

- "Literature adds to reality, it does not simply describe it. It enriches the necessary competencies that daily life requires and provides; and in this respect, it irrigates the deserts that our lives have already become."  
- C.S. Lewis

# Studying English Literature at A Level:

- Write down **three qualities** you think a successful English Literature student should possess.
- What do you think might be the positives of English Literature at A Level?
- What do you think the challenges of studying English Literature at A Level might be?
- Now note down how you might overcome these challenges.

# Course Division:

## Teacher 1:

- Drama texts (component 1)
- Poetry collection (component 3)
- Coursework (component 4)
  
- Study time: 3 hours per week

## Teacher 2:

- Prose (component 2)
- Contemporary poetry (component 3)
- Coursework (component 4)
  
- Study time: 2 hours per week

# Components:

## **Three** exams:

- Component 1: Drama (2 hours, 15 minutes) (60 marks)
- Component 2: Prose (1 hour) (40 marks)
- Component 3: Poetry (2 hours, 15 minutes) (60 marks)

## **Coursework** :

- Component 4: One extended comparative essay referring to two texts (2500-3000 words ) (60 marks)

# Drama: Assessment

## **Section A:** Shakespeare (King Lear/Othello)

- A choice from two questions on the studied text. Students produce an essay response.
- AO1, AO2, AO3, AO5 assessed.
- 35 marks
- Open book (but can't take in Critical Anthology)

## **Section B:** Other drama (Dr Faustus/A Streetcar Named Desire)

- A choice from two questions on the studied drama text. Students produce an essay response.
- AO1, AO2, AO3 assessed.
- 25 marks
- Open book

# Prose: Assessment

- A choice of two questions on the studied prose texts. Students produce an essay response.
- Texts: 'Frankenstein' and 'The Handmaid's Tale'
- AO1, AO2, AO3, AO4 assessed
- 40 marks
- Open book

# Poetry: Assessment

Paper length: 2 hours and 15 minutes

## **Section A:** Contemporary Poetry (Poems of the Decade)

- A choice of two questions on an unseen poem in comparison with a named poem from the studied contemporary collection.
- AO1, AO2, AO4 assessed.
- 30 marks
- Open book
- 20 taught poems

## **Section B:** Poetry Collections (Choice between a named poet or a poetry movement)

- A choice of two questions on the studied poetry period or author. Students produce an essay response.
- AO1, AO2, AO3 assessed.
- 30 marks
- Open book
- 30 taught poems

# Coursework:

- Comparative essay (2500-3000 words)
- Title is chosen by students (but agreed by teachers)
- Focus on independence as preparation for study beyond A Level

Pairings for current Year 12 have included:

- '1984' and 'A Brave New World',
- 'Oranges are not the only Fruit' and 'Behind the Scenes at the Museum'
- 'Saturday Night, Sunday Morning' and 'A Kestrel for a Knave'
- 'Union Street' and 'A Taste of Honey'
- 'Wuthering Heights' and 'The Great Gatsby'

A Level Literature – A taster!

# What's it about?

- Juggernaut
- Jacuzzi
- forbidden fruit
- A beached whale on a king sized bed craving a wave
- Globe of a cheek
- A tidal wave of flesh

LO: To discuss Agbabi's exploration of the power dynamic in a relationship

LO: To take part in a critical discussion about 'Eat Me' which will offer preparation for a summer essay.

# Reading the poem

- Pay close attention to these words / phrases as you come across them in context.
- Does anything surprise you?

# SASI

- Subject/Context
- Attitudes
- Structure/Form
- Imagery/Language

# Subject/Context

- Dramatic monologue charting the story of the first person narrator's abuse at the hands of her partner.
- The narrator describes an unhealthy and extreme relationship in which her partner feeds her to the point of extreme obesity until she snaps and kills him, smothering him with her body.

So, what are the key concerns of the poem?

- Control – relationships
- Power / insecurity
- Sexual fetish
- Abuse
- Greed
- Anything else?

# A02: Form, Structure and Language

## Form:

- Sonnet; Narrative poem; Argument; lyrical poem (a poem that centres on a significant moment in the poet's life, focusing on emotions the event creates); ballad; allegorical poem (containing literal and symbolic meaning); free verse (no set pattern); blank verse (unrhymed iambic pentameter); epic poem (a narrative poem recounting the deeds of a legendary hero); ode (a poem typically addressed to specific subject); elegy (a sad poem about the death of a loved one); dramatic monologue
- shape of the poem (i.e. use of stanzas and variation)

## Structure:

- The ordering of the poems; use of repetition; use of contrast; cyclical effect; climax; foreshadowing;

## Language:

- Use of imagery (simile, metaphor, etc.); vocabulary choices; rhyme, rhythm, tone

# Attitudes/emotions/feelings

- The partner's power and control
- The narrator's submission to the partner's dominance
- The narrator's suffering
- The narrator's lack of self-esteem/self disgust
- Sense of menace
- Disgust at greed/consumption
- Power shift in final two stanzas
- Alternative reading – post colonial view-point

# Structure/Form

- Dramatic monologue charting the story of the first person narrator's abuse at the hands of her partner. Vivid account of her situation is provided
- Use of reported speech for the partner (written in italics). ***In what ways does this other voice contribute to the effect/impact of the poem?***
- No set rhythm, therefore sounds conversational
- Written in tercets (three line stanzas); no variation in stanza length
- Rigid rhyme scheme (aba) although it employs half rhyme. ***Why might the rhyme scheme be so rigid? i.e. what might it aim to reflect?***
- Deliberate variation in sentence lengths. ***Where do you see short sentences used for a specific effect? Where do you see long sentences used? Why?***
- Use of anaphora (the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses) in stanza 7. ***Why is this used? i.e. what might it emphasise about the narrator and her sense of self?***
- Use of enjambment. ***Where do you see examples and why?***
- 'The shift' in the poem. ***How is this signalled? Comments?***

# Imagery/language: *Find examples and explore the effect*

- Metaphor
- Simile
- Natural imagery – why?
- Patterns of alliteration, assonance (repetition of vowel sounds) and repetition
- Use of irony
- Imperatives (and don't forget the title)
- Use of triplet
- Language of excess

# Essay task:

- **Explore the ways Patience Agbabi presents the struggle for control in 'Eat Me'**
- Upload essay to... Showbie Code to follow...
- Due date: beginning of the first week of Year 12

## **Essay structure:** a reminder!

Introduction – setting out the direction of your response – you will, in short, answer the question

Main body – a series of points, using quotations from the poem to support your views/arguments. Follow the 'point, evidence, explanation, link to language/form/structure/context' structure for points

Conclusion – in which you sum up your answer to the question

# Poetic terminology

Assonance

Rhyme/half-rhyme

Alliteration

Simile/metaphor

Personification

Onomatopoeia

Stanza

Tercet

Quatrain

Narrative poem

First person perspective

The speaker

Caesura

Plosive

Enjambment

End stopped

Internal rhyme

Oxymoron

Extended metaphor

Imagery

Discord

Couplet

Rhythm

Tone/mood

Anaphora

Dramatic monologue

# Writing about poems:

- Evokes, presents, shows, conveys, describes, outlines, explores, reflects, reinforces, underlines, highlights, emphasises
- It could be argued... One reading is... Another possibility... Obviously... Of course... One interpretation is... It could be regarded as... Certainly there are...
- Connectives: whereas, in contrast, similarly, differing from, however, on the other hand, whilst, alternatively, conversely, furthermore, moreover, consequently