

English Curriculum Plan
Year 12 and 13 A Level Literature Hasmonean High School for Boys

At Key Stage 5 we provide students with an ambitious curriculum that utilises the skills acquired at KS3 and KS4 to further develop into sophisticated and effective researchers, presenters and critical thinkers through engagement with a rigorous AQA A-Level Programme. Students are encouraged to take a more proactive and independent role in lessons in order to enhance their confidence and inquisitive natures and to ensure they excel in new and more challenging areas of Literature study. Building on previous knowledge of critical lenses, the A level students are introduced to critical theory and advanced key concepts of genre to approach a range of texts including Shakespearean Tragedy, Elements of Crime Writing, and a coursework unit, where students are expected to select a published Anthology of Poetry and a Novel to respond to, either critically or creatively. The skills acquired throughout the course are also designed to help the students grow holistically and prepare them and give them confidence to embark on the next stage in their lives in either further studies or the working world.

Year 12



Tragedy

Year 12 Till October half term
 5 lessons over two weeks

TOPIC: Introduction to tragedy genre and applying this to unseen tragedy texts

BIG QUESTION: How has tragedy changed over time and how can I identify these features in a text?

CORE LEARNING:

Students will analyse the key aspects of tragedy in depth.

- Aristotle
- Freytag
- Hamartia
- Hubris
- Peripeteia
- Anagnorisis
- Fate
- Tragic hero



Crime

Year 12 Till October half term
 5 lessons over two weeks

TOPIC: Introduction to crime genre and elements of crime and applying this to unseen texts

BIG QUESTION: How have crime texts changed over time and how can I identify these features in a text?

CORE LEARNING:

Students will analyse the key aspects of crime texts

- Guilt
- Betrayal & loyalty
- Marginalised figures
- Criminals
- Victims
- Settings
- Justice
- Critical theory

- Critical theory
- Essay technique

Key Concepts

- Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.
- Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts.
- Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.
- Explore connections across literary texts.
- Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

Why this? Why now?

Particularly through the study of Shakespeare in KS3 and KS4, the students are familiar with the outcomes of tragedy and the progression or downfall of a tragic hero, the consequences of blind ambition and toxic masculinity as well as betrayal and the guilt that inevitably follows. These universal themes are still relevant to our society today and students can explore the darker side of human nature and its capabilities, often leading to crimes in society.

Introduction to the genre of tragedy begins through a variety of extracts, allowing the students to obtain a grounding of knowledge of the key concepts and contextual development of the Tragic Genre before examining set texts. Having started to examine concepts such as Hamartia at KS4, students now have the opportunity to explore the origins and developments of these concepts and how different writers in different periods of time utilise or adapt said concepts.

- Essay technique

Key Concepts

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Why this? Why now?

Throughout KS3 and KS4 the focus of English Literature has been to explore the theme of power and conflict and the results of the misuse or abuse of power and the consequences of conflict. As a natural progression, the results of abused power is usually obtained through crime and students have the opportunity to further develop an understanding of how writers question and portray these wider societal concerns.

The unit starts off with an introduction to essay writing with a particular focus on explorative and personal responses to a question; in contrast to Key Stage 4, students are now expected to problematise a question and substantiate a viewpoint. The A Level scheme begins with introducing this skill as this is the biggest jump from the GCSE to the A Level course. This is first introduced through some of the set texts from the GCSE, so that the students are aware of how the skills of analysis develop in A Level, while being familiar and comfortable with the texts. This is paired with an introduction to the Crime Genre so that students are prepared to contextualise unseen passages.



Tragedy

Year 12 Till February half term

5 lessons over two weeks

TOPIC: *The Great Gatsby* by F Scott Fitzgerald

BIG QUESTION: How can traditional tragic concepts be applied to a modern text?

CORE LEARNING:

Students will analyse the key aspects of tragedy in depth.

- Fate
- Tragic hero
- Setting
- Marginalised characters
- Narrative voice
- The American Dream
- Critical theory
- Essay technique

Key Concepts

- Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.
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- Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.



Crime

Year 12 Till February half term

5 lessons over two weeks

TOPIC: *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* by Agatha Christie

BIG QUESTION: How have crime texts changed over time and how can I identify these features in a text?

CORE LEARNING:

Students will analyse the key aspects of crime texts

- Narrative voice
- Golden Age
- Detective Fiction
- Red herrings; McGuffins; Chekhov's Gun
- Milieu
- Critical theory
- Essay technique

Key Concepts

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Why this? Why now?

Most students will enter the course with some knowledge of the plot of Gatsby and its prevalence in popular culture. Using their knowledge from KS3 and KS4, the students are familiar with the effects of contextual factors on a tragic plot and Gatsby gives the opportunity to question why these factors are still relevant and therefore why this text retains such popularity.

As an enjoyable and accessible text, The Great Gatsby is the first A Level set text to be studied as a whole. As the remaining tragedy texts for this paper are Shakespeare plays, students have the opportunity to explore modern day concepts of tragedy which will be invaluable when contrasting to the remaining Renaissance texts.

Why this? Why now?

As an enjoyable and accessible text, The Murder of Roger Ackroyd is the first A Level set text to be studied as a whole. As a “typical” post-war detective fiction, students can utilise a grounded knowledge of the text to contrast with more nuanced applications of elements of crime in the other set texts. Students are introduced to the credence of narrative voice and the relationship between reader, writer and narrator. The teaching of this text will simultaneously lend itself to the two sections of the paper: single text focus (Section B); conceptual understanding of the text in relation to tragic components and genre (Section C).



Tragedy

Year 12 Till May half term

5 lessons over two weeks

TOPIC: Othello, William Shakespeare

BIG QUESTION: How has Shakespeare complicated the traditional tragic concepts?

CORE LEARNING:

Students will analyse the key aspects of tragedy in depth.

- Fate
- Tragic hero
- Setting
- Women and femininity
- Manipulation
- The power of language
- Narrative voice
- Racism
- Identity
- Critical theory
- Essay technique

Key Concepts

- Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written



Crime

Year 12 Till May half term

5 lessons over two weeks

TOPIC: Crabbe/Browning/Wilde poetry

BIG QUESTION: In shorter texts, how have poets complicated traditional ideas of criminals, victims, crime and justice?

CORE LEARNING:

Students will analyse the key aspects of crime texts

- Narrative voice
- Victims and victimhood
- Contexts and settings
- Abuse of power
- Criminality
- Critical theory
- Essay technique

Key Concepts

- Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written

expression.

- Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts.
- Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.
- Explore connections across literary texts.
- Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

Why this? Why now?

Using their knowledge from KS3 and KS4, the students are familiar with the effects of contextual factors on a tragic plot and they now also have a grounding in the knowledge of modern tragedies through Gatsby. This unit allows students to revisit and consolidate previous learning, and marry knowledge from both the earlier A Level units and KS4 learning of Renaissance texts.

The teaching of Othello will simultaneously lend itself to the two sections of the paper: close analytical reading and understanding significance of extracts (Section A); conceptual understanding of the text in relation to tragic components and genre (Section B).

If a teacher identifies any misconceptions in knowledge, the positioning of the text in the scheme will allow them to utilise the time at the end of Year 12 to address and iron out concerns.

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- Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.
- Explore connections across literary texts.
- Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

Why this? Why now?

Students were introduced to the credence of narrative voice and the relationship between reader, writer and narrator through the manipulative criminal within TMORA. Now, students have the opportunity to broaden the focus on narrative voice to explore the perception of criminality and victims and how often, these two elements converge through the narrative voice. Students are studying Shakespeare in the parallel unit, and therefore an emphasis on poetic form and how writers utilise this form to influence the reader/audience is explored further.

The teaching of this text will simultaneously lend itself to the two sections of the paper: single text focus (Section B); conceptual understanding of the text in relation to tragic components and genre (Section C).

If a teacher identifies any misconceptions in knowledge, the positioning of the text in the scheme will allow them to utilise the time at the end of Year 12 to address and iron out concerns.



Critical Theory and NEA

Year 12 **Till January** Year 13

Lesson time and tutorials to teacher's discretion

BIG QUESTION: How can a student apply critical theory and independent research to prose and poetry texts?

CORE LEARNING:

Students will develop and apply a knowledge of the following critical theories:

- Feminism
- Marxism
- Eco-criticism
- Narrative Theory
- Post-colonialism
- Literary value and the Canon

Key Concepts

- Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.
- Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts.
- Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.
- Explore connections across literary texts.
- Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

Why this? Why now?

By concluding the first half of the A Level course with the A-level non-exam assessment component, this provides opportunities for students to pursue their own areas of interest and develop personal and independent learning skills. This includes writing creatively through the re-creative option.

Through the integration of a critical anthology with A-level non-exam assessment study, students are able to explore some of the critical and theoretical approaches that form the basis for literary study which in turn informs and illuminates their own reading of texts, independent investigation and the development of a critical voice.

As this unit is a non-teaching component, the summer break allows the students to focus on their own chosen texts.

The January Year 13 final deadline is designed to allow students to use the critical skills they would have explored further in their NEA for their written exams in May and to allow them to focus on revision.

Year 13



Tragedy

Year 13 Till February half term

5 lessons over two weeks

TOPIC: *Richard II, William Shakespeare (in conjunction with *The Great Gatsby* by F Scott Fitzgerald and consolidating *Othello*)*

BIG QUESTION: How has Shakespeare complicated the traditional tragic hero? How can this compare to modern texts such as TGG?

CORE LEARNING:

Students will analyse the key aspects of tragedy in depth.

- Fate
- Tragic hero
- Setting
- Women and femininity
- The power of language
- Identity
- Epic vs. domestic tragedy
- Public vs. Private

Key Concepts

- Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.
- Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts.
- Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the



Crime

Year 13 Till February half term

5 lessons over two weeks

TOPIC: *Atonement by Ian McEwan*

BIG QUESTION: Can the reader draw conclusions about the nature of the reliability of the narrator? How can an unreliable narrator complicate ideas of criminals, victims, crime and justice?

CORE LEARNING:

Students will analyse the key aspects of crime texts

- Narrative voice
- Victims and victimhood
- Contexts and settings
- Abuse of power
- Criminality
- Class
- Childhood
- Innocence
- War
- Postmodernism

Key Concepts

- Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.
- Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts.
- Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.

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- Explore connections across literary texts.
- Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

Why this? Why now?

The first term is dedicated to introducing Richard II as well as simultaneously consolidating knowledge from Othello and making thematic connections to TGG, in preparation for Section C of the Tragedy paper. By revisiting earlier texts in conjunction with Richard II, this ensures triangulation of the course.

- Explore connections across literary texts.
- Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

Why this? Why now?

As a challenging postmodern text, Atonement requires the students to have a familiarity with narrative structures and to have developed a mature response to crime writing and the knowledge of its history and conception. Having consolidated critical theories over the summer and crafting their analytical approaches to texts, the year begins with an elevation of knowledge.

The teaching of this text will simultaneously lend itself to the two sections of the paper: single text focus (Section B); conceptual understanding of the text in relation to tragic components and genre (Section C).



Revision and consolidation

Year 13 **Till May study leave Year 13**

Lesson time to teacher's discretion

Students will revise the key concepts of each text and the requirements of specific questions for each component.

Students will revise the key concepts required to successfully respond to each question across the two papers.

Students will be guided on how to make effective choices in exam conditions as to the questions they choose to answer for each section and the texts they choose to explore.

Why now? Why this?

Having covered the course content, we will spend the remainder of the year revising each component both in terms of the powerful knowledge students need to be comfortable recalling as well as how to apply this knowledge effectively to specific exam questions. We will be interleaving students' revision in small 'chunks'. The 'chunks' will get smaller as we near the exam.

Given that students' grades are entirely dependent on their performance in the final exams (excluding NEA which would have been completed by January Year 13 to allow students to focus solely on revision), it is imperative that students have enough time to revise and cement each component of the exams. Additionally, by including revision from this point in the year, students have ample opportunity to practice their exam skills and showcase their application of knowledge.

