexis, connotations, symbolism, imagery and sound, depending on the quotation selected.

5. Read *A Streetcar Named Desire*, by Tennessee Williams. You might also watch a production on YouTube if you would like to see it in performance, but this should be done in addition to, not instead of, the reading task. Refer to the 'A Streetcar Named Desire Initial Reading Notes', below. You should:

- summarise each scene in brief, bullet-point form
- select two pieces of textual evidence from each scene and describe in detail the effect created by Williams with the use of each piece of evidence. Your evidence can be dialogue or stage directions such as use of sound, staging, props, costume or proxemics. You might want to consider tone, lexis, connotations, symbolism and imagery, depending on the quotation selected.

6. Produce an essay of at least 600 words in answer to **one** of the following questions:
Explore Williams' presentation of Blanche in the first three scenes of *A Streetcar Named Desire*.
Explore Williams' presentation of Stanley in the first three scenes of *A Streetcar Named Desire* .

Here are some ideas you might consider:

- Our initial introduction to the character
- How they are presented in terms of clothing, colour, movement, and any props they interact with
- Use of sound and music
- What they say, and stage directions which tell us how they say it
- How the character interacts with other characters, and whether this differs when they are with different characters, and whether it differs from how they are if alone
- Any changes you see taking place in the characters over the course of the first three scenes
- Whether you feel the characters might represent something beyond themselves, e.g. a particular representation of, for example, class, gender or geographical area.

Frankenstein Initial Reading Notes

For your 'exploration of effects', you might want to consider:

- the impression your chosen quotation gives of emerging or developing themes, and how it does this
- the impression your chosen quotation gives of character, and how this may relate to developing or emerging themes, and how it does this
- the impression your chosen quotation gives of setting, and how this may relate to developing or emerging themes, and how it does this
- the impression your chosen quotation gives of relationships, and how this may relate to developing or emerging themes, and how it does this

Of course, many quotations may show a combination of these.

Section	Bullet point summary	2 pieces of textual evidence and exploration of effects
Robert Walton's Letters		
Chapter 1		
Chapter 2		
Chapter 3		
Chapter 4		
Chapter 5		
Chapter 6		
Chapter 7		
Chapter 8		
Chapter 9		
Chapter 10		
Chapter 11		
Chapter 12		
Chapter 13		
Chapter 14		
Chapter 15		
Chapter 16		
Chapter 17		
Chapter 18		
Chapter 19		
Chapter 20		
Chapter 21		
Chapter 22		
Chapter 23		
Chapter 24		

Create and complete your own version of the above table.

The Handmaid's Tale Initial Reading Notes

For your 'exploration of effects', you might want to consider:

- the impression your chosen quotation gives of emerging or developing themes, and how it does this
- the impression your chosen quotation gives of character, and how this may relate to developing or emerging themes, and how it does this
- the impression your chosen quotation gives of setting, and how this may relate to developing or emerging themes, and how it does this
- the impression your chosen quotation gives of relationships, and how this may relate to developing or emerging themes, and how it does this

Of course, many quotations may show a combination of these.

Section	Bullet point summary	2 pieces of textual evidence and exploration of effects
Chapter 1		
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Chapter 5		
Chapter 6		
Chapter 7		
Chapter 8		
Chapter 9		
Chapter 10		
Chapter 11		
Chapter 12		
Chapter 13		
Chapter 14		
Chapter 15		
Chapter 16		
Chapter 17		
Chapter 18		
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Chapter 20		
Chapter 21		
Chapter 22		
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Chapter 25		
Chapter 26		
Chapter 27		
Chapter 28		
Chapter 29		
Chapter 30		
Chapter 31		
Chapter 32		

Chapter 33		
Chapter 34		
Chapter 35		
Chapter 36		
Chapter 37		
Chapter 38		
Chapter 39		
Chapter 40		
Chapter 41		
Chapter 42		
Chapter 43		
Chapter 44		
Chapter 45		
Chapter 46		
Historical Notes		

Create and complete your own version of the above table.

A Streetcar Named Desire Initial Reading Notes

For your 'exploration of effects', you might want to consider:

- the impression your chosen quotation gives of emerging or developing themes, and how it does this
- the impression your chosen quotation gives of character, and how this may relate to developing or emerging themes, and how it does this
- the impression your chosen quotation gives of setting, and how this may relate to developing or emerging themes, and how it does this
- the impression your chosen quotation gives of relationships, and how this may relate to developing or emerging themes, and how it does this

Of course, many quotations may show a combination of these.

Scene	Bullet point summary	2 pieces of textual evidence and exploration of effects
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		

Create and complete your own version of the above table.