

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT VITH FORM SUGGESTED READING LIST

For the more committed student of AS/A2 Level and Advanced Extension Paper, the list is a support for and challenging extension to your course reading. It will enhance the range, scope and awareness of your literary experience, both for pleasure and the vital development of your critical response to novels, poetry and drama. Your teachers can highlight the list for particularly relevant texts.

REFERENCE

1. The Oxford & Cambridge Companions to English Literature
2. The Penguin Dictionary of Literature Terms and Literary Theory
(both essential, thoroughly invaluable references to a vast source of information).
3. Macmillan Studies Guides (blue covers; the best study guides available on individual texts).
4. Literature, Criticism and Style (blue covers, specifically designed for ASA2 course)
5. The Great War in British Literature, Adrian Barlow

PROSE	18th Century	<i>The earliest Novel forms; strongly narrative, "epic" style, often entertaining reads and humorous.</i>
Daniel Defoe	Moll Flanders, Robinson Crusoe	
Henry Fielding	Joseph Andrews, Tom Jones	
Samuel Johnson	Rasellais	
Lawrence Sterne	Tristram Shandy	

19th Century (earlier) *Narrative order, traditional Character-based stories; developing social or moral themes.*

Jane Austen	Emma, Pride & Prejudice, Persuasion, Sense and Sensibility
Charlotte Bronte	Jane Eyre, Villette
Emily Bronte	Wuthering Heights
George Eliot	Middlemarch, Silas Marner
Mary Shelley	Frankenstein

(later)	<i>richly descriptive, socially and morally revealing</i>
Charles Dickens	Great Expectations, Hard Times, Oliver Twist
Thomas Hardy	The Mayor of Casterbridge, Far from the Madding Crowd
Bram Stoker	Dracula
Oscar Wilde	The Picture of Dorian Gray
Nathaniel Hawthorne	The Scarlet Letter (American)
Herman Melville	Moby Dick
Mark Twain	Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn
F. Dostoyevsky	Crime and Punishment, Notes from Underground (Russian)
Gustave Flaubert	Madam Bovary (French)
Honore Balzac	Eugène Grandét
Emile Zola	Germinal, L'Assomoir

20th Century (earlier) *often reflecting social upheaval and corresponding effects on individuals; changing forms of structure and expression, sometimes reflecting trends in art such as "impressionism". Beyond traditional "Character narratives"*

Joseph Conrad	The Heart of Darkness, Victory, Lord Jim
F. Scott Fitzgerald	The Great Gatsby, The Last Tycoon (American 20s Jazz age)
Aldous Huxley	Brave New World (futuristic visions of society)
Henry James	Portrait of a Lady, The Europeans (American focus on Europe), The Wings of the Dove, Washington Square
James Joyce	Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Dubliners, Ulysees (Irish-epic stories of Dublin life and many on male experience)
Franz Kafka	Surreal, disturbing study of innocent man destroyed by totalitarian regime
D.H. Lawrence	Sons and Lovers, The Rainbow, Women in Love, The Virgin and the Gypsy, Short Stories (rich, sensual, erotic)
Virginia Woolf	To the Lighthouse, Mrs Dalloway ("impressionist" style)

(thirties to post war)

often reflecting political or social characteristics, concerns or consciousness of the time, in Britain, America or elsewhere.

Kingsley Amis	Lucky Jim (50s "angry young man")
John Braine	Room at the Top (ditto)
John Fowles	The Collector (perverse kidnapper of girl), The French Lieutenant's Woman (great romance)
William Golding	Lord of the Flies
Graham Greene	Brighton Rock, The Third Man, The End of the Affair
Christopher Isherwood	Goodbye to Berlin (The film <i>Cabaret</i> based on this)
Iris Murdoch	The Bell (intriguing and comic story which mocks odd males)
George Orwell	Animal Farm, 1984, The Road to Wigan Pier, Keep the Aspidistra flying (social/political focus)
Alan Sillitoe	Saturday Night, Sunday Morning (50s working class - hilarious)
Muriel Spark	The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie (30s schoolteacher rebel)
Truman Capote	Breakfast at Tiffany's (classic 40s story of starlet; famous film)
Raymond Chandler	Farewell My Lovely, The Big Sleep (early crime genre, descriptive)
Joseph Heller	Catch 22 (American air base; bizarre, allegorical)
Ernest Hemingway	A Farewell to Arms, The Old Man and the Sea, Short Stories
Vladimir Nabokov	Lolita (disturbed man and pre pubescent girl)
Sylvia Plath	The Bell Jar (woman's mental breakdown)
J.P.Salinger	The Catcher in the Rye (American teenage classic)
John Steinbeck	The Grapes of Wrath, Of Mice and Men (men's struggle in American Depression)
Albert Camus	The Outsider, The Plague (French, existential)

(later decades of C20th)

Isabel Allende	House of the Spirits (life and society in Chile)
Anita Brookner	Hotel du Lac (acute, beautifully written study of single female tensions)
Margaret Drabble	The Millstone (young woman's pregnancy)
Gabriel Garcia Marquez	One Hundred Years of Solitude, Love in the time of Cholera (awesome)
V.S.Naipaul	Miguel Street (Caribbean characters)
R.K.Narayan	The Painter of Signs ('Malgudi' novels; Indian culture)

POETRY

acquainting yourself with a selection of some is the best approach

C14	Geoffrey Chaucer
C16	Edmund Spenser
C17	John Donne, George Herbert, Andrew Marvell, John Milton, Shakespeare's Sonnets (romantic, often "metaphysical"-relating human feelings to spiritual dimensions)
C18	Alexander Pope (satirical); William Blake ('mystical' setting) John Clare,
C19	Romantic emphasis: Samuel Coleridge, William Wordsworth, George Byron, John Keats, Percy Shelley, Alfred Tennyson, Robert Browning, G.M.Hopkins, Christina Rossetti, (late C19 America: Emily Dickinson-poignant, reflective)
C20	(early) post-romantic/often developed imagery-poetry: T.S.Eliot, D.H. Lawrence, Ezra Pound, Robert Frost; Edward Thomas, W.B.Yeats Thomas Hardy War Poets: Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen (middle) W.H.Auden, John Betjeman, Seamus Heaney, Philip Larkin, Louis MacNeice, Stevie Smith, Stephen Spender, Dylan Thomas, R.S. Thomas Sylvia Plath, Alan Ginsberg, Robert Lowell (American) (modern) Carol Ann Duffy, U.A.Fanthorpe, Ted Hughes, Elizabeth Jennings Andrew Motion, Simon Armitage, Wendy Cope, Benjamin Zephaniah, Derek Walcott

CONTEMPORARY FICTION

British

A Clockwork Orange	Anthony Burgess	teenage violence
The Cone Gatherers	Robin Jenkins	Scottish rural setting
The Bloody Chamber, The Magic Toyshop	Angela Carter	tortured relationships
The Female Eunuch	Germaine Greer	feminist tract
The Trumpet	Jackie Kay	sex change experience
Flesh and Blood, During Mother's Absence	Michele Roberts	women`s issues
Every Man for Himself	Beryl Bainbridge	The Titanic disaster
A Child In Time, The Comfort of Strangers	Ian McEwan	excellent reads
Amsterdam, Atonement		
The Famished Road	Ben Okri	African, magical
Waterland, Last Orders	Graham Swift	C20th local epics
The White Hotel	D.M.Thomas	holocaust, brilliant
The Wasp Factory	Iain Banks	perverse boy!
Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit	Jeanette Winterson	female issues
Sexing The Cherry	
Borstal Boy	Brendan Behan	Irish youth
The Moor's Last Sigh, Midnight`s Children	Salman Rushdie	Indian
Heat And Dust	Ruth Praver Jhabvala
Time`s Arrow, The Rachel Papers	Martin Amis	imaginative stories
Stars And Bars; The Blue Afternoon; Armadillo	William Boyd	
Regeneration (and other parts of trilogy)	Pat Barker	Great War trilogy
Birdsong	Sebastian Faulks	Great War, popular
The Commitments, The Snapper, The Van	Roddy Doyle	Irish family,
Paddy Clark Ha! Ha! Ha!	hilarious
The Woman who walked into doors		battered wife
Fever Pitch, High Fidelity	Nick Hornby	‘lad lit’
Felicia's Journey	William Trevor	pregnant girl leaves
The Buddha of Suburbia	Hanif Kureishi	70s young male
Writing Home, The Lady in the Van,	Alan Bennett	dryly comic
The Clothes they stood up in		

American

On The Road	Jack Kerouac	epic road journey
Jazz, Tar Baby	Toni Morrison	black experience
The Colour Purple, Collected Stories	Alice Walker
I know why the caged bird sings	Maya Angelou
My Secret History, The Old Patagonian Express	Paul Theroux	exotic travel
The Informers, American Psycho, Less than Zero	Bret Easton Ellis	Modern New York
Brightness Falls	Jay McInerney
The Joy Luck Club	Amy Tan	Chinese American
Where I'm Calling From; Elephant	Raymond Carver	Short Stories
Postcards, The Shipping News, Accordion Crimes	E. Annie Proulx	popular
Deadlock, Tunnel Vision	Sara Peretsky	thrillers
One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest	Ken Kesey	classic, asylum based
The Republic of Love, Larry`s Party	Carol Shields	great stories, adult
We are the Mulvanneys	Joyce Carol Oates	family epic
American Tabloid	James Ellroy	corruption
The Bonfire of Vanities	Tom Wolfe
Ridin' The Rap, Get Shorty, The Hunted	Elmore Leonard	thrillers

Other

Things Fall Apart	Chinua Achebe (Nigeria)
Life Before Man, The Handmaid's Tale, Cat's Eyes	Margaret Atwood (Canadian)
The Riders	Tim Winton (Australian)
The Smell of Apples	Mark Behr (South Africa)
The Unbearable Lightness of Being,	Milan Kundera (Czech)
Laughable Loves	
The Future-Telling Lady	James Berry (Jamaica)
Silence in October	Jens Christian Grondahl

DRAMA

Of course, Shakespeare - in abundance - do have a look at representative works of the Tragedies, e.g. Hamlet/Macbeth/King Lear/ Othello/Romeo & Juliet. The Comedies, e.g. Much Ado About Nothing/ Twelfth Night/Midsummer Night's Dream/The Comedy of Errors. The History plays, (e.g. Henry IV Parts 1&2/Henry V).

Also from the C16/C17 era, notable dramas include Christopher Marlowe: Doctor Faustus, Edward II; Ben Jonson: The Alchemist, Volpone; John Webster-The Duchess of Malfi, The White Devil; John Ford - Tis Pity She's a Whore.

Restoration Comedy; later C17/early C18, witty and socially/politically relevant includes William Congreve - The Way of the World; John Dryden - All for Love; George Farquhar- The Beaux Stratagem; Richard Sheridan - The Rivals, The School for Scandal; Oliver Goldsmith-She Stoops to Conquer; William Wycherley - The Country Wife.

C19 four great dramatists who introduced modern drama: Anton Chekhov (Russian) - Uncle Vanya, The Cherry Tree; Henrik Ibsen (Norway; began "modern" Prose drama/tragedy of "ordinary" subjects) -Ghosts; August Strindberg (Sweden) - Miss Julie, Easter; Oscar Wilde (comic, with social undertones) - The Importance of Being Earnest, Lady Windermere's Fan.

C20 (early and middle) George Bernard Shaw (social/political) St Joan, Pygmalion; Sean O'Casey Juno and the Paycock; J.M.Synge The Playboy of the Western World Samuel Beckett (the absurd)-Waiting for Godot, Endgame (Irish) Bertold Brecht (German emigre; themes of persecution) -The Caucasian Chalk Circle, Mother Courage; Arthur Miller (American)- The Crucible, Death of a Salesman, A View from the Bridge; Tennessee Williams- A Streetcar Named Desire, The Glass Menagerie (American class tension); Edward Albee- Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf, The American Dream (modern American Dream)

(later) John Osborne- Look Back in Anger, The Entertainer (50s social realism); Shelagh Delaney-A Taste of Honey (late 50s deprivation and prejudices in Manchester-very accessible); Harold Pinter - The Caretaker, The Birthday Party, The Homecoming, The Dumb Waiter (brilliant; absurd situations showing sharp realism) Tom Stoppard - Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead (characters from "Hamlet"), Alan Bleasdale- The Boys from the Blackstuff (modern social problems context), Arnold Wesker - Roots (rural Norfolk family contrasted to outside modern world, 50s);

Contemporary: Conor McPherson -The Weir (Irish) Patrick Marber - Closer, and Hanif Kureishi: Sleep with Me (relationships in rootless society)

Most of the texts on this list are available in the School Library or from the English Department. If not, you can order them from the public library for a small fee, or, of course, buy them! Specific modules on the course will have their own particular additional reading suggestions. This list is purposely broad, to enhance your wider literary appreciation and confidence.