**A2 Handbook & Transition Summer Project English Literature**

**Uxbridge High School**

**Year 12 – Year 13**

**AS – A2**

**A2 Expectations**

The second year of your A level course is more demanding than the first and requires a greater degree of commitment and independent learning. To enable you to cope with the demands of the course and achieve your target grades, it is essential that you fulfil the following expectations.

* Attend all lessons, arrive on time and bring all the necessary books and equipment.
* Take responsibility for arriving on time to lessons after break or after a free period.
* No mobile phones in use or in view in the lesson.
* Work to the best of your ability in class and focus on the lesson
* Listen respectfully to the views of other students
* Complete all homework and have it ready for submission at the beginning of the lesson.
* Read widely in your own time
* Complete all necessary research as directed.
* Keep a reading log and a quotation log and bring them to each lesson
* Attempt all work. If you are unsure of what to do, of course you may ask questions, but there are times when your teacher will want you to work independently without question. You must respect this.
* Take advantage of any extra lessons/revision sessions.
* Keep to deadlines.

**AS > A2 Summer Project Tasks:**

1. Complete the first draft of your Great Gatsby comparison coursework (Paper 4 of A2 – 20% of A Level)
2. Read through this booklet, as on your return from school you will be tested on literary periods and terminology of form, language, and structural techniques!
3. Read a text of your choice, and write a review that contextualises it. This should describe how it fits into its literary period, and an evaluation of its language, form and structure. Use this book to help you!

**A2 Outline of the Year**

**Your A2 is made up of 3 exams, and 1 coursework essay.**

**Paper 1; 30%:** Shakespeare’s ‘Othello’ and ‘Streetcar’

**Paper 2; 20%:** ‘Beloved’ and ‘A Picture of Dorian Gray’

**Paper 3; 30%:** Poetry anthology on Christina Rossetti, unseen poetry, poems of a decade

**Paper 4; 20%:** Comparison coursework essay on 20th Century American texts

**How does AS link to our A2?**



**Overview of Literary Periods**

**The** **Middle English Period (Medieval Period)**

**Years:  1066-1485 (roughly)**

*Content:*

* plays that instruct the illiterate masses in morals and religion
* chivalric code of honour/romances
* religious devotion

*Style/Genres:*

* oral tradition continues
* folk ballads
* mystery and miracle plays
* morality plays
* stock epithets
* kennings
* frame stories
* moral tales

*Effect:*

* church instructs its people through the morality and miracle plays
* an illiterate population is able to hear and see the literature

*Historical Context:*

* Crusades bring the development of a money economy for the first time in Britain
* trading increases dramatically as a result of the Crusades
* William the Conqueror crowned king in 1066
* Henry III crowned king in 1154 brings a judicial system, royal courts, juries, and chivalry to Britain

*A Sampling of Key Literature & Authors:*

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Pearl

Domesday Book

L’Morte de Arthur

Geoffrey Chaucer

**The Renaissance**

**Years: 1485-1660**

*The Elizabethan Period: the reign of Elizabeth I, 1586-1603*

*Jacobean Period: the reign of James I of England, 1603-1625*

*Content:*

* world view shifts from religion and after life to one stressing the  human life on earth
* popular theme: development of human potential
* popular theme: many aspects of love explored
* unrequited love
* constant love
* timeless love
* courtly love
* love subject to change

*Style/Genres:*

* poetry
* the sonnet
* metaphysical poetry
* elaborate and unexpected metaphors called conceits
* drama
* written in verse
* supported by royalty
* tragedies, comedies, histories

*Effect:*

* commoners welcomed at some play productions (like ones at the Globe) while conservatives try to close the theatres on grounds that they promote brazen behaviours
* not all middle-class embrace the metaphysical poets and their abstract conceits

*Historical Context:*

* War of Roses ends in 1485 and political stability arrives
* Printing press helps stabilize English as a language and allows more people to read a variety of literature
* Economy changes from farm-based to one of international trade

*A Sampling of Key Literature & Authors:*

**Metaphysical Poets**

John Donne

Christopher Marlowe

Andrew Marvell

Robert Herrick

Katherine Phillips

William Shakespeare

Thomas Wyatt

Ben Jonson

The Cavalier Poets

**The** **Neoclassical Period**

**Years: 1660-1798**

*The Restoration: the reign of Charles II, 1630 - 1660 (after his restoration to the thrown in 1630 following the English Civil War and Cromwell)*

*The Age of Enlightenment (the Eighteenth Century)*

*Content:*

* emphasis on reason and logic
* stresses harmony, stability, wisdom
* Locke: a social contract exists between the government and the people. The government governs guaranteeing “natural rights” of life, liberty, and property

*Style/Genres:*

* satire
* poetry
* essays
* letters, diaries, biographies
* novels

*Effect:*

* emphasis on the individual
* belief that humanity is basically evil
* approach to life: “the world as it should be”

*Historical Context:*

* 50% of males are functionally literate (a dramatic rise)
* Fenced enclosures of land cause demise of traditional village life
* Factories begin to spring up as industrial revolution begins
* Impoverished masses begin to grow as farming life declines and factories build
* Coffee houses—where educated men spend evenings with literary and political associates

*Key Authors:*

Alexander Pope

Daniel Defoe

Jonathan Swift,

Samuel Johnson

John Bunyan

John Milton

**The** **Romantic Period**

**Years:  1798 – 1832**

*Content:*

* human knowledge consists of impressions and ideas formed in the  individual’s mind
* introduction of Gothic elements and terror/horror stories and novels
* in nature one can find comfort and peace that the man-made urbanized towns and factory environments cannot offer

*Style/Genres:*

* poetry
* lyrical ballads

*Effects:*

* evil attributed to society not to human nature
* human beings are basically good
* movement of protest: a desire for personal freedom
* children seen as hapless victims of  poverty and exploitation

*Historical Context:*

* Napoleon rises to power in France and opposes England militarily and economically
* Tory philosophy that government should NOT interfere with private enterprise
* middle class gains representation in the British parliament
* railroads begin to run

*Key Authors:*

Jane Austen

Mary Shelley

Robert Burns

William Blake

William Wordsworth

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Lord Byron

Percy Shelley

John Keats

**The** **Victorian Period**

**Years:  1832-1900**

*Content:*

* conflict between those in power and the common masses of labourers and the poor
* shocking life of workhouses and urban poor is highlighted in literature to insist on reform
* country versus city life
* sexual discretion (or lack of it)
* strained coincidences
* romantic triangles
* heroines in physical danger
* aristocratic villains
* misdirected letters
* bigamous marriages

*Genres/Styles:*

* novel becomes popular for first time; mass produced for the first time
* bildungsroman
* political novels
* detective novels (Sherlock Holmes)
* serialized novels (Charles Dickens)
* elegies
* poetry: easier to understand
* dramatic monologues
* drama: comedies of manners
* magazines offer stories to the masses

*Effect:*

* literature begins to reach the masses

*Historical Context:*

* paper becomes cheap; magazines and novels cheap to mass produce
* unprecedented growth of industry and business in Britain
unparalleled dominance of  nations, economies and trade abroad

*Key Authors:*

Charles Dickens Thomas Hardy

Rudyard Kipling Robert Louis Stevenson

George Eliot Oscar Wilde

Alfred Lord Tennyson Charles Darwin

Charlotte Bronte Robert Browning

**The** **Modern Period
Years: 1900-(subject to debate)**

*Content:*

- Breakdown of social norms

- Realistic embodiment of social meanings

- Separation of meanings and senses from the context

- Despairing individual behaviours in the face of an unmanageable future

- Spiritual loneliness

- Alienation

- Frustration when reading the text

- Disillusionment

- Rejection of history

- Rejection of outdated social systems

- Objection to traditional thoughts and traditional moralities

- Objection to religious thoughts

- Substitution of a mythical past

- Two World Wars' effects on humanity

*Genres/Styles:*

- poetry: free verse

- epiphanies begin to appear in literature

- speeches

- memoirs

- novels

- stream of consciousness

*Effect:*

- Literature attempts to search for ‘truthes’ and discover the deep ideas and meanings behind

*Historical Context:*

- British Empire loses 1 million soldiers to World War I

- Winston Churchill leads Britain through WW II, and the Germans bomb England directly

- British colonies demand independence

*Key Authors:*

James Joyce Virginia Woolf

T. S. Eliot Joseph Conrad

D. H. Lawrence Graham Greene

Dylan Thomas George Orwell

William Butler Yeats Bernard Shaw

**The Post Modern Period**

**Years: 1945(ish) – present**

It is very difficult to determine the exact beginning or evolution of modernism into the realm of postmodernism. It is a general assumption that postmodernism started after WW2 in a time of great social, political and cultural upheaval. What is important is the term postmodernism is revealing in the sense that it is not a new movement, devoid of links with modernism but a reaction to it. Below is a list of characteristics displayed within post-modern literature, all of which are contrasted to modern literature.

1. Whereas Modernism places faith in the ideas, values, beliefs, culture, and norms of the West, Postmodernism rejects Western values and beliefs as only a small part of the human experience and often rejects such ideas, beliefs, culture, and norms.
2. Whereas Modernism attempts to reveal profound truths of experience and life, Postmodernism is suspicious of being "profound" because such ideas are based on one particular Western value systems.
3. Whereas Modernism attempts to find depth and interior meaning beneath the surface of objects and events, Postmodernism prefers to dwell on the exterior image and avoids drawing conclusions or suggesting underlying meanings associated with the interior of objects and events.
4. Whereas Modernism focused on central themes and a united vision in a particular piece of literature, Postmodernism sees human experience as unstable, internally contradictory, ambiguous, inconclusive, indeterminate, unfinished, fragmented, discontinuous, "jagged," with no one specific reality possible.  Therefore, it focuses on a vision of a contradictory, fragmented, ambiguous, indeterminate, unfinished, "jagged" world.
5. Whereas Modern authors guide and control the reader’s response to their work, the Postmodern writer creates an "open" work in which the reader must supply his own connections, work out alternative meanings, and provide his own (unguided) interpretation.

*A Sampling of Key Authors:*

Margaret Atwood Martin Amis

Jean Baudrillard Jorge Louis Borges

William S. Burroughs Albert Camus

Bret Easton Ellis Gabriel García Márquez

Jack Kerouac Vladimir Nabokov

George Orwell Sylvia Plath

Tom Stoppard Salman Rushdie

Kurt Vonnegut Jeanette Winterson

**Analysing Texts**

Here are some questions you should consider when analysing any text, but may be particularly useful to ask yourself when presented with an unseen extract, as you will be in the exam.

* What kind of text is this?
* When was the text written? How do I know this? Are there clues in the subject matter or in the language?
* What is the subject matter?
* Who is speaking, who is spoken to and how does the writer use the idea of ‘voice’ in the text?
* How does the writer use setting(s)?
* How does the writer use ideas of time (past, present, future)?
* How does the writer structure, organise and develop ideas in the text?
* Is there anything distinctive in the way the text is written (structure, choices of vocabulary, sentence structures, variations in pace)?
* Are there any patterns, repetitions of key ideas/ images, uses of contrast?
* What kinds of language are used (formal, informal, descriptive, dialogue, etc)?
* How has finding out about the references and allusions in the text added to your understanding and interpretation?
* Is the language all the same or does the writer use contrast? Why does the writer do this?
* What is the tone of the text?
* What might be the writer’s purpose(s) in this text?
* Is it similar to any other texts? What are the similarities?

**Features of Form, Structure and Language**

When analysing any text, there are three elements of the texts construction that you will need to cover in detail: form, structure and language. As such, Assessment Objective 2 asks you to ‘demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing the ways in which form, structure and language shape literary texts’. Below is a definition of each of these elements and the features of form, structure and language you might expect to find and explore in each genre of text.

**Form**

What you are analysing e.g. novel, play, diary entry, poem and also includes the **way** in which the text is being told

**Structure**

The way in which a text is constructed, so the acts in a play, the stanzas in a poem, etc.

**Language**

The writer’s choice of **words** and their characteristics

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| **Drama** | **Form** | **Structure** | **Language** |
|  | * Lighting
* Entrances and exits
* Pace
* Scene opening/ ending
* Sound effects
* Set and costume
* Comic relief
* Asides
* Entrance lines/ exit lines
* Tension/ surprise
* Monologue
* Soliloquy
 | * Flashbacks/ chronological order
* Conflict and change
* Catalyst
* Protagonist
* Time/place/ action
* Introduction/ exposition/ complication/ crisis/ denouement
* Contrast
* Twist
 | * Dialogue
* Dialect/ colloquialisms
* Functional/ literal
* Metaphorical/ symbolic/ poetic
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| **Prose** | **Form** | **Structure** | **Language** |
|  | * Narrative/ episodic
* First/ second/ third person
* Subjective viewpoint
* Intrusive narrator
* Multiple narrators
* Inter-textual links
* Stream of consciousness
* Indirect speech
 | * Chapters/ sections
* Autobiographical
* Diary
* Development of incident/ suspense/ idea/ tension
* Contrast
* Twist
* Shift in tone
* Climax/ anti-climax
* Linear/ cyclical structure
* Foreshadowing
* Flashback
 | * Concrete/ abstract imagery
* Reference to colours
* Metaphor
* Simile
* Comparison
* Symbolism
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| **Poetry** | **Form** | **Structure** | **Language** |
|  | * Concise/ extended
* Narrative
* Ballad
* Lyric
* Dramatic monologue
* Sonnet
* Epic
 | * Stanzas
* Quatrains/ sestet/ octet
* Meter
* Shift in tone
* Opening line/ phrase
* Closing line/ phrase
* Title
* Rhythm
* Rhyme
* Punctuation
* Enjambment
* Caesura
* Repetition
* Indented lines
 | * Metaphor
* Simile
* Personification
* Onomatopoeia
* Alliteration
* Sibilance
* Oxymoron
* Assonance
* Reference to colour
* Sensual language
* Formal/ informal
* Archaic
* Colloquial
* Allusions
* Natural imagery
* Symbolism
* Pathetic fallacy
* Biblical allusions
* Rolling vowels
* Hard consonants
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**Also think about:**

* Tone(s) – the writer/ the speaker/ the reader or audience
* The theme(s) raised in the text(s) regarding the portrayal of love
* The social context – time of writing/ time of publication or first performance (political/social/historical issues)
* Gender – how does this affect the text?
* Where an extract appears in the play/ novel
* How the texts link together – Tone? Theme? Voice? Language? Etc.
* References to time and place
* How characters are presented –sympathy/ caricature/ realistic/ symbolic/ pathos etc.
* How is the writer’s point of view expressed?

**Terminology to learn at A Level:**

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| --- | --- |
| **Allegory** | A story or fable that has a clear secondary meaning beneath its literal sense. |
| **Alliteration** | The repetition of the same sounds at the start of several words or syllables in sequence or in close proximity to each other. |
| **Anaphora** | The repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses or verses. |
| **Antithesis**  | ‘Opposite placing’- using contrasting ideas in neighbouring sentences or clauses. |
| **Assonance** | The word is usually used to describe the repetition of vowel sounds in neighbouring syllables. |
| **Bathos**  | Moving from the sublime to the ridiculous, using the contrast to heighten the effect. |
| **Blank Verse** | Consists of an unrhymed iambic pentameter. Most frequently used by Shakespeare. |
| **Caesura** | A pause or breathing-place about the middle of a metrical line, generally indicated by a pause in the sense/ meaning. |
| **Colloquial** | Informal language of conversational speech. |
| **Deification**  | The transformation of someone into a god/ goddess. |
| **Dramatic monologue** | A poem that shares many features with a speech from a play: one person speaks, and in that speech there are clues to his/her character and the situation they are in. |
| **Elegy** | Lament for the death or permanent loss of someone or something. |
| **Ellipsis** | The omission of a portion of the sequence of events, allowing the reader to fill in the narrative |
| **Enjambment**  | A line of poetry which is not end stopped and the sentence runs on to the next line without pause. |
| **Epithet**  | An adjective or adjectival phrase which defines a special quality or attribute. |
| **Epic simile**  | A comparison or likeness, often using ‘as when’ to introduce sustained images. |
| **Foreshadowing** | To show or indicate beforehand within a text. |
| **Free Verse** | Verse in which the metre and line length vary, and in which there is no discernible pattern in the use of rhyme. |
| Heroic couplet  | Lines of iambic pentameter rhymed in pairs.  |
| **Hyperbole**  | A figure of speech that emphasises through exaggeration. |
| Iambic pentameter  | A line of five feet (weak stress followed by a strong stress e.g. ti-tum). |
| **Irony**  | Saying one thing while meaning another. |
| **Juxtaposition**  | Ideas placed side by side to increase effect. |
| **Metaphor** | The transfer of a quality or attribute from one thing or idea to another in such a way as to imply some resemblance between the two things or ideas. |
| **Mock heroic**  | Refers to the style where something trivial is treated with ridiculous comic grandeur. |
| **Onomatopoeia** | The use of words or sounds which appear to resemble the sounds which they describe. |
| **Panegyric**  | A speech or poem praising someone wholeheartedly. |
| **Paradox** | A seemingly contradictory statement that may nonetheless be true. |
| **Parody**  | An imitation of a work of literature to ridicule its characteristic features. |
| **Pathetic Fallacy** | Attributing emotions to inanimate objects, usually elements of nature, to represent a character’s feelings. |
| **Personification** | The attribution to a non-animate thing of human qualities or traits. |
| **Plosive/ Fricative sounds** | **Plosive:** A consonantal sound in the formation of which the passage of air is completely blocked, such as 'p', 'b', 't', creating a harsh sound.**Fricative:** Consonants produced by forcing air through a narrow channel, such as ‘f’, ‘s’, ‘z’, ‘th’, creating a soft sound. |
| **Quatrain** |  A verse stanza of four lines, often rhyming abab. |
| **Refrain**  | A repeated line, phrase or group of lines, which recurs at regular intervals through a poem or song, usually at the end of a stanza. |
| **Rhetoric**  | The art of speaking or writing effectively so as to persuade an audience to your point of view. |
| **Satire**  | Literature which holds up folly or vice to ridicule. |
| **Sibilance** | The repetition of ‘s’ or ‘sh’ sounds in neighbouring syllables to create a hissing effect. |
| **Simile** | A comparison between two objects or ideas which is introduced by 'like' or 'as'. |
| **Sonnet** | Lyrical poem of fourteen lines of rhymed iambic pentameter, either an octet and sestet (Petrarchan), or three quatrains and a couplet (Shakespearean) or 14 lines ending in a couplet (Miltonic). |
| **Stream of consciousness** | A method used by some modern novelists to relate the innermost thoughts and feelings of characters without logical sequenx, syntax or punctuation. |
| **Wit**  | Understanding or intelligence, showing imagination. |
| **Zeugma**  | A figure of speech where one verb joins together widely differing ideas e.g. He held his temper and her hand |