

## Preparing for A Level Study: English Language and Literature

Threshold Concept	Description	Task title
1	AO1 - Apply concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study as appropriate, using associated terminology and coherent written expression	Read the response to 'Sonnet 43' and improve the answer, paying close attention to linguistic and literary terminology.
2	AO2 - Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in texts	Analyse the presentation of characters in one of the extracts from Jane Eyre or The Color Purple.
3	AO3 - Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which texts are produced and received	Create a timeline that places the twelve texts in their chronological order. Choose one text and produce a context research poster.
4	AO4 - Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic and literary concepts and methods	Read one of the Shakespeare plays listed and consider the text in relation to the play you read at GCSE. Write ten bullet points sharing your thoughts.
5	AO5- Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways	Creative Writing – write your own story opening or a blog entry.

## **Summer Wider Reading**

Please read at least one text from the list below:

*Dracula by Bram Stoker*

*The Haunting of Hill House by Shirley Jackson*

*Brave New World by Aldous Huxley*

*War of the Worlds by H.G. Wells*

*Enduring Love by Ian McEwan*

*Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte*

*The Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood*

*1984 by George Orwell*

*Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro*

*The Talented Mr Ripley by Patricia Highsmith*

*Regeneration by Pat Barker*

*127 Hours by Aron Ralston*

*The Bell Jar by Sylvia Plath*

*Notes from a Small Island by Bill Bryson*

*The Wasp Factory by Iain Banks*

*The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde by Robert Louis Stevenson*

## **Task 1**

### **Threshold Concept 1**

*AO1 - Apply concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study as appropriate, using associated terminology and coherent written expression*

Read through the extract of a student's response to Sonnet 43 by Elizabeth Barrett Browning. The poem is provided below. Rewrite the response, improving the accuracy of the written expression including spelling, punctuation and grammar. You should also try to include literary and linguistic terminology in the response. There is a glossary of terms that you should already know at the end of this booklet.

The response can be found on the following page. You do not need to improve the quality of the student's analysis. Please focus on the accuracy of their written expression. You are allowed to change the vocabulary used if you wish.

### **Sonnet 43**

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.  
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height  
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight  
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.  
I love thee to the level of every day's  
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.  
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;  
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.  
I love thee with the passion put to use  
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.  
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose  
With my lost saints — I love thee with the breath,  
Smiles, tears, of all my life! — and, if God choose,  
I shall but love thee better after death.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

Sonnet 43 by Elizabeth Barrett Browning is presented as the theme of love. The repetition of "I love thee" throughout the poems tells the reader that the writer loves her husband.

Sonnet 43 is a sonnet poem which contains 14 lines, 1 stanza. ~~It is a sonnet poem.~~

This poem ~~represents~~ represents how she loves her husband and will always love her husband. "I love thee with the breath, smiles, tears, of all my life!" This suggests that no matter what she has always loved her husband.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning left her home, with her parents and ran away to Italy with her ~~love~~ husband because her father was very strict and wouldn't let her marry him.

The use of rhetorical question ~~says~~ "How do I love thee?" suggests that she is asking herself how does she love him.

## **Task 2**

### **Threshold Concept 2**

*AO2 - Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in texts*

**Choose one of the extracts provided and analyse how the writer has used language and structure to create character in either task 2.a or 2.b. Use terminology in your response.**

#### **Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte**

**Task 2a) Analyse how Bronte presents Jane in this extract.**

There was no possibility of taking a walk that day. We had been wandering, indeed, in the leafless shrubbery an hour in the morning; but since dinner (Mrs. Reed, when there was no company, dined early) the cold winter wind had brought with it clouds so sombre, and a rain so penetrating, that further out-door exercise was now out of the question.

I was glad of it: I never liked long walks, especially on chilly afternoons: dreadful to me was the coming home in the raw twilight, with nipped fingers and toes, and a heart saddened by the chidings of Bessie, the nurse, and humbled by the consciousness of my physical inferiority to Eliza, John, and Georgiana Reed.

The said Eliza, John, and Georgiana were now clustered round their mama in the drawing-room: she lay reclined on a sofa by the fireside, and with her darlings about her (for the time neither quarrelling nor crying) looked perfectly happy. Me, she had dispensed from joining the group; saying, "She regretted to be under the necessity of keeping me at a distance; but that until she heard from Bessie, and could discover by her own observation, that I was endeavouring in good earnest to acquire a more sociable and childlike disposition, a more attractive and sprightly manner--something lighter, franker, more natural, as it were--she really must

exclude me from privileges intended only for contented, happy, little children."

"What does Bessie say I have done?" I asked.

"Jane, I don't like cavillers or questioners; besides, there is something truly forbidding in a child taking up her elders in that manner. Be seated somewhere; and until you can speak pleasantly, remain silent."

A breakfast-room adjoined the drawing-room, I slipped in there. It contained a bookcase: I soon possessed myself of a volume, taking care that it should be one stored with pictures. I mounted into the window-seat: gathering up my feet, I sat cross-legged, like a Turk; and, having drawn the red moreen curtain nearly close, I was shrined in double retirement.

Folds of scarlet drapery shut in my view to the right hand; to the left were the clear panes of glass, protecting, but not separating me from the drear November day. At intervals, while turning over the leaves of my book, I studied the aspect of that winter afternoon. Afar, it offered a pale blank of mist and cloud; near a scene of wet lawn and storm-beat shrub, with ceaseless rain sweeping away wildly before a long and lamentable blast.

### **The Color Purple by Alice Walker**

**Task 2.b) Analyse how Walker presents the attitudes of Harpo and Sofia in this extract.**

You still bothering Sofia? I ast.

She my wife, he say.

That don't mean you got to keep on bothering her, I say. Sofia love you, she a good wife. Good to the children and good looking. Hardworking. Godfearing and clean. I don't know what more you want.

Harpo snuffle.

I want her to do what I say, like you do for Pa.

Oh, Lord, I say.

When Pa tell you to do something, you do it, he say. When he say not to, you don't. You don't do what he say, he beat you.

Sometime beat me anyhow, I say, whether I do what he say or not.

That's right, say Harpo. But not Sofia. She do what she want, don't pay me no mind at all. I try to beat her, she black

my eyes. Oh, boo-hoo, he cry. Boo-hoo-hoo.

I start to take back my hansker. Maybe push him and his black eyes off the step. I think bout Sofia. She tickle me. I used to hunt game with a bow and arrow, she say.

Some womens can't be beat, I say. Sofia one of them. Besides, Sofia love you. She probably be happy to do most of what you say if you ast her right. She not mean, she not spiteful. She don't hold a grudge.

He sit there hanging his head, looking retard.

Harpo, I say, giving him a shake, Sofia love you. You love Sofia.

He look up at me best he can out his fat little eyes. Yes ma'am? he say.

Mr — marry me to take care of his children. I marry him cause my daddy made me. I don't love Mr — and he don't love me.

But you his wife, he say, just like Sofia mine. The wife spouse to mind.

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## **Task 3**

### **Threshold Concept 3**

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

1. Research the author and the date that the following texts were written/published and put them in chronological order in a timeline.

**1984**

**Pride and Prejudice**

**Ulysses**

**The Canterbury Tales**

**Atonement**

**Wuthering Heights**

**The Handmaid's Tale**

**Hamlet**

**The Bell Jar**

**Robinson Crusoe**

**Never Let Me Go**

**Beowulf**

2. Choose one of the texts and produce a research poster/mind-map exploring the context in which they were produced. You could explore:
  - the values and beliefs of the society in which they were written
  - the role of women at the time it was written (if applicable)
  - the reception to the text when it was first published
  - relevant features of the writer's biography

## **Task 4**

### **Threshold Concept 4**

*AO4 - Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic and literary concepts and methods.*

1. Read and watch (if possible) one of the following Shakespeare plays:

*Antony and Cleopatra*

*Julius Caesar*

*Othello*

*The Tempest*

2. Think about the play in relation to your study of Shakespeare at GCSE. Compare how relationships are presented in the plays. You should look at romantic relationships and marriage, friendship, parent and child relationships and what happens when these relationships break down. Write 5 bullet points for each play showing that you have thought about both plays together.

## **Task 5**

### **Threshold Concept 5**

*AO5 - Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways.*

**Complete one of the creative writing tasks below. Think carefully about Purpose, Audience, Format and Tone. Try to use ambitious vocabulary and literary techniques in your writing.**

**5.a) Write an extract from a novel describing a city in winter. Aim to write approximately 200 words.**

In the **extract** you should:

- consider what aspect of city life in winter you will describe
- show awareness of audience and purpose
- make appropriate language choices
- use an appropriate tone and style.

**5.b) Write a blog entry entitled 'The World Needs Inspirational Leaders'. In your blog you may consider the qualities of a good or bad leader as well as offering practical advice for future leaders. Aim to write approximately 200 words.**

In the **blog entry** you should:

- consider whether the tone should be serious or light-hearted
- show awareness of audience and purpose
- make appropriate language choices
- use an appropriate tone and style.

## Terminology you should already know:

- **Adjective:** describes a noun, gives more information about it, e.g. stunning, disgraceful, angry.
- **Adverb:** describes a verb, gives more information about it, e.g. angrily, happily, joyfully
- **Alliteration:** words that begin with the same letter sound, e.g. 'flowing flakes that flock'
- **Allusion:** reference to another text or idea, e.g. 'the valley of Death'
- **Ambiguous:** when something is left *deliberately* unclear.
- **Anaphora:** repetition of a phrase at the start of a line or sentence, e.g. "Cannon to", "Dem tell me"
- **Antithesis:** a person or thing that is the direct opposite of someone or something else, e.g. Love is the antithesis of selfishness
- **Assonance:** words that share the same vowel sound, e.g. 'weearied we ee keep awake beeause'
- **Caesura:** a pause in a line of poetry, e.g. 'Nothing beside remains.  
Round the decay'
- **Connotations:** what a word or phrase suggests, e.g. 'black' usually connotes darkness, evil or death.
- **Ellipsis:** a situation in which words are left out of a sentence but the sentence can still be understood – symbol = ....
- **Enjambment:** where a line has no punctuation at the end and breaks onto a new line, but carries on an idea, e.g. 'One of my mates goes by  
/ and tosses his guts back into his body.'

- **Foregrounding:** To make something the most prominent or important feature.
- **Hyperbole:** deliberate exaggeration, used to emphasise a point.
- **Iambic pentameter:** a line of poetry with 10 syllables, e.g. 'The lone and level sands stretch far away.'
- **Imperative:** verbs which create a sentence that gives an order – bossy verbs, e.g. Stop.
- **Irony:** a) The expression of one's meaning by using language that normally signifies the opposite, typically for humorous or emphatic effect. b) A state of affairs or an event that seems deliberately contrary to what one expects and is often wryly amusing as a result, e.g. "Don't go overboard with gratitude" – to someone who hasn't said thank you. You laugh at a person who slipped stepping on a banana peel and the next thing you know, you've slipped too.
- **Juxtaposition:** two things being seen or placed close together with contrasting effect, e.g. It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.
- **Metaphor:** describing something by saying it is something else, e.g. 'mind-forged manacles', 'an ornamental stitch', 'the gelled / blackthorns of your hair.'
- **Monologue:** one person speaking (dramatic monologue).
- **Motif:** a repeated idea or theme.
- **Narrative:** writing that tells a story.
- **Noun:** names of people, places or things.
- **Onomatopoeia:** use of words which echo their meaning in sound, e.g. 'thunder'd'

- **Oxymoron:** two words that seem to contradict each other, e.g.  
'exploding comfortably'
- **Personification:** giving an object or animal human characteristics,  
e.g. 'the wind's nonchalance'
- **Persona:** when the poet takes on a voice in the poem.
- **Refrain:** repetition of a single line in a poem, e.g. 'Rode the six  
hundred.' 'But nothing happens.'
- **Repetition:** repeating the same word or phrase, e.g. 'a huge peak,  
black and huge', 'I struck and struck again', 'Half a league, half a  
league / Half a league', 'his bloody life in my bloody hands'
- **Rhyme Scheme:** abbcca etc
- **Rhyming couplets:** two lines that rhyme next to each other, e.g.  
'Plunged in the battery-smoke / Right thro' the line they broke'
- **Rhythm:** the beat or pace of the words. It can be regular or irregular,  
slow or fast, depending on the effect the poet wants to create.
- **Sibilance:** repetition of 's' or 'sh' sounds, e.g. 'Storm'd at with shot  
and shell'
- **Simile:** imagery comparison using as or like, e.g. 'little fishing boats  
/ strung out like bunting', 'spits like a tame cat', 'He lugged a rifle  
numb as a smashed arm', 'his foot hung like / Statuary in mid-stride'
- **Stanza:** a section of a poem sometimes referred to as a verse.
- **Symbolism:** when object stands for something else, e.g. 'dove' =  
peace and hope.
- **Tone:** mood or feelings suggested by the poem.
- **Verb:** describes an action, e.g. walk, sashay, bounce.