St Joseph’s Catholic Academy

English Department



A Level English Literature

Bridging Course

**Name:**

**Congratulations on choosing English Literature as one of your A Level options! You can look forward to a challenging but stimulating course of study, supported by a dedicated and successful department.**

The key requirements for this course are a genuine love of reading and a willingness to look beyond the surface level of a text to consider the effects of choices made by the author. To be successful in this subject, you need to stop yourself thinking of plots and characters as real and transfer your attention to the methods of the author and the way/s that reader/s respond to their work, as well as how responses may vary according to context. Please bring this transition work to your first lesson in September. We look forward to meeting you and sharing our passion for English Literature!

Over the summer, you need to purchase the following texts, one of which you will study for Paper 1 *Aspects of Tragedy* and the other for Paper 2 *Elements of Crime Writing.* Both will be needed to complete the tasks in this pack.

Paper 1 *Aspects of Tragedy*

*King Lear*, William Shakespeare

Available as a free e-book:

<https://www.sparknotes.com/nofear/shakespeare/lear/>

Recommended edition to buy:

[Shakespeare: *King Lear* (Arden edition)](https://www.amazon.co.uk/King-Lear-Arden-Shakespeare-William/dp/1903436591/ref=sr_1_1?crid=14IGTFCPWWWS6&keywords=king+lear+arden+shakespeare&qid=1655037608&sprefix=king+lear+%2Caps%2C92&sr=8-1)

Paper 2 *Elements of Crime Writing*

*Atonement*, Ian McEwan

Online e-book:

[*Atonement* by Ian McEwan](https://onlinereadfreenovel.com/ian-mcewan/33984-atonement.html)

Recommended edition to buy:

[McEwan, I. *Atonement* (Vintage edition)](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Atonement-Ian-McEwan/dp/0099429799/ref=asc_df_0099429799/?tag=googshopuk-21&linkCode=df0&hvadid=310875774408&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrand=10558026361859862962&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=1006688&hvtargid=pla-525219269005&psc=1&th=1&psc=1)

For September you will also need:

2 x A4 Lever Arch files

2 x packs of A4 lined paper

2 x packs of file dividers

Highlighters / stationery / post-its

Some students find purchasing revision guides for the texts useful, though they are not compulsory. If you do purchase any, York Notes A Level revision guides are best.

There are film versions available to support your studies, but remember that they are adaptations and may differ substantially from the original texts on which you will be examined.

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| **If you have any questions about the course or the activities in this booklet, email:**  [**soconnor@stjosephs.uk.net**](mailto:soconnor@stjosephs.uk.net) **or**  [**mcewene@stjosephs.uk.net**](mailto:mcewene@stjosephs.uk.net) |

***King Lear* by William Shakespeare**

**Task 1: Context**

**Access the following websites and use them to write a short biography detailing Shakespeare’s life and career:**

[**The British Library**](https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/shakespeares-life)

[**Biography Online**](https://www.biographyonline.net/poets/william_shakespeare.html)

[**Oxford Dictionary of National Biography**](https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-25200?rskey=hCZvN5&result=12)

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**Task 2: Summaries and key terms**

**Read and provide scene summaries in your own words of the first act of the play. Include a list of which characters appear in each scene:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Act 1** | |
| **Scene** | **Summary of events** |
| **1** |  |
| **2** |  |
| **3** |  |
| **4** |  |
| **5** |  |

**Define the terms below:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Term** | **Definition** |
| **Tragedy** |  |
| **Hamartia** |  |
| **Anagnorisis** |  |
| **Peripeteia** |  |
| **Hubris** |  |
| **Catharsis** |  |
| **Dramatic irony** |  |
| **Machiavellian** |  |
| **Prose** |  |
| **Verse** |  |
| **Iambic pentameter** |  |
| **Antithesis** |  |

**Task 3: Characterisation and themes**

**Based on your reading of the opening of the play make some notes on your impressions of the characters and themes below. You must include at least one quotation per section in support of your ideas.**

|  |
| --- |
| **Characters** |
| **Gloucester** |
| **Lear** |
| **Goneril** |
| **Regan** |
| **Cordelia** |
| **Kent** |
| **Edmund** |
| **Edgar** |
| **Fool** |
| **Themes** |
| **Fathers and children** |
| **Authority and order** |
| **Madness and fooling** |

***Atonement* by Ian McEwan**

**Task 1: Context**

**Access the following websites and use them to write notes on significant aspects of the novel’s context or writing process (beware spoilers!):**

[**Course hero**](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Atonement/context/)

[**English Review**](https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/media/Documents/magazine-extras/English%20Review/EngRev%2028_2/EnglishReview28_2_poster.pdf?ext=.pdf)

[**Penguin Books**](https://penguin.co.uk/articles/2021/february/ian-mcewan-atonement-oral-history.html)

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**Task 2: Summaries and key terms**

**Read the first FOUR chapters and provide summaries in your own words. Make a note of any significant settings and characters who appear:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Chapter** | **Plot events, characters, settings** |
| **1** |  |
| **2** |  |
| **3** |  |
| **4** |  |

**Define the terms below:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Term** | **Definition’** |
| **Metafiction** |  |
| **Motif** |  |
| **Symbol** |  |
| **Proleptic irony** |  |
| **Analeptic irony** |  |
| **Unreliable narrator** |  |
| **Limited third person narrator** |  |
| **Melodrama** |  |
| **Postmodernism** |  |
| **Stream of consciousness** |  |
| **Tripartite structure** |  |
| **Epilogue** |  |
| **Intertexuality** |  |

**Task 3: Characterisation and themes**

**Based on your reading of the opening of the novel make some notes on your impressions of the characters and themes below. You must include at least one quotation per section in support of your ideas.**

|  |
| --- |
| **Characters** |
| **Bryony Tallis** |
| **Cecelia Tallis** |
| **Emily Tallis** |
| **Robbie Turner** |
| **Lola Quincey** |
| **Paul Marshall** |
| **Themes** |
| **Writing and imagination** |
| **Guilt** |
| **Coming of age** |
| **Social status** |