

A Level Language and Literature

Recommended Reading

(To stretch you, enhance your learning and broaden your literary horizons...)

General wider reading

Classics

Homer '*The Odyssey*' and '*The Illiad*' (the ultimate Greek adventure)

Austen, '*Pride and Prejudice*', '*Emma*', '*Northanger Abbey*' (The most accessible Austens)

Dickens, '*Great Expectations*', '*Hard Times*', '*Short Stories*', '*A Tale of Two Cities*'

Woolf, '*Orlando*', '*To the Lighthouse*', '*Mrs Dalloway*' (Get to grips with Modern Stream of Consciousness)

Perkins Gilman, '*The Yellow Wallpaper*' (Unnerving novella about mental breakdown)

Hawthorne, '*The Scarlet Letter*' (Early American novel - adultery and redemption)

Bronte, C, '*Jane Eyre*' (Early feminist bildungsroman)

Bronte, E, '*Wuthering Heights*' (Classic gothic love-story. Great for understanding narrative)

Stoker, '*Dracula*' (The one with the blood sucking vampire...)

Hardy, '*Tess of the D'Urbervilles*', '*Far from the Madding Crowd*' (Bridging the Victorian novel and the modern, sad and beautiful novels)

Wilde, '*Picture of Dorian Gray*' (Oh the price of wanting to stay young....)

Collins, '*The Moonstone*', '*The Woman in White*' (Late Victorian mysteries)

Ed. Heaney, '*Beowulf*' (one of the earliest recorded written stories)

Du Maurier, '*Rebecca*' (Gothic novel)

Classics (some more modern ones...)

Orwell, '*1984*' and '*Animal Farm*' and '*Down and Out in Paris and London*' (British political novels)

Huxley, '*Brave New World*' (Influential novel set in a dystopian future)

Greene, '*Brighton Rock*' (Gang violence in Brighton)

Golding, '*Lord of the Flies*' (Classic story of what happens when a bunch of boys become stranded...)

Twain, '*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*', '*Tom Sawyer*' (Early American stories of childhood)

Atwood, '*The Handmaid's Tale*', '*The Testaments*' and '*Alias Grace*'

Hosseini, '*The Kite Runner*' (Growing up in 1970s Afghanistan - terrifyingly brilliant)

Barker, '*Regeneration*' (First in trilogy about WWI)

Nabokov, '*Lolita*' (beautiful writing, unpleasant narrative voice...)

Joyce, '*Portrait of the Artist*', '*Dubliners*' (classic Irish fiction)

Tartt, '*The Secret History*', '*The Goldfinch*' (Disturbing and enthralling American novels)

D H Lawrence, '*Lady Chatterley's Lover*' (infamously sexual content....)

Course specific

Frankenstein

Stoker, '*Dracula*' (familiarise yourself with Gothic style)

Lewis, '*The Monk*' (unnerving, horrible yet fun Gothic horror)

Walpole, '*The Castle of Otranto*' (more Gothic, this one is credited as the prototype of its kind)

Wollstonecraft, '*A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*' (Shelley's mother and a fierce activist)

Godwin, '*Caleb Williams*' (Shelley's father - also a radical political voice of the period)

All My Sons

Steinbeck, '*The Grapes of Wrath*' and '*Of Mice and Men*' (good for American Dream...)

Tennessee Williams, '*Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*'

Henrik Ibsen, '*A Doll's House*'

The Great Gatsby

Conrad, '*Heart of Darkness*' (hugely influenced FSF)

TS Eliot, '*The Wasteland*' (a tricky poem, but an important text from the early C20th that influenced FSF)

Henry James, '*The Turn of the Screw*' (Early C20th American writer - an unnerving 'ghost' story)

Othello

Bradley, AC '*Shakespearean Tragedy: Lectures on Hamlet, Othello, King Lear and Macbeth*'

Heilman, '*Magic in the Web: Action and Language in Othello*'

Ed. Honigman, '*Othello*' Arden Shakespeare (the introduction to the Arden edition is excellent)

Recasting texts

Bronte, '*Jane Eyre*' with Rhys '*Wide Sargasso Sea*'

Austen, '*Pride and Prejudice*' with Baker, '*Longbourn*'

Woolf, '*Mrs Dalloway*' with Cunningham, '*The Hours*'

Carter, '*The Bloody Chamber*' (excellent retelling of classic fairy tales)

De France, '*The Lais of Marie de France*' (translations of medieval French poems which turn the tradition of 'fairy tales' on their head)

De Voragine, '*The Golden Legend*' (retelling of the female Saints stories - some gory bits so be warned!)

Poetry

Chaucer, *'The General Prologue'*

Blake, *'Songs of Innocence and Experience'*

Coleridge, *'The Ancient Mariner'*, *'Kubla Khan'*

Wordsworth, *'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud'*, *'We are Seven'* *'Composed Upon Westminster Bridge'*

Shelley, *'To Wordsworth'* (shows how the Romantic poets would interact with each other through their work and be inspired by each other - links to Browning's *'The Lost Leader'*)

Byron, *'Don Juan'*

Keats, *'La Belle Dame Sans Merci'*

Thomas, *'Do Not Go Gentle into that Good Night'*

Rossetti, C, *'Remember'*

Toomer, *'Cane'* including *'The Harvest Song'* (Harlem Renaissance literature exploring black identity)

Hughes, *'Harlem Sweeties'* (Harlem Renaissance)

Hughes. T, *'Daffodils'*, *'Birthday Letters'* (collection written to/for Sylvia Plath)

Plath, *'Morning Song'* *'Ariel'*

Heaney, *'Digging'*, *'Clearances'* *'Beowulf'*

Duffy, *'Little Red-Cap'*.

Critical essays

De Beauvoir, *'The Second Sex'* (discussion of gender politics)

Bourke, *'Dismembering the Male'* (Not as gory as it sounds...gender politics)

Hornby, *'Ten Years in the Tub'* (A memoir of reading)

King, *'On Writing: A memoir of the craft'* (By the master of horror, Stephen King)

Sutherland, '*Lives of the Novelists: A history of fiction*'

Woolf, '*A Room of One's Own*' (reflections on breaking through as a female writer)

Our Favourites

Mrs Balmer's:

Non-fiction:

Susan Black '*All That Remains*' (about death)

Caitlin Moran '*How to be a Woman*' (not for the boys.. Or maybe it should be)

RD Laing '*Self and others* (psychoanalysis for the sixties generation)

Susan Showalter '*The Female Malady*' (going mad in Literature)

Tomalin '*Samuel Pepys*' and '*Charles Dickens*' (biography)

Hermione Lee '*Virginia Woolf*' (biography)

Jung Chang '*Wild Swans*' (amazing multigenerational story about C20th China)

Bevor '*Stalingrad*' (WW2 siege)

Fiction

Kingsolver '*The Poisonwood Bible*'

Atkinson '*Life after Life*' '*Behind the Scenes at the Museum*'

Eco '*The Name of the Rose*'

Mantel '*Wolf Hall*' '*Bring up the Bodies*'

Dickens '*Bleak House*'

Flaubert '*Madame Bovary*'

Suskind '*Perfume*'

Austen '*Persuasion*'

St. John Mandel '*Station Eleven*' (great book about a Pandemic virus...)

Mr Smith's:

Eric Carle: '*The Very Hungry Caterpillar*'

Scheffler & Donaldson: '*The Gruffalo*'

George Orwell '*Nineteen Eighty Four*'

Cormac McCarthy '*Blood Meridian*'

Kurt Vonnegut, '*Slaughterhouse-Five*'

Tom Franklin '*Crooked Letter, Crooked Letter*'

Tom Franklin *'Hell at the Breech'*

Philip K. Dick *'Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?'*

Miss Hassell's:

Non-Fiction

Kay, *'This is Going to Hurt: The Diaries of a Junior Doctor'*

Butler, *'Gender Theory'*

Woolf, *'A Room of One's Own'*

Fiction

Walker, *'The Color Purple'*

Neale-Hurston, *'Their Eyes Were Watching God'*

Schuyler, *'Black No More'*

Honeyman, *'Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine'*

Alderman, *'The Power'*

Hosseini, *'A Thousand Splendid Suns', 'And The Mountains Echoed'*

Donoghue, *'Room'*

Keyes, *'The Break'*

Lee, *'To Kill a Mockingbird'*

Poets

Heaney

Wordsworth

Coleridge

Keats

Clarke