

GETTING AHEAD



Start to develop skills that are relevant to your course before you join HSDC this September!

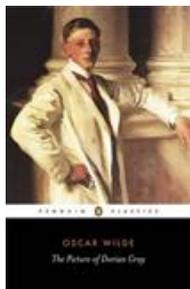
English Literature – A Level

This course is staffed by passionate and enthusiastic lecturers who love their subject and sharing their knowledge. The study of Literature brings with it the opportunity to take on new perspectives, explore ideas, beliefs and values, challenge or discover your own and learn the literary skills to express yourself in original and creative ways. These are skills that will be useful throughout your life and any career you choose.

Reading

In readiness for September please read:

The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde (1891) and *Beloved* by Toni Morrison (1987)



Research on the American dream

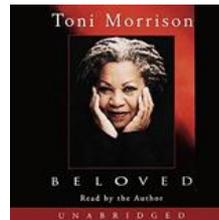
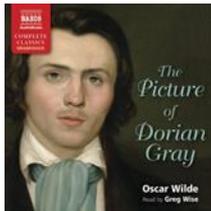
<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/a/american-dream.asp>

Listening

These are two of the books you will be studying in the first term. There are also really good audio versions available, in particular *Beloved* being read by Toni Morrison.

We look forward to seeing you in September!

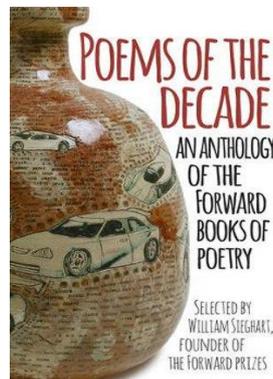
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These can be found on Audible, which is part of Amazon. Make sure you choose the unabridged versions! Other useful tools are the York Notes Advanced for both texts.

Poetry

In your first term you will also be studying a selection of poems from the Forward Poetry Anthology. It would be useful to buy the anthology for yourself as you will also be expected to compare the ones you have studied with an unknown poem.



To help you remind yourself of the skills needed for the close reading of a poem (ie, the detailed analysis of meaning, language, form and structure) we use the 'How a Poet Creates Meaning' sheet as a starting point to decide what we think the overarching meaning of the poem is. Try it out on the poem 'To My Nine Year Old Self', by Helen Dunmore, which is one of the ones we study. We'll share ideas when we see you next term.

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Collage work - take it further!

We sometimes unpack a poems' meaning through art, for example, making a collage of images which suggest the meaning of the poem. As part of our work on 'To My Nine Year Old Self' we ask you to remember what it was like being nine years old, so why not create a collage of images which tell us what you remember about that time. Use the poem for inspiration and include a picture of yourself if you wish!

Research

As part of your study of Literature you will be expected to undertake independent research into context. You'll be familiar with this from GCSE. Below is a loose timeline of arts movements which shows roughly where the texts you study fit in:

Anglo-Saxon – 700-1066

Medieval – 1066-1400 – *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Adapted Simon Armitage 2007) 1st/2nd year

Renaissance – 1400-1600 – William Shakespeare (1604), 2nd year (either *Measure for Measure* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream*)

Civil War – 1639-1649

The Age of Enlightenment – 1700-1780

Romantics – 1780-1830 – *Selected poems* John Keats, (1795-1821), 2nd year

Victorians – 1830-1900 – *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Oscar Wilde (1891) 1st year

Modernist – 1900-1980 – *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Tennessee Williams (1947)

Post-Modern – 1945-2000 - *Beloved* Toni Morrison (1987) 1st year (compared with Wilde)

Post 2000 – *Forward Poetry Anthology* 1st year

Find out some more about each of these movements. There's no need to do lots of writing, just be curious!

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Watch

[BBC Four - Culture in Quarantine: Shakespeare, Othello](#)

Raising the Bar 100 Years of Black British Theatre and Screen - Lenny Henry on *Othello* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b06nq1fd>

And finally....

EMAG is a really useful resource which we use a lot to complement our study of Literature. They have produced a book of resources and tasks specifically designed to help you prepare for the delights (and challenge) of studying A level. There's no need to work through the whole thing, but do dip in to the articles and do a couple of the tasks - they will help you prepare for your study.

Did You Know...

That we use Shakespeare's language every day?

'Aside from introducing an estimated 3,000 words into the English language, there are also everyday phrases the Bard coined that we still use today, 400 years later. The *British Council* report if it wasn't for Shakespeare we wouldn't be saying "heart of gold", "wild goose chase", "faint-hearted", "break the ice" or "love is blind".'

The Independent 22nd April 2016

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