

English Literature Bridging Assignment

“What an astonishing thing a book is. It's a flat object made from a tree with flexible parts on which are imprinted lots of funny dark squiggles. But one glance at it and you're inside the mind of another person...an author is speaking clearly and silently inside your head, directly to you. Writing is perhaps the greatest of human inventions, binding together people who never knew each other.”

Carl Sagan

The English Department at KAA is really pleased you have chosen to study English Literature and we are excited to start working with you in September.

English Literature is the perfect choice of subject at A-Level. The texts you study over the next two years will transport you to different historical periods and far-flung places; you'll see the world through the eyes of writers and their characters. You will be trying to find answers to the big philosophical and moral questions that are at the centre of all good literature.

You will also develop invaluable analytical skills to take forward in your life. Whether you go on to study English Literature at University or not, future employers will be on the lookout for young people with the skill-set that English Literature can help develop. By the end of the course, you'll be confident analysing detail, researching background and context, approaching a problem logically, and presenting a clear, coherent argument.

The step-up from GCSE to A-Level is difficult and you will need to use your summer break to prepare yourself for the type of work you are going to encounter in September. To help you do this, the English Department have designed a task to give you a taste of the demands of A-Level study.

There is a direct correlation between success at A-Level and students who read regularly. Alongside this work, you should read as much as possible. Aim for a novel a week; you'll arrive ready to meet the demands of the course.

Please bring in all your work when you start and do not hesitate to email with any questions.

Best wishes,

Mr J Clayton | Director of English | j.clayton@kaa.o rg.uk

Dystopia

noun

‘a society characterized by human misery, as squalor, oppression, disease, and overcrowding’

“There’s a rich tradition of dystopian tales in this country, narratives of disaster that have struck a widespread chord by *reflecting socio-political realities of their times*, **rendering worst-case scenarios as a warning to change our ways.**”

[S.McFadden, *The Guardian*, 26/10/16]

TASK 1

Thinking about the definition and statement above, read the opening chapters of the following texts. All are attached at the back of this pack.

- 1984 by George Orwell
- Brave New World by Aldus Huxley
- The Lottery by Shirley Jackson

[It is **strongly recommended** that you read the whole novels]

Make notes on the following areas...

In what ways do the stories ‘reflect...realities of their times’?

In what ways do the stories ‘warn’ us to ‘change our ways’?

TASK 2

Write an essay answering the following question:

How do the authors criticise society in their dystopian fiction?

You should try to demonstrate the skills that you will need at A-Level; your essay will be assessed on:

- Your ability to support your ideas with quotations and including these fluently in your writing.
- Your ability to analyse the effects that the authors create through their use of language, style and structure in the novels.
- Your ability to comment on the context of the novels and how it affects the way we read and interpret them.

TASK 3

Visit Book and Kitchen on All Saints Road (off Portobello Road)

Ask the staff there to recommend a piece of dystopian fiction.

Read at least one of their recommendations.



TASK 4

Watch the following dystopian films

For each film, complete the worksheet attached. You must be ready to discuss your ideas on each one.

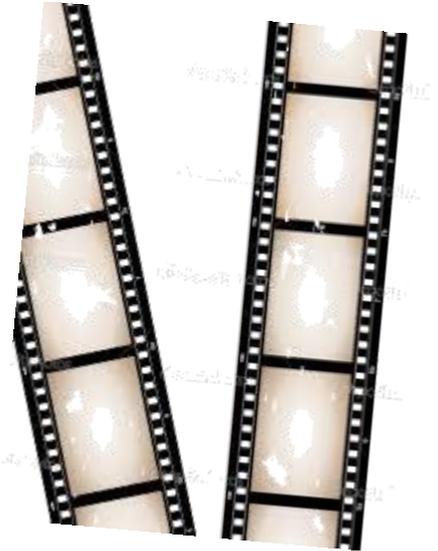
V for Vendetta (2006)

Minority Report (2002)

The Matrix (1999)

The Lobster (2015)

Children of Men (2016)



Dystopian film worksheet

Own word summary of the plot

Explain the dystopia presented in the film

How does the dystopia reflect real life?

What might it be warning people about?

TASK 6: The Extra Mile

Your success in English Literature depends on being curious about the writing around you.

Visit this exhibition at the British Library

Free entry!

<http://www.bl.uk/events/shakespeare-in-ten-acts>



Visit one of London's famous book shops

Treat yourself.

<http://www.buzzfeed.com/danieldalton/beautiful-bookshops-london#.jwIYAmPK3>

Skip the cinema and go to The Globe Theatre

Tickets are only £5 if you book in advance

<http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/theatre/whats-on>



Go on a literary walk around London

http://www.walks.com/standalone/literary_london_walks/default.aspx

Start your own reading blog

This can be a great way to motivate yourself to read and to get into the habit of reflecting.

Be ready to share your blog with your teacher when you start.

<http://blogger.com>