

English
Literature
'A' level

Introduction

Welcome to your 'A' level English Literature course. This Introduction should provide you with all the information you need to make a successful start to your studies.

The Specification (or Syllabus)

This course has been designed to give you a full and thorough preparation for the AS level or A level English Literature A specification, set by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA). The specification gives you two options: with or without coursework. This course pack is designed for students who are **not** doing coursework.

The **Subject Code** for entry to the AS only award is **5741**.

The **Subject Code** for entry to the A level award is **6741**.

Private Candidates

The AQA specification is open to private candidates. Private candidates should contact AQA for a copy of '*Information for Private Candidates*'.



Oxford Open Learning

Arrangement of Lessons

Introductory Module: Literary Analysis

Lesson 1	Imagery
Lesson 2	The Sounds of Language
Tutor-marked Assignment A	
Lesson 3	Characters
Lesson 4	Descriptive Writing
Tutor-marked Assignment B	
Lesson 5	Point of View
Lesson 6	Tone of Voice
Tutor-marked Assignment C	
Lesson 7	Feelings
Tutor-marked Assignment D	

AS Modules

Module One: The Modern Novel

Margaret Atwood *The Handmaid's Tale*

Lesson 8	Overview
Lesson 9	Sections I-VII
Tutor-marked Assignment E	
Lesson 10	Sections VIII-XI
Tutor-marked Assignment F	
Lesson 11	Sections XII-XV and the 'Historical Notes'
Lesson 12	Conclusion
Tutor-marked Assignment G	

Module Two: Shakespeare

William Shakespeare *The Taming of the Shrew*

Lesson 13	Introduction to the Study of Shakespeare
Lesson 14	First Close Reading
Lesson 15	Structure, Characters and Themes
Tutor-marked Assignment H	
Lesson 16	Sources, Text and Language
Tutor-marked Assignment I	
Lesson 17	Metre, Imagery and Key Passages
Tutor-marked Assignment J	

Module Three: Texts in Context

Brian Friel: *Making History* (2004 onwards)
and *Three Victorian Poets*(2004 only) or Thomas Hardy:
Selected Poems (from 2005)

Lesson 18	<i>Making History</i> : Making the Plot: Act I
Lesson 19	<i>Making History</i> : Text in Context: Act II
Lesson 20	<i>Making History</i> : Character-making
Tutor-marked Assignment K	

Lesson 21 *Making History*: Making History, etc

Tutor-marked Assignment L

Lesson 22 *Three Victorian Poets*: Alfred, Lord Tennyson, or
Introduction to Hardy's Poetry

Lesson 23 *Three Victorian Poets*: Elizabeth Barrett Browning, or
Hardy looking out at the World

Tutor-marked Assignment M

Lesson 24 *Three Victorian Poets*: Robert Browning, or
Hardy looking inwards at his Experience

Tutor-marked Assignment N

A2 Modules

Module Four: Texts in Time

William Shakespeare *Othello* and John Keats *Selected Poems*

Lesson 25 *Othello*: a Domestic Tragedy

Lesson 26 *Othello*: Characters, Style and Imagery

Tutor-marked Assignment O

Lesson 27 *Othello*: the Double Time Scheme

Tutor-marked Assignment P

Lesson 28 Keats: the Narrative Poems

Lesson 29 Keats: the Great Odes

Tutor-marked Assignment Q

Lesson 30 'The Fall of Hyperion' and Keats' Life

Tutor-marked Assignment R

Module Five: Literary Connections

Thomas Hardy: *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and John Fowles: *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (from 2005)

Lesson 31 *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*: Introduction to the Novel

Lesson 32 Hardy's Characterisation

Tutor-marked Assignment S

Lesson 33 *Style and Irony*

Tutor-marked Assignment T

Lesson 34 Introduction to *The French Lieutenant's Woman*

Lesson 35 Fowles's Style and Narrative Technique

Tutor-marked Assignment U

Lesson 36 Comparing the Two Texts

Tutor-marked Assignment V

Module Six: Reading for Meaning - War in Literature

Lesson 37 War in Literature

Lesson 38 Prose and Drama of the First World War

Tutor-marked Assignment W

Lesson 39 Poetry of the First World War

Tutor-marked Assignment X

Set Texts

Introductory Module

'Literary Analysis'

no set text: covers a wide range of unseen literary material

Module 1 'The Modern Novel'

set text: Margaret Atwood: *The Handmaid's Tale* (Vintage)

Module 2 'Shakespeare Written Unit'

set text: William Shakespeare: *The Taming of the Shrew*

Module 3 'Texts in Context'

set texts: Brian Friel: *Making History* (Faber & Faber)

and Ogborn (ed.): *Three Victorian Poets* (Cambridge University Press)

(last set in 2004) **or** Thomas Hardy: *Selected Poetry* (Everyman, ed. Norman Page (first set in 2005))

Module 4 'Texts in Time'

set texts: William Shakespeare: *Othello*

and John Keats: *Selected Poems* (Penguin, ed. Barnard)

Module 5 'Literary Connections'

set texts: Thomas Hardy: *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (Penguin)

and John Fowles: *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (Penguin)

Module 6 'Reading for Meaning'

'War in Literature' with special reference to the First World War

no set texts: module based on reading list, unseen prose, poetry and drama

One easy way of acquiring accompanying textbooks is through the Oxford Open Learning website (www.ool.co.uk).

Further Reading

Do not be deceived into thinking that you will do well in 'A' level English Literature simply by studying the set books carefully. As with all 'A' levels, it is important to read around the subject. The assessment objectives of your course (see below) specifically require that you compare the responses of different readers, and that you show some understanding of the historical and cultural background of your texts. Each of the modules will give you suggestions for supporting reading which is appropriate to the study of that particular set book. Your tutor may also be able to advise you on what else you should be reading.

The only books you will have to buy are the set texts themselves; the purchase of supplementary reading books is optional. Indeed, some of the supplementary reading will have gone out of print and so be unavailable in the shops. Your local library should be able to help you get hold of the supplementary texts.

Your ability to write English well is particularly important as far as the examiners are concerned. It may be that you need an extra course on essay-writing skills. Alternatively, there are a number of good textbooks which would help you with this. Any good library or bookshop should be able to help you to find an appropriate book, should you require one.

Aims and Objectives of the Course

This course has been designed and written with the purpose of preparing you to sit and *pass* the Advanced Subsidiary (AS) and the Advanced Level (A2) English Literature Examination of the AQA (Assessment and Qualifications Alliance).

The AS examination (modules 1, 2 and 3) will assess a candidate's ability to:

1. communicate clearly the knowledge, understanding and insight appropriate to literary study, using appropriate terminology and accurate and coherent written expression;
- 2i. respond with knowledge and understanding to literary texts of different types and periods;
3. show detailed understanding of the ways in which writers' choices of form, structure and language shape meanings;
4. articulate independent opinions and judgements, informed by different interpretations of literary texts by other readers;
- 5i. show understanding of the contexts in which literary texts are written and understood.

The A2 level examination (modules 4, 5 and 6) will assess a candidate's ability to:

1. communicate clearly the knowledge, understanding and insight appropriate to literary study, using appropriate terminology and accurate and coherent written expression;
- 2ii. respond with knowledge and understanding to literary texts of different types and periods, exploring and commenting on relationships and comparisons between literary texts;
3. show detailed understanding of the ways in which writers' choices of form, structure and language shape meanings;
4. articulate independent opinions and judgements, informed by different interpretations of literary texts by other readers;

- 5iii. evaluate the significance of cultural, historical and other contextual influences on literary texts and study.

The syllabus also emphasises the importance of the quality of candidates' written work (spelling, grammar, punctuation, legibility, use of appropriate form and style, use of specialist vocabulary).

Using the Course Materials

The Oxford Open Learning course gives you considerable help with all six modules on the specification. After the additional introductory module, in which a variety of literary and critical skills are revised, the course follows the syllabus, starting with Module One, 'The Modern Novel', and ending with Module Six, 'War in Literature'.

You are advised to work through the course in the order in which the modules occur. However, it would be a good idea to get hold of a copy of each of your set texts early on in your studies, and read all of these from beginning to end as soon as possible. This means that when you come to study a particular book in detail, its general outline will already be familiar to you.

You should aim to read each set text from beginning to end at least twice, and preferably three times during your course of study. By the time you write the exams, you should be thoroughly familiar with the contents of each text. Remember that you will also need to read some criticism and some historical background, so altogether you have a lot of reading ahead of you.

You will find that there are generally three or four TMAs in each of the modules. Your answers should normally be submitted to your tutor for marking. When the marked script is returned, you should receive a set of Suggested Answers.

Besides the TMAs there are a number of self-assessment tests (SATs) to be found at certain points in the course, usually at the ends of lessons. *It is vital that you undertake these as full-scale written work.* Only after you have done what is asked to the best of your ability should you look at the Suggested Answers provided. Probably the single most important thing about English Literature 'A' level is that *you should form your own judgements* on what you study. It is no use regurgitating somebody else's opinion, even if you have found it in these lessons! It is difficult to argue a point well unless you have thought of it for yourself and *believe* in it. Have the courage to form your own opinions.

In addition, there are many, many activities throughout the course, located within the lessons. These are smaller pieces of work, usually requiring brief written answers. You will see that there is a space immediately beneath the activity for you to write in the answer. The

size of the space is a clue to how much you might write, but do not be afraid to continue on a separate piece of paper. Suggested answers are usually given at the end of the lesson but most activities are open-ended and you may well have produced very different answers. The important thing is that you actively engage with the text. The work you do in the boxes is evidence of your active study and it will also help when you come to revise your work for the examination, taking you back to your train of thought at an earlier date and organising your notes for you.

The Suggested Answers (in particular, the TMA answers) demonstrate the writing style and level of detail you should be aiming for. The standard of the answers is purposefully high. This is the standard you will be working towards, and tutors will not necessarily be expecting you to be writing at this level in the early stages of the course. To ensure that you are actively working towards the style of writing required, it will be useful to read the Suggested Answers in conjunction with the section on Essay Writing Skills at the end of this Introduction.

You will need to plan your study timetable carefully. You should aim to complete your basic studies at least two months before you plan to take the examination, in order to leave you ample time for revision. Most modules will give you further advice on how to plan your revision although there is no one method that will suit everybody.

The 'AS' level and A level System

Students should be aware that the 'A' level system in the UK was changed in 2000. As a result, all the awarding bodies, including AQA (which brought together the old AEB and NEAB exam groups) introduced new Advanced Subsidiary (AS) as well as revised Advanced ('A') level specifications and examinations across the full subject range.

The Advanced Subsidiary (AS) Level

Advanced Subsidiary (AS) courses may be used in one of two ways:

- As a final qualification, allowing candidates to broaden their studies and to defer questions about specialism;
- As the first half (50%) of an Advanced Level qualification, which must be completed before an Advanced Level award can be made.

Advanced Subsidiary is designed to provide an appropriate assessment of knowledge, understanding and skills expected of candidates who have completed the first half of a full Advanced Level Qualification.

The Advanced Level (AS + A2)

The Advanced Level examination is in two parts:

Advanced Subsidiary (AS) - 50% of the total award;
A second examination, called A2 - 50% of the total award

Most Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced level courses are modular. The AS level normally comprises three teaching and learning modules and the A2 comprises a further three teaching and learning modules. These modules generally match the Units of Assessment (or Exam Papers).

Examination Flexibility

The new style 'A' levels allow for more flexibility in the taking of exams. The two most popular options are:

- AS is completed at the end of one year and A2 at the end of the second year;
- AS and A2 are completed at the end of the same year.

Both of these options are open to students following this course as it is divided into two halves and follows the same modular sequence as the specification.

Grading and Shelf-Life

The **grading system** has not changed much from the old 'A' level system. For both AS level and the full 'A' level qualification, there is a 5-grade scale: A, B, C, D and E. Candidates who fail to reach the minimum standard for Grade E will be recorded as U (unclassified).

The **shelf-life** of the results, prior to the award of the qualification, is limited only by the shelf-life of the specification. As long as the specification stays in its present form, grades can therefore be carried forward indefinitely.

The Examination Structure

The 6741 syllabus examined in 2003 and later years requires candidates to take six modules. The first three modules make up the AS exam (5741). The second three modules complete the 'A' level exam (6741). Your course pack follows the order and numbering of the syllabus modules exactly, except that there is also an introductory module designed to your critical and analytical skills in preparation for the detailed study of your set texts.

The exam board offers several options for set texts within each module. The reference in the examination structure below to, for example, 'One question from a choice of two' indicates that there will be two possible questions for the particular text you have been studying.

This information is correct at the time of publication but may be subject to change. Prior to the examination, students should contact the exam board for the latest information.

AS Examination

Unit 1 (1 hour) (exam entry code: LTA1)
 (30% of total AS marks, 15% of total 'A' level marks)
 'The Modern Novel'
 set text: Margaret Atwood: *The Handmaid's Tale* (Vintage)
 One question from a choice of two
 (**closed** book exam: copy of set text is **not** permitted)

Unit 2 (1 hour) (exam entry code: LA2W)
 (30% of total AS marks, 15% of total 'A' level marks)
 'Shakespeare Written Unit'
 set text: William Shakespeare: *The Taming of the Shrew*
 One question from a choice of two
 (**open** book exam: copy of set text **is** permitted)

Unit 3 (2 hours) (exam entry code: LTA3)
 (40% of total AS marks, 20% of total 'A' level marks)
 'Texts in Context'
 set texts: Tom Stoppard: *Arcadia* (Faber & Faber) (set for the last time in 2003) OR Brian Friel: *Making History* (Faber & Faber) (set for the first time in 2004)

and Ogborn (ed.): *Three Victorian Poets* (Cambridge University Press)
 Two equally-weighted questions: one on drama and one on poetry
 Section A: Drama - One question from a choice of two
 Section B: Poetry - One question from a choice of two
 (**open** book exam: copies of set texts **are** permitted)

A2 Examination

Unit 4 (2 hours) (exam entry code: LTA4)

(15% of total 'A' level marks)

'Texts in Time'

set texts: William Shakespeare: *Othello*

and John Keats: *Selected Poems* (Penguin, ed. Barnard)

Two equally-weighted questions: one on drama and one poetry

Section A: Drama Pre-1770 – One question from a choice of two

Section B: Poetry Pre-1990 – One question from a choice of two

(closed book exam: copies of set texts are **not** permitted)

Unit 5 (1½ hours) (exam entry code: LA5W)

(15% of total 'A' level marks)

'Literary Connections' – Time and Place

set texts: Thomas Hardy: *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*

and John Fowles: *The French Lieutenant's Woman*

This Unit is made up of three areas of literary study, one of which is Time and Place. There are with two options offered within each area. These set texts are linked to the 'Perspectives on Nineteenth Century England' option.

One question, which will focus on the comparison of the two texts.

(open book exam: copies of set texts **are** permitted)

Unit 6 (3 hours) (exam entry code: LTA6)

(20% of total 'A' level marks)

'Reading for Meaning'

'War in Literature' with special reference to the First World War

One compulsory question with several tasks based on a collection of unprepared material.

No set texts.

Studying the Syllabus

You should be sure to acquire your own copy of the syllabus, either via the AQA Publications Dept or from the website www.aqa.org.uk.

The syllabus can be purchased from

Publications,
AQA, Aldon House,
39, Heald Grove,
Rusholme,
Manchester

M14 4NA (tel: 0161-953-1170)

or downloaded from www.aqa.org.uk/qual/pdf/AQA6741WSP.pdf.

We advise that you obtain a copy of the syllabus so that you can assess which topics you have covered in the most detail and which ones you will feel happiest about in the exam. AQA can also provide advice booklets on your course, including 'Supplementary Guidance

for Private Candidates'. As you approach the examination, it will also be helpful to purchase and tackle past papers from AQA.

Using the Internet

All students would benefit from access to the Internet. You will find a wealth of information on all the topics in your course. As well as the AQA website (www.aqa.org.uk), you should get into the habit of checking the Oxford Open Learning site (www.ool.co.uk) where you may find news, additional resources and interactive features as time goes by. If you have not already done so, you may register for your free copy of *How to Study at Home*, our 200-page guide to home learning, or enrol on further courses. Put it on your Favourites list now!

Further Guidance

Essay Writing Skills

Being able to write a literature essay is an important skill for success at English Literature A level. Your essays and literary responses need to be coherent and well-expressed, and although a sophisticated style cannot make up for lack of content, strands of the assessment criteria do refer to the *way* your answers are written. Candidates are expected to be able to communicate their knowledge, understanding, opinions and judgements in an appropriately confident, formal and accurate style. It is recommended that you treat all appropriate self-assessment tests, as well as TMAs, as formal opportunities to practise essay writing.

Steps to a Successful Essay

Thinking

Do not expect to be able to write your essay in one session. Ideally, you should read the task instructions or the essay title one or two days before you begin work on the essay. Go back over the lessons and any advice you have received from your tutor. Build the time needed for this part of the process into your learning programme. Give yourself time to understand exactly what is being asked. Read and re-read the title, highlighting key words and checking the meaning of any terminology used. Your 'thinking' time should also include brainstorming the answer (mentally or, preferably, on paper) so that by the time you get to the planning stage you should be beginning to select material to include in your writing.

Planning

Whether you plan on paper or using a word-processor, be aware that this is an essential stage in producing a well-structured, appropriately detailed essay. It is important to practise planning so that you can do it as effectively in exam situations. By the time you finish planning, you should have clear ideas about:

- i) the number of points you are going to include, and notes of textual evidence you are going to use in your answer
- ii) the order of the points you are going to make, remembering that the aim should be to:
 - use your introduction to set up the position you are taking or the argument at the heart of the essay
 - base the main part of your essay around a sequence of clear points, all supported with textual reference
 - conclude powerfully, presenting an overview of your argument and ending on a challenging, punchy note.

Writing

If you have given sufficient time to thinking and planning, the actual writing of the essay will be easier. Try writing your first draft quite quickly, following your plan. Your second draft is the time to refine choices of expression and proofread your work so that spelling, sentence structure, punctuation and paragraphing are accurate. Do not try to adopt a style that is unfamiliar to you; it is better to express your ideas clearly and simply. Avoid over-complicated sentence structures and vocabulary, although you will need to use some specialist terminology correctly. Keep referring to your plan and keep re-reading as you write to make sure you are answering the question. Be aware of the need for a clear structure and focus:

i) **Structure**

Coherence and clarity will only be achieved if you link paragraphs and shape the essay so that the reader feels guided through the argument. You can get ideas about how to do this from the Suggested Answers. Use phrases to signpost the direction of your discussion (such as 'In addition', 'However', 'Nevertheless', 'On the other hand').

ii) **Focus**

Do not stray too far from the title. Each paragraph should add to the sense that you are building towards an argument. Embed one-word and short-phrase quotations into your sentences, interspersing this type of "shorthand quotation" with longer references to text. Remember that marks are awarded for analysis and think very carefully before quoting more than two lines of poetry or two sentences from a prose text. Follow the 'point + evidence + analysis / evaluation' model you will find in the answers provided.

Following these steps each time you complete a task or essay should ensure that these techniques become second nature to you. Obviously, in an exam situation there is a need to work more quickly, but do not be tempted to miss out the thinking and planning stages, or you will risk compromising the quality of your response.

Good luck!

Examinations in Other Years

All exam boards, including AQA, change their set texts every few years, although not usually all at once. This course is designed primarily for students taking all their examinations in **2005**. If this does not fit your plan, or your plan changes, you will need to consult the specification to check that the right texts (for you) are being examined in the right year. It is likely that OOL will be able to supply you with additional modules for a supplementary fee.

The only changes between 2004 and 2005 that need concern us relate to Units Three and Five.

Unit Three: Thomas Hardy: *Selected Poems* is examined for the first time in 2005. *Three Victorian Poets* is the set text (for 2004) that was replaced. An alternative OOL module is available for this text if you decide to take this AS Unit in 2004 after all.

Unit Five: 'Perspectives on Nineteenth Century England' is a new theme, examined for the first time in 2005. If you are definitely taking the Unit 5 exam in 2004, you will need to ask for the alternative OOL module on 'Visions of the Future', covering Huxley's *Brave New World* and Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

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