

Bridging Pack: A-level English Literature



That is part of the beauty of all literature. You discover that your longings are universal longings, that you're not lonely and isolated from anyone. You belong.

— F. Scott Fitzgerald —

AZ QUOTES

Welcome to the A-level English Literature Bridging Pack, and well done for choosing to spend your time on this wonderful subject. Over the next few weeks, you will get an insight into what studying English Literature is all about and a taster of the different skills that you will learn and master, should you decide to take the subject for A-level in September. We hope you enjoy the journey.

What is the study of English Literature?

Put simply, to study English Literature means to open yourself up to the world around you. It's not just about reading books, poems and plays and then writing about them. Studying English Literature is to learn about different cultures and religions; different periods of time in history and the values that were important then; and different critical theories that make you look at the world differently. This video explains it perfectly: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MSYw502dJNY>

What will I be doing over the course of this pack?

Each week will have a different focus. In **Week One**, you will look at a series of short texts, including poems and be encouraged to think critically about them. In **Week Two**, you will learn about the importance of context when reading a text. For example, you will learn how knowing what happened at the time that the text was written, adds to your understanding of the text. In **Week Three**, you will learn about the different theories you can apply to a text, from Feminism to Psychoanalytic theory. Don't worry- these will be fully explained to you. Finally, in **Week Four**, you will use all your learning over the course of the pack to write an essay.

What will the final assessment be?

As mentioned previously, the final assessment will be in **Week Four** of the pack. You will be writing an 800-1000-word essay on a poem that you have done work on in the pack. Don't be put off by the word count- it may look like a lot of words, but it's actually not. You most likely wrote this amount when you did GCSE essays. Plus, we will help you a lot with what to write.

Will I need to constantly be writing essays in this pack?

No! The only week where an essay is required is Week 4. For all the other lessons in weeks 1-3, you will have a choice in how to present the work from making presentations to making videos. Of course, you can choose to present the work in essays if you want, but it's not expected.

Do I need to always get the answer 'right' to be accepted on to the A-level in September?

No. The beauty of studying English Literature is that there are so many different answers that can be 'right'. This pack is designed to develop your own critical thinking and analysis skills, so please avoid using the internet to get your ideas. We just want to see evidence that you have been able to think for yourself: after all – your brain is your number one weapon in this world.

Where can I go for help if I'm really stuck or need some help or guidance?

The pack is designed to take you through each lesson independently, however if you find yourself really stuck, send an e-mail explaining the problem to either of the current A-level teachers:

Ms Diamond: tiffany.diamond@lambeth-academy.org

Pack Overview:

Below is an overview for the entire pack. There are 3 lessons per week, and the work for each lesson should take 60 minutes (1 hour). Don't worry- each week and task is clearly explained as you work through the pack.

	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3
Week 1 Thinking Critically	<p><u>Task 1:</u> Read the short story entitled 'The Flowers'.</p> <p><u>Task 2:</u> Answer questions on the short story.</p>	<p><u>Task 1:</u> Ranking statements.</p> <p><u>Task 2:</u> Read the poem 'Salome'.</p> <p><u>Task 3:</u> Answer questions on 'Salome'.</p> <p><u>Task 4:</u> Establish 'big ideas' about the poem.</p>	<p><u>Task 1:</u> Read the poem 'No, Thank You, John' and answer questions.</p> <p><u>Task 2:</u> Establish 'big ideas' for the poem.</p> <p><u>Task 3:</u> Annotate the poem for methods.</p>
Week 2 The importance of context	<p><u>Task 1:</u> Interpreting pictures without context.</p> <p><u>Task 2:</u> Applying context to the pictures.</p> <p><u>Task 3:</u> Read an extract from 'Pride and Prejudice'.</p> <p><u>Task 4:</u> Apply context to the extract.</p>	<p><u>Task 1:</u> Read the poem 'Mental Cases'.</p> <p><u>Task 2:</u> Watch the video and take notes on context of the poem.</p> <p><u>Task 3:</u> Apply knowledge of context to the poem.</p>	<p><u>Task 1:</u> Read over notes for 'No, Thank You, John' Week 1, Lesson 3.</p> <p><u>Task 2:</u> Listen to podcast and answer question.</p> <p><u>Task 3:</u> Watch video and answer questions.</p> <p><u>Task 4:</u> Apply knowledge of context to the poem.</p>
Week 3 The impact of criticism	<p><u>Task 1:</u> Watch film clip and answer questions.</p> <p><u>Task 2:</u> Read the poem 'The Soldier'.</p> <p><u>Task 3:</u> Interpret the poem through different points of view.</p>	<p><u>Task 1:</u> Read examples of literary theory and answer the questions.</p> <p><u>Task 2:</u> Apply literary theory to the poem 'The Soldier'.</p>	<p><u>Task 1:</u> Read over your notes for 'No, Thank You, John, Weeks 1 and 2 Lesson 3.</p> <p><u>Task 2:</u> Apply literary theory to 'No, Thank You, John'.</p> <p><u>Task 3:</u> Find evidence in the poem for other's points of view.</p>
Week 4 Writing the essay	<p><u>Task 1:</u> Look over your notes for 'No Thank You, John' Week 1, Lesson 3.</p> <p><u>Task 2:</u> Write paragraph 1.</p>	<p><u>Task 1:</u> Look over your notes for 'No Thank You, John' Week 2, Lesson 3.</p> <p><u>Task 2:</u> Write paragraphs 2,3 and 4.</p> <p><u>Task 3:</u> Proofread your work.</p>	<p><u>Task 1:</u> Look over your notes for 'No Thank You, John' Week 3, Lesson 3.</p> <p><u>Task 2:</u> Write paragraphs 5, 6 and 7.</p> <p><u>Task 3:</u> Proofread your work.</p>

Week One: Thinking critically and exercising our brains

One of the most important skills in English is exercising our ability to think conceptually. This means being able to think about big ideas in a text and thinking about what the overall purpose of a text is. You will be practising this skill this week.

Lesson 1:

In this lesson, we will read a short story by Alice Walker and think about our own responses to it. Try to avoid looking up the answers on the internet. We are interested in what YOU have to say, not another people.

To present the work for the lesson, you can choose from one of the options below:

- Handwrite the answers and take a photo of this.
- Type the answers.
- Make a PowerPoint presentation of the answers.
- Record yourself talking about the answers verbally.
- Film yourself talking about the answers verbally.

Task 1: Read the short story entitled 'The Flowers' by Alice Walker.

Timing: (spend approximately 5-10 minutes doing this)

Alice Walker (1944-) is an American author and activist. She is most famous for writing *The Color Purple* which tells the story of a woman's struggle to survive in a culture that is both racist and sexist. It has since been made into a film and also a West End musical. Her short story 'The Flowers' was published in 1973.



It seemed to Myop as she skipped lightly from hen house to pigpen to smokehouse that the days had never been as beautiful as these. The air held a keenness that made her nose twitch. The harvesting of the corn and cotton, peanuts and squash, made each day a golden surprise that caused excited little tremors to run up her jaws.

Myop carried a short, knobby stick. She struck out at random at chickens she liked, and worked out the beat of a song on the fence around the pigpen. She felt light and good in the warm sun. She was

ten, and nothing existed for her but her song, the stick clutched in her dark brown hand, and the tat-de-ta-ta-ta of accompaniment.

Turning her back on the rusty boards of her family's sharecropper cabin, Myop walked along the fence till it ran into the stream made by the spring. Around the spring, where the family got drinking water, silver ferns and wildflowers grew. Along the shallow banks pigs rooted. Myop watched the tiny white bubbles disrupt the thin black scale of soil and the water that silently rose and slid away down the stream.

She had explored the woods behind the house many times. Often, in late autumn, her mother took her to gather nuts among the fallen leaves. Today she made her own path, bouncing this way and that way, vaguely keeping an eye out for snakes. She found, in addition to various common but pretty ferns and leaves, an armful of strange blue flowers with velvety ridges and a sweet suds bush full of the brown, fragrant buds.

By twelve o'clock, her arms laden with sprigs of her findings, she was a mile or more from home. She had often been as far before, but the strangeness of the land made it not as pleasant as her usual haunts. It seemed gloomy in the little cove in which she found herself. The air was damp, the silence close and deep.

Myop began to circle back to the house, back to the peacefulness of the morning. It was then she stepped smack into his eyes. Her heel became lodged in the broken ridge between brow and nose, and she reached down quickly, unafraid, to free herself. It was only when she saw his naked grin that she gave a little yelp of surprise.

He had been a tall man. From feet to neck covered a long space. His head lay beside him. When she pushed back the leaves and layers of earth and debris Myop saw that he'd had large white teeth, all of them cracked or broken, long fingers, and very big bones. All his clothes had rotted away except some threads of blue denim from his overalls. The buckles of the overall had turned green.

Myop gazed around the spot with interest. Very near where she'd stepped into the head was a wild pink rose. As she picked it to add to her bundle she noticed a raised mound, a ring, around the rose's root. It was the rotted remains of a noose, a bit of shredding plowline, now blending benignly into the soil. Around an overhanging limb of a great spreading oak clung another piece. Frayed, rotted, bleached, and frazzled--barely there--but spinning restlessly in the breeze. Myop laid down her flowers.

And the summer was over.

Task 2: Answer the following questions

Timing: (spend approximately 45-50 minutes doing this)

1. What time of the year is it when the story begins? How do you know that? (Include a quotation).
2. Who is Myop? Describe her. How old is she?
3. How is Myop thinking and feeling in the beginning of the story? How do you know?
 - a. line 1 'she skipped lightly from hen house to pigpen to smokehouse'
 - b. line 7 'she was 10 and nothing existed for her but her song'

4. After she leaves the farm, where does she go?
5. What kind of farm does she live on? Is she rich or poor? How do you know?
6. What was she watching out for as she walked? Why? How are a snake and a dead body alike? (Hint: think about the connotations)
7. Where do things start to change in the story?
8. When did you realize what Myop stepped on? How long had the man been there?
9. How does Myop react when she finds the man? Why do you think she reacts that way? Do you think she understood what had happened to him? How long ago did the man get there in your opinion?
10. What do flowers often symbolise?
11. STRETCH: Why do you think the title of the story is *The Flowers*? Why do you think Myop “laid down her flowers”?
12. What do you think/feel about this story?
13. What does the last sentence of the story symbolise in (your opinion), “and the summer was over.” Hint: what does the ‘summer’ symbolise and why it is over for Myop?
14. What causes young people to lose innocence?
15. What childhood experiences have you had that changed you?
16. STRETCH: Why do you think Alice Walker wrote this story? What do you think her purpose is?

The second lesson this week is on a short poem called 'Salome' by Carol Ann Duffy. You have come across Duffy before- she is the author of 'War Photographer' in the GCSE Power and Conflict poetry. We'll be looking at some 'big ideas' in the poem.

To present the work in the lesson, you can choose you can choose from one of the options below:

- Handwrite the answers and take a picture.
- Type the answers.
- Make a PowerPoint presentation of the answers.
- Record yourself talking about the answers verbally.
- Film yourself talking about the answers verbally.

The poem 'Salome' is taken from a collection of poems that are studied on the A-level course called 'The World's Wife'. In this collection, Duffy aims to give women throughout history, literature, myths, the Bible and fairy tales a voice, so that we hear their story in their own words.

In the Bible, Salome is famous for demanding the head of John the Baptist. The story is that her stepfather Herod Antipas, King of Galilee admired her sexy dancing so much that he offered to give her whatever she desired, up to half his kingdom. She was persuaded by her mother to call for the head of John the Baptist. Her mother hated John the Baptist because he disapproved of her marriage to Herod.



Task 1:

Below is a list of statements. Rank them in order of how much you agree with each statement. Justify your top and bottom choice with a reason.

Timing: (spend approximately 10 minutes doing this)

- A. Society teaches boys how to act like 'men' and girls how to act like 'women'.
- B. Both girls and boys are born knowing how to act like their genders.
- C. The idea that men shouldn't cry or show their emotions is harmful to both genders.
- D. There is a double standard for women in society. If a man has lots of sexual partners, he is considered to be a 'player' but if a woman has a lot of sexual partners, she is considered to be a 'slut'.
- E. There is complete gender equality in society now.
- F. Society is still vastly unequal, and women are still disempowered by men.

Task 2:

Read the poem 'Salome' below.

Timing: (spend approximately 10 minutes doing this)

Salome by Carol Ann Duffy

I'd done it before
(and doubtless I'll do it again,
sooner or later)

woke up with a head on the pillow beside me – whose? –
what did it matter?
Good-looking, of course, dark hair, rather matted;
the reddish beard several shades lighter;
with very deep lines round the eyes,
from pain, I'd guess, maybe laughter;
and a beautiful crimson mouth that obviously knew
how to flatter...
which I kissed...
Colder than pewter.
Strange. What was his name? Peter?

Simon? Andrew? John? I knew I'd feel better
for tea, dry toast, no butter,
so rang for the maid.
And, indeed, her innocent clatter
of cups and plates,
her clearing of clutter,
her regional patter,
were just what needed –
hungover and wrecked as I was from a night on the batter.

Never again!
I need to clean up my act,
get fitter,
cut out the booze and the fags and the sex.
Yes. As for the latter,
it was time to turf out the blighter,
the beater or biter,
who'd come like a lamb to the slaughter
to Salome's bed.

In the mirror, I saw my eyes glitter.
I flung back the sticky red sheets,
and there, like I said – and ain't life a bitch -
was his head on a platter.

Task 3:

Answer the following questions with a couple of sentences each to check understanding:

Timing: (spend approximately 25 minutes doing this)

1. How does Salome (the speaker) feel about the men she wakes up with? How do you know? (Include a quotation).
2. Why is the mouth she kisses 'colder than pewter'? (pewter is a cold, metal alloy)
3. What are all the names of the men the speaker kisses? What does this suggest about her?
4. Why is she feeling hungover?
5. What does 'lamb to the slaughter' mean? (Hint: What does a lamb connote? What does it suggest if the man is being killed?)
6. Therefore, how are the male characters being portrayed here?
7. How does Salome feel at the end of the poem? How do you know? (Include a quotation)

Task 4:

Now we move on to the big ideas. Read the list below, then pick which idea you most agree with. Alternatively, feel free to think of your own big idea!

Timing: (spend approximately 15 minutes doing this)

1. In the poem 'Salome', Duffy destroys the idea that men are the dominant sex.
2. In the poem 'Salome', Duffy celebrates female sexuality.
3. In the poem 'Salome', Duffy creates an alternative model of female sexuality.
4. In the poem, 'Salome' argues that the only way women can gain power over men is to act in a masculine way.
5. In the poem 'Salome', Duffy destroys male pride by having her speaker lure men to bed where she kills them.

Once you have chosen your 'big idea' find 5 different lines/phrases in the text to back up this idea.

Lesson 3:

The last lesson this week is on a poem called 'No, Thank You, John' by a poet called Christina Rossetti. We study a collection of her poems on the A-level course.

This is the poem you will write about in your essay in Week 4. We will revisit this poem on the third lesson every week to build your understanding of it.

To present the work in the lesson, you can choose from one of the options below:

- Handwrite the answers and take a picture.
- Type the answers.
- Make a PowerPoint presentation of the answers.
- Record yourself talking about the answers verbally.
- Film yourself talking about the answers verbally.

Christina Rossetti (1830- 1894) is a famous female Victorian poet. She published under the pseudonym Ellen Alleyne at the start of her career. She wrote a variety of poems about gender, religion, society, and religion. Later in her life, she also wrote religious, devotional poetry. Rossetti never married.



Task 1:

Read the poem first to yourself, and then answer the questions in the boxes next to each stanza to ensure you understand what is happening in the poem.

Timing: (spend approximately 20 minutes doing this)

The words listed below feature in the poem. Look up their meaning and write it in the grid:

Wan (line 7)	
Bygones (line 17)	
Ulterior (line 27)	
Treaty (line 29)	
Quibbles (line 30)	

You may wish to use this link to an online dictionary: <https://www.dictionary.com/>

No, Thank You, John

I never said I loved you, John:

Why will you tease me, day by day,
And wax a weariness to think upon
With always "do" and "pray"?

1. How does the speaker feel about John?
2. Is John taking 'no' for an answer? How do you

You know I never loved you, John;

No fault of mine made me your toast:
Why will you haunt me with a face as wan
As shows an hour-old ghost.

3. How is John trying to make the speaker feel about rejecting him? Hint: How is John's face described? Why might he look at the speaker like this?

I dare say Meg or Moll would take

Pity upon you, if you'd ask:
And pray don't remain single for my sake
Who can't perform that task.

4. Who does the speaker suggest John turns his attentions to?
5. What does she not want him to do?

I have no heart?—Perhaps I have not;

But then you're mad to take offence
That I don't give you what I have not got:
Use your common sense.

6. What do you think John has said to the speaker to make her respond with the first line of this stanza?

Let bygones be bygones:

Don't call me false, who owed not to be true:
I'd rather answer "No" to fifty Johns
Than answer "Yes" to you.

7. What is the speaker's attitude towards John in this stanza?

Let's mar our pleasant days no more,
Song-birds of passage, days of youth:
Catch at to-day, forget the days before:
I'll wink at your untruth.

8. What tells you here that the speaker wants to stop arguing with John?

Let us strike hands as hearty friends;
No more, no less: and friendship's good:
Only don't keep in view ulterior ends,
And points not understood

9. What kind of relationship does the speaker want with John now?

In open treaty. Rise above
Quibbles and shuffling off and on:
Here's friendship for you if you like; but love,—
No, thank you, John.

10. Finally, how does the speaker react to John at the end of the poem?

Task 2:

Below are some big ideas about the poem. Read the list below, then pick which idea you most agree with. Alternatively, feel free to think of your own big idea!

Timing: (spend approximately 5 minutes doing this)

1. In 'No, Thank You, John', Rossetti exposes the arrogance of men who believe they are entitled to a woman's love.
2. In 'No, Thank You, John', Rossetti celebrates strong, forthright women.
3. In 'No, Thank You, John', Rossetti argues that the only way women can gain agency (power) is to act in a typically masculine way.
4. In 'No, Thank You, John', Rossetti subverts (goes against) the stereotypical presentation of the genders.
5. In 'No, Thank You, John', Rossetti undermines the patriarchy.

Task 3:

Once you have chosen your big idea, annotate your poem to find FOUR methods that Rossetti uses which will BACK UP your big idea. Remember that in all texts, there are a lot of methods. You only want to find ones which back up your argument.

Timing: (spend approximately 35 minutes doing this)

SUPPORT: You **may** want to think about the following questions, but do not feel limited by them.

- Why might Rossetti have chosen to use a dramatic monologue as the form of her poem? (A dramatic monologue is a poem in the form of a narrative of speech by an imagined character like 'My Last Duchess').
- What semantic fields can you find? How do they help to illustrate your big idea?
- What imagery (simile) can you find in the poem which helps to illustrate your big idea?
- Where is the repetition? What is the effect of it?
- Where are the rhetorical questions? How do they help to illustrate your big idea?
- What is the tone of the poem? Which words or phrases help to create this tone?
- STRETCH: The poem has a regular rhyme scheme (ABAB) throughout. Why?

Week Two: The importance of context

The skill we will be practising this week is looking at how the context of a text can influence our understanding of it because all literature is a product of time and place. That means that every author is influenced by the period in which they lived and the place they lived in, whether they are aware of it or not!

Lesson 1:

In this lesson, we are going to look at how context affects our understanding and response to art and then literature.

To present the work from the lesson, you can choose from one of the options below:

- Handwrite the answers and take a picture.
- Type the answers.
- Make a PowerPoint presentation of the answers.

- Record yourself talking about the answers verbally.
- Film yourself talking about the answers verbally.

Task 1:

Look at the first two pictures below and for each one, answer the following questions:

1. What do you see in this picture?
2. What do you think the picture is representing?
3. What is your opinion of it? Do you like it? Do you not like it? Explain.

STRETCH: Do the same for picture three.

Timing: (spend approximately 10 minutes doing this)

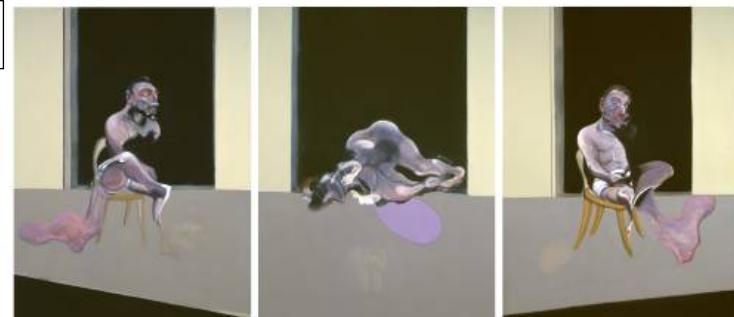
1.



2.



3.



Task 2:

Now follow the link
done your research

after you have

1. How has your understanding of the pictures changed now that you know the context behind it?
2. Has your opinion of the picture changed in terms of how much you like it or don't like it now that you know the context?

<https://www.visitberlin.de/en/memorial-murdered-jews-europe>

<https://www.pablopicasso.org/guernica.jsp>

STRETCH: <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/bacon-triptych-august-1972-t03073>

Timing: (spend approximately 10 minutes doing this)

Task 3:

Jane Austen (1775-1817) was an English novelist, who wrote a number of novels commenting on and critiquing society. She also exposes the problems women faced in society. She is known for her sharp wit and the biting irony in her novels. Austen's novels were published from 1811 onward in a period of English history known as the Regency era.



You will now read an extract which is the opening of Jane Austen's novel 'Pride and Prejudice' published in 1813. Once you have read the extract, answer the questions below it.

Timing: (spend approximately 20 minutes doing this)

The extract introduces us to the Bennet family, which is made up of the parents Mr and Mrs Bennet and their five daughters. They have no sons.

Pride and Prejudice

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.

However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on his first entering a neighbourhood, this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families, that he is considered as the rightful property of some one or other of their daughters.

'My dear Mr Bennet,' said his lady to him one day, 'have you heard that Netherfield Park is let at last?'

Mr Bennet replied that he had not.

'But it is,' returned she; 'for Mrs Long has just been here, and she told me all about it.'

Mr Bennet made no answer.

'Do you not want to know who has taken it?' cried his wife impatiently.

'You want to tell me, and I have no objection to hearing it.'

This was invitation enough.

'Why, my dear, you must know, Mrs Long says that Netherfield is taken by a young man of large fortune from the north of England; that he came down on Monday in a chaise and four to see the place, and was so much delighted with it that he agreed with Mr Morris immediately; that he is to take possession before Michelmas, and some of his servants are to be in the house by the end of

next week.'

'What is his name?'

'Bingley.'

'Is he married or single?'

'Oh! single, my dear, to be sure! A single man of large fortune; four or five thousand a-year. What a fine thing for our girls!'

'How so? How can it affect them?'

'My dear Mr Bennet,' replied his wife. 'how can you be so tiresome! You must know that I am thinking of his marrying one of them'

'Is that his design in settling here?'

'Design! Nonsense, how can you talk so! But it is very likely that he may fall in love with one of them, and therefore you must visit him as soon as he comes.'

'I see no occasion for that. You and the girls may go, or you may send them by themselves, which perhaps will be still better, for you are as handsome as any of them, Mr Bingley might like you the best of the party.'

'My dear, you flatter me. I certainly have had my share of beauty, but I do not pretend to be anything extraordinary now. When a woman has five grown-up daughters, she ought to give over thinking of her own beauty.'

'In such cases, a woman has not often much beauty to think of.'

'But, my dear, you must indeed go and see Mr Bingley when he comes into the neighbourhood.'

'It is more than I engage for, I assure you.'

'But consider your daughters. Only think what an establishment it would be for one of them. Sir William and Lady Lucas are determined to go, merely on that account, for in general you know they visit no new comers. Indeed you must go, for it will be impossible for us to visit him if you do not.'

'You are over scrupulous, surely. I dare say Mr Bingley will be very glad to see you; and I will send a few lines by you to assure him of my hearty consent to his marrying which ever he chooses of the girls; though I must throw in a good word for my little Lizzy.'

Questions:

1. What is Mrs Bennet trying to get her husband to do?
2. Why does she want him to do this?
3. Therefore, what do you think her goal in life is?
4. How does Mr Bennet react?

5. How do you react to Mrs Bennet as a character? Do you think she is annoying? Amusing? Do you like her or not? Explain your reason.
6. How do you react to Mr Bennet as a character? Do you feel sympathetic towards him or do you feel that he is unkind? Explain your reason.

Task 4:

Now read this link about inheritance laws in Regency England:

<https://heirsandsuccesses.com/2015/10/25/pride-prejudice-entailed-land/>

Now that you have some context about inheritance laws in Regency England, answer the following questions:

Timing: (spend approximately 20 minutes doing this)

1. Why can Mr Bennet's daughters not inherit his property?
2. If Mr Bennet dies, who will inherit the property?
3. What would happen to the Bennet daughters if Mr Bennet died and they were unmarried?
4. Why do you think it is so important then for Mrs Bennet to secure her daughters a good marriage?
5. Does this contextual information change the way you feel about Mrs Bennet's character? Does it change the way you feel about Mr Bennet's character? Explain your reasons.
6. STRETCH: What problems do you think literature runs into as time passes?

Lesson 2:

Following on from the previous lesson, will look in more detail at how context can add understanding to a text. Today we will be looking at war poetry, in particular a poem from Wilfred Owen, who you've come across in the GCSE Power and Conflict poetry as he wrote 'Exposure'.

To present the work in the lesson, you can choose from one of the options below:

- Handwrite the answers and take a picture.
- Type the answers.
- Make a PowerPoint presentation of the answers.
- Record yourself talking about the answers verbally.
- Film yourself talking about the answers verbally.

Wilfred Owen (1893-1918) is known for his war poetry. He composed almost all of his poetry in slightly over a year, from August 1917 – September 1918. He was killed in November 1918 at the age of 25, one week before Armistice. Owen based the poem 'Mental Cases' on his experience of Craiglockhart Military Hospital where he was treated for neurasthenia which was a 'mechanical weakness of the nerves'. The poem recounts the devastating effects of war on men such as post-traumatic stress disorder, known at the time as 'shell shock'.



up any words you don't

know in the dictionary: www.dictionary.com

Timing: (spend approximately 20 minutes doing this)

Mental Cases

Who are these? Why sit they here in twilight?
Wherefore rock they, purgatorial shadows,
Drooping tongues from jaws that slob their relish,
Baring teeth that leer like skulls' tongues wicked?
Stroke on stroke of pain,—but what slow panic,
Gouged these chasms round their fretted sockets?
Ever from their hair and through their hand palms
Misery swelters. Surely we have perished
Sleeping, and walk hell; but who these hellish?
—These are men whose minds the Dead have ravished.
Memory fingers in their hair of murders,
Multitudinous murders they once witnessed.
Wading sloughs of flesh these helpless wander,
Treading blood from lungs that had loved laughter.
Always they must see these things and hear them,
Batter of guns and shatter of flying muscles,
Carnage incomparable and human squander
Rucked too thick for these men's extrication.

Therefore still their eyeballs shrink tormented
Back into their brains, because on their sense
Sunlight seems a bloodsmear; night comes blood-black;
Dawn breaks open like a wound that bleeds afresh
—Thus their heads wear this hilarious, hideous,
Awful falseness of set-smiling corpses.
—Thus their hands are plucking at each other;
Picking at the rope-knots of their scourging;
Snatching after us who smote them, brother,
Pawing us who dealt them war and madness.

1. The first stanza describes the men now that are back from the war. How are they depicted? How do you know? Include a quotation.
2. The second stanza describes the reality of war. What kinds of things have they witnessed? How do you know? Include a quotation.

3. The third stanza describes the trauma the men are still experiencing now they are back. How do they act? How do you know? Include a quotation.
4. STRETCH: What do you think is the purpose of this poem?

Task 2:

Click on the link and watch the following video about shell shock and then answer the questions:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvTRJZGWqF8>

Timing: (spend approximately 20 minutes doing this)

1. Approximately how many British soldiers suffered from 'shell shock' after having participated in WW1?
2. When were war symptoms first studied?
3. What was thought to be some of the causes of shell shock?
4. What was there a great reluctance to accept and why?
5. What were some the treatments?
6. How did Britain treat shell shock?
7. Who was an influential doctor in Britain and what were his theories?
8. What did the world learn long term about shell shock?
9. What did shell shock become a metaphor for?

Task 3:

Now that you have some contextual information about shell shock, answer the following questions.

Timing: (spend approximately 20 minutes doing this)

1. Owen writes this poem with particularly graphic imagery, therefore the poem can work, even if you do not know anything about shell shock. However, pick 2 lines which become more 'real' to you now that you have watched the context video. Explain in what ways knowing the context brings these lines to life.
2. The poem depicts the men as grotesque (which means monstrous). Pick three quotations that illustrate this.
3. Why do you think Owen wanted to depict the men as grotesque figures?
4. In the 21st century, we have a much better understanding of mental illness and shell shock is now known as post-traumatic stress disorder. As a 21st century reader, how might we see Owen's depiction of the men as offensive?
5. Some people have argued that "Literature only has value in its original context", which means that they are saying that literature is only useful to the people it is written for. This

means, for example, that they would argue that Owen's poem is only valuable for those who lived during WW1. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain your reason.

Lesson 3:

For the last lesson this week, we will go back to the poem 'No Thank You, John' by Christina Rossetti as this is the text you will write your assessment essay on in Week 4.

We will look at some information about Rossetti's life and the life of women in the Victorian period and then look at how this adds to our understanding of Rossetti's message and purpose in writing the poem.

To present the work in the lesson, you can choose from one of the options below:

- Handwrite the answers and take a picture.

- Type the answers.
- Make a powerpoint presentation of the answers.
- Record yourself talking about the answers verbally.
- Film yourself talking about the answers verbally.

Task 1:

Go back to your notes and work for Week One, Lesson Three and read over the poem again and your notes. Remind yourself of the big idea you chose and look over your annotations.

Timing: (spend approximately 5 minutes doing this)

Task 2:

Listen to the following podcast on Rossetti's life and work. **You only need to listen to the first 16 minutes**, although you can listen to the whole thing if you want!

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b017mvwy>

Write down the answers to the following questions as you listen:

Timing: (spend approximately 25 minutes doing this)

1. What do you learn about Rossetti's father and mother?
2. How many siblings did Rossetti have and what do you learn about them?
3. What was Rossetti like as a child?
4. What happened to Rossetti when she hit puberty and why?
5. What part of her personality remained?
6. What were Rossetti's religious views?
7. Which church did she attend, along with her mother and sister?
8. In what ways did Rossetti show her devotion to her religion?
9. How many opportunities did Rossetti have to get married?
10. Why did she not get married?
11. Who was Rossetti's first fiancé?
12. Why did she not marry him?
13. Who was the second man who proposed to her and why was he turned down?
14. Who was the third one, and again, why was Rossetti not interested in him?
15. What happened to Rossetti's health?
16. What disease did Rossetti end up suffering from later in her life?
17. What gave Rossetti the 'space' to be a writer?

Task 3:

Now watch this 7-minute video from the British Library, where a well-known historian called Kathryn Hughes talks about the expectations of women in the 19th century. Remember that these women (and men) would have been the very first readers of Rossetti's poetry.

Answer the questions below.

Timing: (spend approximately 15 minutes doing this)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkJFX8Qn90>

1. What was the sole aim for middle class women?
2. What kinds of things were middle class women expected to learn to be seen as attractive to men?
3. What was a 'Bluestocking'?
4. Why was it terrible for a woman to be considered a 'Bluestocking'?
5. What else was a middle-class girl expected to be and not to be in terms of her appearance?

Note: The next bit talks about hysteria which was a common medical diagnosis for women exhibiting a wide range of symptoms such as anxiety, panic attacks, fainting, nervousness, loss of appetite etc.

6. How did some girls find these societal expectations difficult?
7. How did Florence Nightingale react and why?
8. Who was Elizabeth Barrett Browning and what were the expectations of her?
9. How did she get time to write her poetry? How was this similar to Rossetti?
10. Who did she eventually marry?

Task 4:

Now that you have some contextual information about Rossetti and the Victorian period, let's think about how this applies to the poem.

Timing: (spend approximately 15 minutes doing this)

1. Overall, what were the expectations for Victorian women?
2. Why did Rossetti never marry at all in her life?
3. Therefore, how did Rossetti subvert (go against) societal Victorian expectations of her in her own life?

4. Pick three lines in the poem which depict a strong female speaker, who knows what she wants.
5. How does the speaker in the poem subvert (go against) societal expectations in the poem? (Hint: Think about her confident tone and what she refuses to do).
6. We know from listening to the podcast that Rossetti was deeply religious and that she put her relationship with God above any earthly relationships (relationships with men). Pick one statement from the list below that you most agree with and explain your reason:
 - By having the speaker in the poem reject 'John', Rossetti suggests that the only relationship one should have is with God.
 - By having the speaker reject 'John' in such a forceful manner, Rossetti proposes to her contemporary Victorian readers that it is possible for women to have a strong voice.
 - By having the speaker reject 'John' in such a forceful manner, Rossetti proposes to her contemporary Victorian readers that it is possible to subvert societal norms.

Week Three: The impact of criticism

This week we will be looking at criticism on texts and how it helps us to understand texts in different ways. Criticism in literature does not mean that we look at a text and say what's wrong with it. Rather, it means that we can analyse texts from different viewpoints.

Lesson 1:

In this lesson, we are going to look at what literary criticism is and how it can impact the way we read a text. In many ways, the world we live in is an opinion obsessed world. When a film is released, people write reviews of it, which can affect how many people see the film. When a song is released, people give their opinions of the song. When a new restaurant opens, a food critic will go and give their opinion on whether the food is worth eating or not. This even filters down into businesses- for example if you have a bad haircut, you can leave a review on the internet which tells people not to go to that salon. The bottom line is that other people's opinions can affect our own.

To present the work from the lesson, you can choose from one of the options below:

- Handwrite the answers and take a picture.
- Type the answers.
- Make a PowerPoint presentation of the answers.
- Record yourself talking about the answers verbally.
- Film yourself talking about the answers verbally.

Task 1:

Watch this clip from the Pixar film Ratatouille and answer the questions below:

Timing: (spend approximately 10 minutes doing this)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-JPOoFkrh94>

1. Why is the role of a critic easy?
2. What kind of criticism is the most fun to read?
3. What is the bitter truth that the critic must face?
4. When does a critic truly risk something?

Task 2:

Read the poem below and look at the explanation of the poem.

Timing: (spend approximately 15 minutes doing this)

The Soldier by Rupert Brooke

IF I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by the suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

'The Soldier' is a patriotic poem where Brooke (the poet) glorifies war. It was written in 1914 at the start of WW1. The speaker expresses their love for England which is depicted as a paradise with lots of nurturing imagery. The poet feels that England has made him who he is and is therefore worth fighting for. The speaker says that if they die in war, their spirit will return to heaven.

For more on the poem, click on the link:
<https://www.bachelorandmaster.com/britishandamericanpoetry/the-soldier.html>

Task 3:

Every person will read and understand a text in their own way. This will be based on where in the world they have grown up and the culture they have experienced. Their understanding of the text will also be influenced by what they have experienced. Therefore, when we read a text, we need to understand that there are many ways of interpreting it.

For example, imagine wearing each pair of glasses. What you see would look a bit different every time because the you are looking at things through different coloured lenses. It's the same with literature.



Let's explore this idea by interpreting the poem from four different points of view:

1. An army general
2. A conscientious objector (a person refusing to fight in war because of moral or religious reasons)
3. A mother who has lost her son in the trenches
4. A politician

Answer the questions below:

Timing: (spend approximately 25 minutes doing this)

1. Why might an army general like this poem?
2. In your opinion do you think the army general would believe everything the poet says?
3. What might a conscientious objector think about this poem?
4. STRETCH: Which lines in particular do you think the conscientious objector would have a problem with?
5. What might a mother who has lost her sons in the trenches think about this poem?
6. The poem suggests that dying for one's country is the most desirable death. Is this something the mother would agree with? Explain your views.
7. What might a politician who is aware of the realities of war think about this poem?
8. Do you think the politician would speak out against this poem before the war? Explain your views.
9. STRETCH: Some have suggested that a text no longer 'belongs' to a writer once it is published. What do you understand this to mean?
10. STRETCH: Does the writer's original intentions matter when we look at a text? Explain your views.

Lesson 2:

In this lesson, we will continue to consider the impact of criticism. We will learn about some schools of literary theory. Literary theory is a more scholarly (academic or intellectual) way of interpreting a text.

To present the work from the lesson, you can choose from one of the options below:

- Handwrite the answers and take a picture.
- Type the answers.
- Make a PowerPoint presentation of the answers.
- Record yourself talking about the answers verbally.
- Film yourself talking about the answers.

Task 1:

Read the examples of literary theory below and answer the questions:

Timing: (spend approximately 30 minutes doing this)

Feminist criticism:

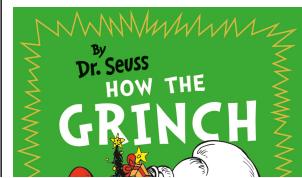
Feminist critics believe that the idea of gender 'male' and 'female' is constructed (built up) by culture and society. They believe it is important to be aware of this when reading texts from periods and cultures of their own. They are interested to analyse how women are depicted (shown) in literature written by men especially, and how the text reinforces gender stereotypes.



1. How is Sleeping Beauty depicted in this image? (Hint- think about it in terms of gender)
2. How does her depiction reinforce gender stereotypes? (Hint- think about what the picture is suggesting about relationships between men and women)
3. Who has more power in this relationship? How do you know?
4. STRETCH: Is there anything else problematic you can see in the picture? Explain your views.

Psychoanalytic criticism:

A psychoanalytic reading is interested in the unconscious mind. They pay most attention to what is glossed over or 'repressed' (think about Hyde being the repressed side of



1. What might have happened in the grinch's life that makes him hate Christmas?
2. What emotions might Christmas bring up for the grinch?



Moral criticism:

A moral reading looks at what a text teaches us. It believes that literature is nothing unless it teaches its reader something and helps them to become better people. They think that all good literature is moral and uplifting.

1. Think about 'An Inspector Calls'. What do we learn from the play?
2. What does Priestley want the audience to leave the play thinking about?
3. STRETCH: A moral viewpoint is one that thinks that literature is only worthy if it helps us to become better people. Do you agree with this? Explain your views.

Task 2:

Let's now apply these schools of literary theory to Rupert Brook's poem 'The Soldier' that we looked at last lesson.

The Soldier by Rupert Brooke

IF I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by the suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Timing: (spend approximately 30 minutes doing this)

Feminist reading:

1. Which gender is England portrayed as?
2. Look at the line highlighted in yellow. The poet here is saying that England created him and nurtured him. England is also depicted as being 'gentle'. Why might a feminist critic find these lines problematic?

Hints:

- How are women stereotyped in general?
- How is the figure of 'England' being stereotyped here?
- How does the portrayal of England in this poem reinforce gender stereotypes?

Psychoanalytic reading:

1. How is war portrayed in this poem?
2. What emotions could the poet be repressing (pushing down) and why?

Hint

- Who is the speaker/what is their job?
- What might they have witnessed?
- How might this have made them feel?
- Why don't they want to acknowledge this?

STRETCH:

Moral reading:

1. What do you think a moral critic might have to say about this poem?

Hint:

- Do you think that reading this poem teaches us something?
- Do you think our reaction to it may be different to someone reading this during WW1?
- Why is moral criticism problematic? (Think about your morals compared to other people's morals.)

Lesson 3:

For the last lesson this week, we will go back again to the poem 'No Thank You, John' by Christina Rossetti as this is the text you will write your assessment essay on in Week 4.

We will look at the poem through different lenses and see if we can apply different readings to the poem.

To present the work in the lesson, you can choose from one of the options below:

- Handwrite the answers and take a picture.
- Type the answers.
- Make a powerpoint presentation of the answers.
- Record yourself talking about the answers verbally.
- Film yourself talking about the answers verbally.

Task 1:

Go back to your notes and work for Week One, Lesson Three and Week Two, Lesson Three and read over the poem again and your notes. Remind yourself of the big idea you chose and look over your annotations. Remind yourself of the context of the poem, Rossetti's life and the Victorian period.

Timing: (spend approximately 10 minutes doing this)

Task 2:

In this task, we're going to think about how we can apply different literary theory to the poem and look at it through different lenses. Answer the questions below.

Timing: (spend approximately 30 minutes doing this)

Feminist reading:

1. How does the speaker in this poem behave towards 'John'?
2. How does the character of John behave towards the speaker?
3. How does the speaker subvert (go against) gender stereotypes?
4. STRETCH: Do you think that 'John' subverts (goes against) gender stereotypes? Justify your answer with a reason.

Moral reading:

1. What do you think the poem is teaching its readers about independence?
2. Who might approve of this message in Victorian society and why?
3. Who might disapprove of this message in Victorian society and why?
4. Who might approve of this message in the 21st century (our own society) and why?

STRETCH:

Psychoanalytic reading:

1. Find 2 lines where you think the speaker is aggressively rejecting John.

In Victorian society, chastity (no sexual activity before marriage) was the greatest virtue that women should aspire to. Sex education did not exist, and young women often entered marriage with very little idea of what sex involved. Women with deeply repressed sexual desires often experienced psychological issues which were labelled as 'hysteria'. Remember that Rossetti became very ill at 14 and was sent to a gynaecologist (a doctor for the female reproductive system). He prescribed that she should spend more time reading religious texts. Rossetti did this and it helped, but it was also seen to exacerbate (worsen) her fear of sexuality.

2. Why might the speaker in the poem be rejecting John in such an aggressive, defensive manner? (Hint- What fears might she have repressed?)
3. Read through the poem again. Does the speaker here seem hysterical (panic-stricken)? Find lines to show that she is hysterical, OR lines to show that she is not hysterical.

Task 3:

We don't just need to pay attention to literary theory when applying different readings to a text. We can also respond to what other people say about the text. These people are called literary critics, and they give their opinion of a text. We can then agree or disagree with them.

For each statement below, find a couple of lines from the poem which you think could back up the statement.

Timing: (spend approximately 20 minutes doing this)

1. Simon Avery (professor of English) says: '**What this poem asserts is the woman's right to say 'no' and to claim independence and agency (power) for herself. Certainly, she is not to be bullied into a relationship because a man or social convention more generally demands it.'**

2. Gaynell Galt (professor of English) says '**Rossetti effortlessly and sharply convinces her audience that she is a woman whom the conventions of society could not shake in any area; that she had her own agenda in life.**'
3. STRETCH- Simon Avery: '**The speaker deploys impeccable (faultless) logic and turns John's own arguments against him.**'

Week Four: Writing the essay

This week we will be pulling everything we have done together to write an essay on Rossetti's poem 'No, Thank You, John'. You will write about the big ideas in the poem as well as analysing methods and evaluating the impact of context and criticism on your understanding.

Lesson 1:

In this lesson, you are going to write the first section of your essay on 'No Thank You, John.' Please use the guiding questions to help you write the essay- that is what they're there for. The essay question is:

Give a detailed analysis of 'No, Thank You, John' by Christina Rossetti, focusing on big ideas, methods, context and criticism.

To present the work from the lesson, you can choose from one of the options below:

- Handwrite the section and take a picture.
- Type the essay.

Task 1:

Go back to your notes and work for Week One, Lesson Three and read over the poem again and your notes. Remind yourself of the big idea you chose and look over your annotations.

Timing: (spend approximately 10 minutes doing this)

Task 2:

You will now be writing the first section of your essay which is on the big ideas and methods used in 'No, Thank You, John. Feel free to use the support questions below to guide you. **Answer the questions in full sentences and in one paragraph (as though you were writing an essay).**

Timing: (spend approximately 40 minutes doing this)

Word Count: This section should be around 250-300 words.

Paragraph 1:

1. Who wrote 'No Thank You, John'?
2. What is this poem about? (No more than 2 sentences here).
3. What is the big idea/big ideas in this poem?
4. Explain why you believe this is the big idea/s for the poem.
5. Now you are going to discuss the 4 methods that you picked out in Week 1 Lesson 3, and discuss their effect. You want to try to be as detailed as possible here in your analysis (think about how you might write in a GCSE English Literature essay). Below are some support sentences to help you although feel free to ignore these and analyse the methods you found yourself in the poem.

Support starter sentences:

- In order to convey this idea, Rossetti uses a number of key methods.
- Rossetti has chosen to use the dramatic monologue form to... because...
- Moreover, Rossetti has chosen to use a regular ABAB rhyme scheme throughout to... as it symbolises...
- Rossetti uses the semantic field of ... which foregrounds the idea that... as the noun/verb/adjective/adverb '...' evokes an image of/has connotations of... . This signifies that...
- Rossetti uses the simile, '...' which compares... to This evokes an image of... which amplifies the idea that...
- The use of the repetition with the words '...' emphasises the idea that...
- Rossetti uses rhetorical questions in the lines '...' to signify that...
- Rossetti creates a ... tone in the poem through the semantic field/imagery of... which evoke an image of.../have connotations of...

Task 3:

Technical accuracy is extremely important at A-level. Please proofread through your work now, correcting any spelling or grammatical errors.

Timing: (spend approximately 10 minutes doing this)

Lesson 2:

In this lesson, you are going to write the second section of your essay on 'No, Thank You, John.' Please do continue to use the guiding questions to help you write the essay- that is what they are there for.

To present the work from the lesson, you can choose from one of the options below:

- Handwrite the section and take a picture.
- Type the essay.

Task 1:

Go back to your notes and work for Week Two, Lesson Three and read over the notes you made on the context of the poem.

Timing: (spend approximately 5 minutes doing this)

Task 2:

You will now be writing the second section of your essay which is on context of the Victorian period and of Rossetti's life, which influenced the ideas in 'No, Thank You, John. Feel free to use the support questions below to guide you. **Answer the questions in full sentences and in paragraphs (as though you were writing an essay).**

Timing: (spend approximately 45 minutes doing this- 15 minutes per paragraph)

Word Count: This section should be around 300-350 words.

Paragraph 2: Rossetti's life

Optional starter sentence: Rossetti's experiences in life appear to have influenced the ideas in the poem.

1. What was Rossetti like as a child?
2. What happened to Rossetti when she hit puberty and why?
3. What part of her personality remained?
4. What were Rossetti's religious views?
5. Which church did she attend, along with her mother and sister?
6. In what ways did Rossetti show her devotion to her religion?
7. How many opportunities did Rossetti have to get married?
8. Why did she not get married?
9. Who was Rossetti's first fiancé?
10. Why did she not marry him?
11. Who was the second man who proposed to her and why was he turned down?
12. Who was the third one, and again, why was Rossetti not interested in him?
13. What happened to Rossetti's health?
14. What disease did Rossetti end up suffering from later in her life?
15. What gave Rossetti the 'space' to be a writer?

Paragraph 3: The Victorian period

Optional starter sentence: Moreover, Rossetti lived in the Victorian period where the expectations for women were very constraining (entrapping).

1. What was the sole aim for middle class women?
2. What kinds of things were middle class women expected to learn in order to be seen as attractive to men?
3. What was a 'Bluestocking'?
4. Why was it terrible for a woman to be considered a 'Bluestocking'?
5. What else was a middle-class girl expected to be and not to be in terms of her appearance?
6. How did some girls find these societal expectations difficult?

Paragraph 4: How the context influences your understanding of the poem

Optional starter sentence: Therefore, our understanding of the context in which Rossetti was writing influences our understanding of the poem.

1. Overall, what were the expectations for Victorian women?

2. Why did Rossetti never marry at all in her life?
3. How did Rossetti subvert (go against) societal Victorian expectations of her in her own life?
4. How does the speaker in the poem subvert (go against) societal expectations in the poem?
(Hint: Think about her confident tone and what she refuses to do). Quote three lines in the poem which depict a strong female speaker, who knows what she wants.

Task 3:

Technical accuracy is extremely important at A-level. Please proofread through your work now, correcting any spelling or grammatical errors.

Timing: (spend approximately 10 minutes doing this)

Lesson 3:

In this lesson, you are going to write the third and final part of your essay on 'No Thank You, John.' Please do continue to use the guiding questions to help you write the essay- that is what they are there for.

To present the work from the lesson, you can choose from one of the options below:

- Handwrite the section and take a picture.
- Type the essay.

Task 1:

Go back to your work for Week Three, Lesson Three and read over the notes you made on the criticism for the poem.

Timing: (spend approximately 5 minutes doing this)

Task 2:

You will now be writing the third section of your essay which is on the different ways we can read and understand the poem depending on criticism. Feel free to use the support questions below to guide you. **Answer the questions in full sentences and in paragraphs (as though you were writing an essay).**

Timing: (spend approximately 45 minutes doing this- 15 minutes per paragraph)

Word Count: This section should be around 200-300 words.

Paragraph 5: A feminist reading

Optional starter sentence: The poem can also be understood in different ways, depending on which critical lens we apply when reading it. A feminist critic would say that...

1. How does the speaker in this poem behave towards 'John'?
2. How does the character of John behave towards the speaker?
3. How does the speaker subvert (go against) gender stereotypes?
4. STRETCH: Do you think that 'John' subverts (goes against) gender stereotypes? Justify your answer with a reason.

Paragraph 6: A moral reading

Optional starter sentence: We can also apply a moral reading to the poem.

1. What do you think the poem is teaching its readers about independence?
2. Who might approve of this message in Victorian society and why?
3. Who might disapprove of this message in Victorian society and why?
4. Who might approve of this message in the 21st century (our own society) and why?

STRETCH- Optional paragraph: A psychoanalytic reading

Optional starter sentence: However, a psychoanalytic critic may read the poem differently.

1. What was the greatest virtue women should aspire to in the Victorian period?
2. How much sex education were women given?
3. What was 'hysteria'?
4. What happened to Rossetti when she was 14?
5. What did the gynaecologist prescribe and what was the effect on Rossetti?
6. Why might the speaker in the poem be rejecting John in such an aggressive, defensive manner? (What fears might she have repressed?)
7. Which lines in the poem convey that the speaker is hysterical or not hysterical?

Paragraph 7: Criticism from individuals

Optional starter sentence: Lastly, we may also be influenced by the opinions of literary critics.

1. What does Simon Avery say about the poem? (Use his first statement)
2. Which line backs up his statement?
3. What does Gaynell Galt say about the poem?
4. Which line backs up her opinion?
5. STRETCH: What is Simon Avery's second opinion about the poem?
6. STRETCH: Which line/s back up his opinion.
7. What is your overall opinion of the text?

Task 3:

Technical accuracy is extremely important at A-level. Please proofread through your work now, correcting any spelling or grammatical errors. Please read back through your other sections as well to proofread these again.

Timing: (spend approximately 10 minutes doing this)

Final note:

Well done, Year 11, for completing the English Literature A-level bridging pack.

If you are accepted onto the A-level, you should read *The Great Gatsby*: <https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=bWVubG9hdGhlcnRvbmhzLmNvbXxtcnMtYmVyZ2hvdXNlWVuZ2xpc2gtMjAxM3xneDo0MjM5ZDN1njFINjExM2Ey> and *A Doll's House*: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/2542/2542-h/2542-h.htm> over the summer as they are the first texts we will study.

If you are planning to take English Literature A-level or would like to do further reading, please see the optional reading list below.

Year 12 Reading List

Set texts for Year 12:

- *The Great Gatsby* - F. Scott Fitzgerald
- *A Doll's House*- Henrik Ibsen
- *A Streetcar Named Desire* – Tennessee Williams
- *The World's Wife*- Carol Ann Duffy
- *Poetry Collection* – Christina Rossetti
- *The Tempest* – William Shakespeare

Further Wider Reading Suggestions:

Poetry and prose 1800-1945

Prose:

Mary Shelley- *Frankenstein*
Charlotte Bronte- *Jane Eyre*, *Villette*
Oscar Wilde- *The Picture of Dorian Gray*
Joseph Conrad- *The Secret Agent*
Virginia Woolf- *Mrs Dalloway*, *The Waves*

Richard Yates – *Revolutionary Road*
Tennessee Williams – *The Glass Menagerie*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*
William Faulkner – *The Sound and the Fury*
Mark Twain – *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
Arthur Miller – *Death of a Salesman*, *The Crucible*, *All my sons*
Joseph Heller - *Catch 22*
John Steinbeck – *The Grapes of Wrath*
Ernest Hemingway – *A Farewell to Arms*, *The Sun also Rises*, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*
F Scott Fitzgerald- *Tender is the Night*

Jane Austen- *Pride and Prejudice*, *Persuasion*
Charles Dickens- *Great Expectations*, *David Copperfield*, *The Tale of Two Cities*,
Thomas Hardy- *Far from the Madding Crowd*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, *Jude the Obscure*
Kate Chopin- *The Awakening*
Charlotte Gilman Perkins- *The Yellow Wallpaper*
Henry James- *The Awkward Age*, *The Portrait of a Lady*
D H Lawrence- *Lady Chatterley's Lover*
E M Forster- *A Room with a View*, *Howard's End*
Edith Wharton- *The Age of Innocence*

Poetry:

Emily Dickinson
Edward Thomas

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Robert Browning

Alfred Tennyson

Complementary literary critical texts:

Montgomery/Durant/Fabb/Furniss/Mills – *Ways of Reading*, Routledge

Malcolm Peet and David Robinson – *Leading Questions: a Course in Literary Appreciation*, Nelson

Robert Eaglestone – *Doing English*, Routledge

David Lodge – *The Art of Fiction*, Penguin

Terry Eagleton – *How to Read Literature*

