

Year 12 English Literature Student Guide

Unit 1 Drama

In Year 12 you will study a comedy, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, by Oscar Wilde. The play satirises the society in which it is set with the secretive double lives of the protagonists and their pursuit of romance and confusion and comedy ensue. Wilde's famous flamboyant flair for language combined with a comic plot makes this late-Victorian play a joy to study.



Unit 2 Prose: The Handmaid's Tale & Frankenstein



Studying two texts will encourage you to see connections and comparisons between these two iconic novels. How have the writers speculated about aspects of society? What impact do these imagined worlds have on the behaviour of the characters and the nature of society? What messages do these texts offer for a reader today? Look forward to exploring these questions and more when reading and discussing aspects of both novels.

Unit 3 Poetry

The poetry studied in Year 12 has all been written this century by living poets who occasionally contribute to Instagram or perform on YouTube. Their concerns are current ones (for example, the immigrant experience, female infanticide, the role that technology plays in our lives) and their writing provokes thought and engages the emotions.



Unit 4 Coursework

This is where you have the chance to show some independence and reveal what you can do when you read and think on your own. You will be supported by a member of staff, but you can select one of your own texts to analyse and evaluate. You will write comparatively and explore the significance of the contexts of the texts too.

How can I help myself and maximise my chances of doing well?

- Read as widely as possible; become an avid and diverse reader. Explore nineteenth century fiction (by canonical writers such as Dickens and Austen), twentieth century classics (by writers such as George Orwell and Virginia Woolf) and contemporary fiction (what is currently top of the bestseller lists?).
- Go to the theatre, whether in London, Cambridge or more locally in Hertford or Harlow. Watch film versions of major dramas, such as Marlon Brando's performance of *A Streetcar Named Desire*.
- Explore YouTube clips of modern poets in performance and in conversation. Follow your favourites on Twitter and Instagram.
- Listen to Arts Podcasts, several of which can be found on the BBC Sounds app such as Front Row or In Our Time.
- Read copies of Emagazine online, the literary publication intended for A level literature students. Follow this link:

• <https://www.englishandmedia.co.uk/e-magazine/emag-login>

and with the username charles and password dickens, a world of marvels awaits.

- Read the Arts pages of quality newspapers such as The Guardian, Times or Telegraph which you can find online or in the school library.

Explore the British Library website, Discovering Literature:

• <https://www.bl.uk/discovering-literature>

- Write frequently too. Use the Notes app on your phone or treat yourself to some fancy stationery. Record your thoughts on your reading material. What did you enjoy? Find challenging? Why?
- Remember - reading and writing are skills and, like all skills, you need to practise them in order to improve.
- Good luck and enjoy!