

English Literature

A level English Literature builds on the skills, knowledge and understanding established at GCSE. It is a rigorous and demanding course which develops your analytical technique.

A Level English Literature students have enquiring minds and a thirst for knowledge. At Teignmouth Community School we study the OCR Specification. The English Department delivers quality A Level teaching which aims to stretch and challenge our students. We are committed to your progress and achievement and provide focused lessons which enable you to develop your understanding of literature in a supportive and motivating environment. However, you will be expected to take a greater responsibility for your own learning – organising your workload and time management to ensure that you meet all deadlines.

Independent Learning Task

Over the summer holidays you are expected to complete the following independent learning task to show that you are committed to taking the course. This work will help your teachers to assess your prior knowledge and will help you and your teacher set personal targets for improvement. It will also contribute to the judgment made during the probation period in September.

The work is due in on your first English lesson in September.

You will need to read both extracts and annotate them.

You should then produce a critical essay about one of the extracts. This should be between 1000 – 1200 words.

Remember to use the assessment objectives to help keep your work structured and focused.

Assessment Objectives:

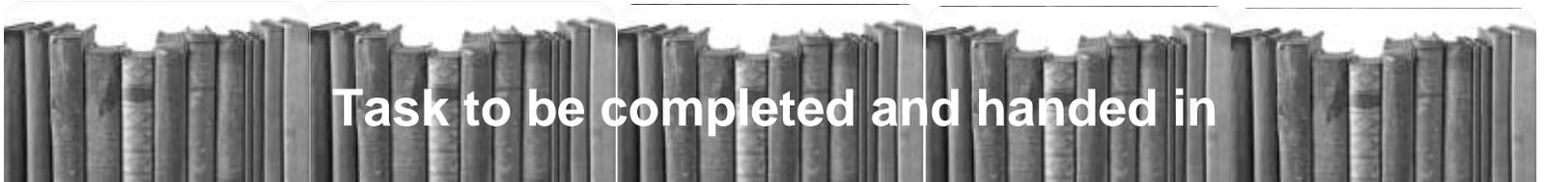
AO1: Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.

AO2: Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts.

AO3: Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.

AO4: Explore connections across literary texts.

AO5: Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.



Task to be completed and handed in

Independent Learning Tasks

Task 1: Read closely the extract from *Twelfth Night* and annotate the use of language, form and structure for dramatic effect. You may wish to read it aloud or perform the section with a friend! Can you consider how this falls within the Comedy genre?

Task 2: Read closely the extract from *The Fall of the House of Usher*. Annotate the extract identifying any gothic features.

Task 3: Choose one of the extracts you have annotated and complete the following question.
How does the writer use language, form and structure to create meaning in the extract?

Your finished essay should be 1000-1200 words.

Remember to use the assessment objectives to help ensure your writing is relevant and answers the question.



What can I read?

We expect all of our A level students to read widely in order to further their knowledge of the core texts which will be studied in class. The following list can be used as a starting point for further research.

Fiction:

| | |
|-------------|----------------------------------|
| Atwood | <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> |
| Austen | <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> |
| Banks | <i>The Wasp Factory</i> |
| Beckford | <i>Vathek</i> |
| Bronte | <i>Jane Eyre</i> |
| Dickens | <i>A Tale of Two Cities</i> |
| Eliot | <i>The Waste Land</i> |
| Eliot | <i>The Mill on the Floss</i> |
| Faulkner | <i>Light in August</i> |
| Forster | <i>Howards End</i> |
| Frazier | <i>Cold Mountain</i> |
| Golden | <i>Memoirs of a Geisha</i> |
| Hardy | <i>Tess of the D'Urbervilles</i> |
| Hawthorne | <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> |
| Homer | <i>The Odyssey</i> |
| McCarthy | <i>Outer Dark</i> |
| McCourt | <i>Angela's Ashes</i> |
| McEwan | <i>Saturday</i> |
| Morrison | <i>Beloved</i> |
| Niffenegger | <i>The Time Traveller's Wife</i> |
| Picoult | <i>My Sister's Keeper</i> |
| Roberts | <i>Black Rose</i> |
| Salinger | <i>A Catcher in the Rye</i> |
| Shelly | <i>Frankenstein</i> |
| Trollope | <i>The Book Boy</i> |
| Walker | <i>The Colour Purple</i> |
| Waters | <i>The Night Watch</i> |
| Woolf | <i>Mrs Dalloway</i> |



Extract 1

OLIVIA

Go call him hither.

Exit MARIA

I am as mad as he,
If sad and merry madness equal be.

Re-enter MARIA, with MALVOLIO

How now, Malvolio!

MALVOLIO

Sweet lady, ho, ho.

OLIVIA

Smilest thou?

I sent for thee upon a sad occasion.

MALVOLIO

Sad, lady! I could be sad: this does make some obstruction in the blood, this cross-gartering; but what of that? if it please the eye of one, it is with me as the very true sonnet is, 'Please one, and please all.'

OLIVIA

Why, how dost thou, man? what is the matter with thee?

MALVOLIO

Not black in my mind, though yellow in my legs. It did come to his hands, and commands shall be executed: I think we do know the sweet Roman hand.

OLIVIA

Wilt thou go to bed, Malvolio?

MALVOLIO

To bed! ay, sweet-heart, and I'll come to thee.

OLIVIA

God comfort thee! Why dost thou smile so and kiss thy hand so oft?

MARIA

How do you, Malvolio?

MALVOLIO

At your request! yes; nightingales answer daws.

MARIA

Why appear you with this ridiculous boldness before my lady?

MALVOLIO

'Be not afraid of greatness:' 'twas well writ.

OLIVIA

What meanest thou by that, Malvolio?

MALVOLIO

'Some are born great,'--

OLIVIA

Ha!

MALVOLIO

'Some achieve greatness,'--

OLIVIA

What sayest thou?

MALVOLIO

'And some have greatness thrust upon them.'

OLIVIA

Heaven restore thee!

MALVOLIO

'Remember who commended thy yellow stockings,'--

OLIVIA

Thy yellow stockings!

MALVOLIO

'And wished to see thee cross-gartered.'

OLIVIA

Cross-gartered!

MALVOLIO

'Go to thou art made, if thou desirest to be so;'—

William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*

Extract 2

Shaking off from my spirit what *must* have been a dream, I scanned more narrowly the real aspect of the building. Its principal feature seemed to be that of an excessive antiquity. The discoloration of ages had been great. Minute fungi overspread the whole exterior, hanging in a fine, tangled web-work from the eaves. Yet all this was apart from any extraordinary dilapidation. No portion of the masonry had fallen; and there appeared to be a wild inconsistency between its still perfect adaptation of parts, and the crumbling condition of the individual stones. In this there was much that reminded me of the specious totality of old woodwork which has rotted for years in some neglected vault, with no disturbance from the breath of the external air. Beyond this indication of extensive decay, however, the fabric gave little token of instability. Perhaps the eye of a scrutinizing observer might have discovered a barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zigzag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn.

Noticing these things, I rode over a short causeway to the house. A servant in waiting took my horse, and I entered the Gothic archway of the hall. A valet, of stealthy step, thence conducted me, in silence, through many dark and intricate passages in my progress to the *studio* of his master.

The room in which I found myself was very large and lofty. The windows were long, narrow, and pointed, and at so vast a distance from the black oaken floor as to be altogether inaccessible from within. Feeble gleams of encrimsoned light made their way through the trellised panes, and served to render sufficiently distinct the more prominent objects around; the eye, however, struggled in vain to reach the remoter angles of the chamber, or the recesses of the vaulted and fretted ceiling. Dark draperies hung upon the walls. The general furniture was profuse, comfortless, antique, and tattered. Many books and musical instruments lay scattered about, but failed to give any vitality to the scene. I felt that I breathed an atmosphere of sorrow. An air of stern, deep, and irredeemable gloom hung over and pervaded all.

Upon my entrance, Usher arose from a sofa on which he had been lying at full length, and greeted me with a vivacious warmth which had much in it, I at first thought, of an overdone cordiality—of the constrained effort of the *ennuyé*¹ man of the world. A glance, however, at his countenance convinced me of his perfect sincerity. We sat down; and for some moments, while he spoke not, I gazed upon him with a feeling half of pity, half of awe. Surely, man had never before so terribly altered, in so brief a period, as had Roderick Usher!

Edgar Allan Poe, *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1840)