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DELEGATE BOOKLET

14GBAE03

Getting Ready to Teach Pearson's new AS and A level English Literature specifications from 2015

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About this event

Course Title:

Getting Ready to Teach Pearson's new AS and A level English Literature specifications from 2015

Course Code: 14GBAE03

Aims and Objectives of the event

During the session delegates will:

- Consider the structure, content and assessment of these new qualifications, and the support available to guide you through these changes
- Explore possible teaching and delivery strategies for the new qualifications, including co -teaching AS and A level
- Take part in planning activities
- Have the opportunity to network and share ideas with other teachers

Agenda of Event

Time	Item
09.30 - 09.45	Welcome and Introduction Review of criteria changes
09.45 – 10.05	Specification overview
10.05 – 10.30	Planning
10.30 – 10.35	Markschemes
10.35- 10.45	Coffee
10.45 – 11.15	Component 1 - Drama
11.15– 11.30	Component 2 - Prose
11.30 – 11.50	Component 3 - Poetry
11.50 – 12.10	Coursework
12.10 – 12.25	AS
12.25 – 12.30	Support

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A Level English Literature: text checklist

Component 1	**Shakespeare**		**Other drama**	
	Tragedy *Antony and Cleopatra*	☐	**Tragedy** *Doctor Faustus*	☐
	Hamlet	☐	*The Duchess of Malfi*	☐
	King Lear	☐	*The Home Place*	☐
	Othello	☐	*A Streetcar Named Desire*	☐
	Comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream*	☐	**Comedy** *The Importance of Being Earnest*	☐
	Measure for Measure	☐	*The Pitmen Painters*	☐
	The Taming of the Shrew	☐	*The Rover*	☐
	Twelfth Night	☐	*Waiting for Godot*	☐

Component 2	**Childhood**		**Colonisation and its Aftermath**	
	What Maisie Knew	☐	*Heart of Darkness*	☐
	Hard Times	☐	*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*	☐
	Atonement	☐	*A Passage to India*	☐
	The Color Purple	☐	*The Lonely Londoners*	☐
Component 2	**The Supernatural**		**Women and Society**	
	The Picture of Dorian Gray	☐	*Wuthering Heights*	☐
	Dracula	☐	*Tess of the D'Urbervilles*	☐
	The Little Stranger	☐	*Mrs Dalloway*	☐
	Beloved	☐	*A Thousand Splendid Suns*	☐
Component 2	**Crime and Detection**		**Science and Society**	
	Lady Audley's Secret	☐	*Frankenstein*	☐
	The Moonstone	☐	*The War of the Worlds*	☐
	In Cold Blood	☐	*Never Let Me Go*	☐
	The Murder Room	☐	*The Handmaid's Tale*	☐

Component 3	The Medieval Period	☐	Geoffrey Chaucer	☐
	The Metaphysical Poets	☐	John Donne	☐
	The Romantics	☐	John Keats	☐
	The Victorians	☐	Christina Rossetti	☐
	Modernism	☐	T S Eliot	☐
	The Movement	☐	Philip Larkin	☐

A Level English Literature: course planning

Questions to consider:

Are you planning to co-teach AS and A level, or just A level?

What do we know works well in the first term?

What text types will your students be familiar with from GCSE i.e. will they be doing British prose or British drama for their post- 1914 text?

What do we know will ensure stretch and challenge in Year 13?

How will you balance and take advantage of the skills and knowledge of different teachers in your department and support any less experienced teachers?

How will the course content be divided if being delivered by 2 teachers?

Where do we want to place coursework in terms of being able to build on students' skills gained through the course without having a last minute panic?

Is there opportunity to begin coursework preparation if co-teaching AS and A level while some are doing exam preparation/exam sitting?

Example 1: Co-teaching AS and A level students in year 1

Year 1

Autumn 1	• Contemporary poetry
Autumn 2	• Drama • AS paper 1 section B mock exam
Spring 1	• Prose
Spring 2	• Prose • AS paper 2 mock exam
Summer 1	• Contemporary Poetry • AS paper 2 section A mock exam
Summer 2	• Revision • AS Exams • Selection of coursework texts (A level students only)

Year 2

Autumn 1	• Coursework • Shakespeare
Autumn 2	• Shakespeare • Drama revision • Paper 1 mock exam
Spring 1	• Poetry movement/poet
Spring 2	• Unseen • Poetry revision • A level paper 3 mock
Summer 1	• Prose revision • A level paper 2 mock • Drama/Poetry revision
Summer 2	• A level exams

Example 2: Co-teaching AS and A level students in year 1

Year 1

Autumn 1	• 'Other' drama
Autumn 2	• Contemporary Poetry • Prose (text 1)
Spring 1	• Prose (text 2)
Spring 2	• Poetry • Prose and poetry revision
Summer 1	• Drama revision
Summer 2	• Revision • AS Exams • Selection of coursework texts (A level students only)

Year 2

Autumn 1	• Coursework • Unseen contemporary poetry
Autumn 2	• Shakespeare • Critical reading • Completion of coursework
Spring 1	• Poetry movement/poet
Spring 2	• Contemporary poetry revision • Prose revision
Summer 1	• Shakespeare revision • Poetry movement/poet revision • Drama revision
Summer 2	• A level exams

Example 3: 2-year linear course (without AS examination)

Year 1

Autumn 1	• Shakespeare
Autumn 2	• Shakespeare Critical Anthology • Contemporary Poetry
Spring 1	• Drama
Spring 2	• Contemporary Poetry
Summer 1	• Unseen analysis
Summer 2	• Coursework

Year 2

Autumn 1	• Coursework • Prose
Autumn 2	• Prose
Spring 1	• Poetry movement/poet
Spring 2	• Drama revision
Summer 1	• Poetry and Prose revision
Summer 2	• Exams

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A Level ENGLISH LITERATURE COURSE PLANNER

Year 1

Autumn 1	Autumn 2

Spring 1	Spring 2

Summer 1	Summer 2

Year 2

Autumn 1	Autumn 2

Spring 1	Spring 2

Summer 1	Summer 2

A Level English Literature: Mark Scheme Example – 'other' drama

	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–5	**Descriptive** • Makes little reference to texts with limited organisation of ideas. Limited use of appropriate concepts and terminology with frequent errors and lapses of expression. • Uses a narrative or descriptive approach that shows limited knowledge of texts and how meanings are shaped in texts. Shows a lack of understanding of the writer's craft. • Shows limited awareness of contextual factors.
Level 2	6–10	**General understanding/exploration** • Makes general points, identifying some literary techniques with general explanation of effects. Aware of some appropriate concepts and terminology. Organises and expresses ideas with clarity, although still has errors and lapses. • Gives surface readings of texts relating to how meanings are shaped in texts. Shows general understanding by commenting on straightforward elements of the writer's craft. • Has general awareness of the significance and influence of contextual factors. Makes general links between texts and contexts.
Level 3	11–15	**Clear relevant application/exporation** • Offers a clear response using relevant textual examples. Relevant use of terminology and concepts. Creates a logical, clear structure with few errors and lapses in expression. • Demonstrates knowledge of how meanings are shaped in texts with consistent analysis. Shows clear understanding of the writer's craft. • Demonstrates a clear exploration of the significance and influence of contextual factors. Develops relevant links between texts and contexts.
Level 4	16–20	**Discriminating controlled application/exploration** • Constructs a controlled argument with fluently embedded examples. Discriminating use of concepts and terminology. Controls structures with precise cohesive transitions and carefully chosen language. • Demonstrates discriminating understanding of how meanings are shaped in texts. Analyses, in a controlled way, the nuances and subtleties of the writer's craft. • Provides a discriminating analysis of the significance and influence of contextual factors. Makes detailed links between texts and contexts.
Level 5	21–25	**Critical and evaluative** • Presents a critical evaluative argument with sustained textual examples. Evaluates the effects of literary features with sophisticated use of concepts and terminology. Uses sophisticated structure and expression. • Exhibits a critical evaluation of the ways meanings are shaped in texts. Displays a sophisticated understanding of the writer's craft. • Presents a sophisticated evaluation and appreciation of the significance and influence of contextual factors. Makes sophisticated links between texts and contexts.

Poems of the Decade teacher support

Example 1: Vicki Feaver, 'The Gun'

Biography
Vicki Feaver (b. 1943) grew up in Nottingham "in a house of quarrelling women", an emotional inheritance which finds later expression in her poetry. She studied Music at Durham University and English University College, London and worked as a lecturer in English and Creative Writing at University College, Chichester, becoming Emeritus Professor.

Her three collections have been highly praised, the second, *The Handless Maiden* (Jonathan Cape, 1994), included both the Arvon International Poetry Competition finalist 'Lily Pond', and 'Judith', winner of the Forward Poetry Prize for Best Single Poem. The same collection was also given a Heinemann Prize and shortlisted for the Forward Prize. Her most recent collection, *The Book of Blood* (Jonathan Cape, 2006) was shortlisted for the 2006 Costa Poetry Award.

Her dark and sensual re-workings of myth and fairy-tale have been termed "domestic gothic" by fellow poet Matthew Sweeney. While her poems incorporate objects from everyday life, Feaver often grafts them onto the transgressive power of these old tales, allowing her a space to explore emotions and desires which women are not usually allowed (or don't allow themselves) to express. A central concern of her work is female creativity and its repression, and how this can find an outlet in violence.

Vicki Feaver currently lives in South Lanarkshire, Scotland.

Key features
This poem's audacious relish of the physical acknowledges the thrill of connection between sex, death and life.

The opening stanza is dramatic, shocking even; a line – literal and metaphorical – has been crossed. The house is traditionally associated with life and family, a place where we feel safe. What enters into this sanctuary is a potential threat, a means of taking life.

The atmosphere of violence is sustained throughout the poem, particularly through the sound of the language and the structure of the lines and stanzas. In the second stanza for instance, short lines and disruptive line breaks combine with hard, consonantal sounds to give an angular, edgy feel to the description of the gun. It's as if the gun's explosive potential is embedded in the sound the poem makes.

Enjambment, the running on of units of sense over two or more lines, also has the effect of shining a small spotlight on those words at the end and start of a line. 'The Gun' is full of such examples e.g. "a rabbit shot/ clean through the head" or "Your hands reek of gun oil/ and entrails. You trample/ fur and feathers". In this way the line breaks enact the violent encounter between the human and animal world.

The poem also breaks contemporary liberal taboos around hunting and valuing the natural world, as well as gender roles: the narrator is seen as complicit in the gun's use, but in a traditional female role, cooking what the man has brought her.

By exploring the primitive thrill of hunting and its connection to our most basic instincts, Feaver prepares the ground for the extraordinary last stanza. At this point we move into a world of ancient rites and pagan beliefs with the appearance of the King of Death. The poem's contention that death

brings life more starkly into focus is beautifully expressed in the last image of the King's mouth "sprouting golden crocuses".

Teaching activities/ discussion points

- What do you think the narrator means when she says "A gun brings a house alive"? What evidence does the poem present to support this idea? Does the poem convince you this is the case?

- Look closely at the line breaks in the poem – what do you notice about them? How do you think they connect to the poem's subject matter?

- Split the class into four groups and assign each of them one of the longer stanzas to analyse. Ask them to look at the predominant sounds in each stanza, including examples of alliteration, assonance and rhyme/ half rhyme. Discuss as a class how these contribute to the poem's overall impact.

Links to other poems

Patience Agbabi's 'Eat Me' forms an interesting counterpoint to Feaver's poem. It's also about appetite, but the gender roles play out very differently, though the poem's share a highly sensual approach to language.

Further resources

This is an interesting and wide-ranging interview from earlier in Feaver's career:
http://www.poetrymagazines.org.uk/magazine/record.asp?id=3900

A Guardian review of *The Book of Blood* from which 'The Gun' is taken sets the poem in context with the broader themes of Feaver's recent work:
http://www.theguardian.com/books/2006/sep/30/featuresreviews.guardianreview22

This article from leading poetry magazine, *Magma*, is interesting as it shows Feaver taking inspiration from an earlier poet, Edward Thomas, to create a poem of her own:
http://magmapoetry.com/archive/magma-54-2-2/articles/presiding-spirits-vicki-feaver-talks-to-judy-brown/

Example 2: Sinead Morrissey, 'Genetics'

Biography
Sinéad Morrissey (b. 1972) grew up in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and was made the city's inaugural Poet Laureate in 2013. Educated at Trinity College, Dublin, she has travelled widely and lived in Japan and New Zealand, experiences that left a mark on her early poetry. She returned to her birthplace in 1999. In 2002 she was appointed Writer in Residence at Queen's University Belfast, and she is currently Reader in Creative Writing at the Seamus Heaney Centre for Poetry at Queen's.

She has published five collections of poetry, the last four of which were shortlisted for the T. S. Eliot Prize which she finally won in 2013 with her most recent collection, *Parallax* (Carcanet, 2012). Other accolades include the Patrick Kavanagh Award (of which she was the youngest ever winner), the Michael Hartnett Prize and the Irish Times/Poetry Now Award. In 2007 she took first prize in the National Poetry Competition with 'Through the Square Window', the title poem of her fourth collection which was also shortlisted for the Forward Poetry Prize for Best Poetry Collection.

Wide-ranging in their subject matter, Morrissey's poems are beautifully controlled with a literary sophistication which does not preclude tenderness. Her poems encompass historical imaginings and domestic scenes, and are appreciative of worldwide cultures while always being firmly rooted in Northern Ireland.

Key features
Morrissey's choice of the villanelle expresses beautifully the dance of separation and togetherness which runs through the poem. A villanelle requires two repeated lines which alternate as the end line of each stanza, and the whole poem is constructed from only two rhymes. The parents' relationship with each other and their child is beautifully expressed by this structure, form and meaning in the poem becoming one. The interlacing of words and rhyme suggests the complex inheritance of genetics as revealed in the narrator's hands. The villanelle is also a circular form, coming back in the final couplet to where it began. It forms a ring, echoing the imagery of marriage in the poem.

However Morrissey's use of the form is even more subtle: just as genetics doesn't result in a carbon copy of the previous generation, so the rhymes and repetitions in the poem aren't exact. The key rhyme, out of which the rest of the poem grows is "palms"/ "hands" – a half, not a full rhyme. The words echo each other (as do the words "mother" and "father"), they "touch" both in meaning and in sound, but they are not the same. The narrator has inherited physical likeness from both parents but these combine to create a new, individual identity.

The fact that the parents are no longer together makes their presence in the narrator's body all the more, literally, touching. The Christian marriage ceremony speaks of the couple becoming "one flesh": now the narrator's hands are all that's left of that commitment to each other.

The last stanza introduces another relationship into the poem. A "you" is suddenly addressed as the narrator looks to her own future and the possibility of having a family of her own. So while the poem does return to its start, it also marks a fresh chapter – continuity and change are again brought together.

Teaching activities/ discussion points
Look at the first two rhyme words. What is the significance of the poet's use of half rhyme in her version of the villanelle?

How does the poet use this form to explore her subject matter?

What tone does the poem have? What kinds of language contribute to this and how does this relate to the subject matter?

Discuss the final stanza and how it is both different from and similar to the rest of the poem.

Links to other poems
'Inheritance' by Eavan Boland is an obvious poem to look at alongside 'Genetics' in terms of subject matter, while George Szirtes' 'Song' also demonstrates the musical power of highly patterned poetry, and how small modulations can carry the meaning of a poem.

Further resources
The Belfast Telegraph has a nice chatty article about Morrissey and her life and work:
http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/life/features/dr-sinead-morrissey-poetry-in-motion-29523952.html
This interview is more in-depth about her formation as a poet and subsequent development:
http://www.stingingfly.org/sample/sin%C3%A9ad-morrissey-interview

Approaching unseen poetry – extract from the Unseen Poetry Preparation anthology

Approaching an unseen poem – a teacher's perspective

Gary Snapper, English Teacher, Cheney School, Oxford / Editor, National Association for the Teaching of English

What makes a teacher happy when they read a response to an unseen poem? I've read hundreds of such essays over the last 25 years, and I've thought hard not only about what makes a good response, but also how to help my classes to produce them. I'll try here to distil my thoughts in this short space – just as you will have to do when you try to organise your thoughts about an unseen poem in your AS or A level exam.

First, and perhaps most important, when I read the unseen response essay I hope to get a sense that the writer is someone who understands how poetry *works* and what it is *for*. First and foremost that means someone who understands that *poems are not intended to be studied in classrooms or written about in exams*, but rather are written to be read *for pleasure:* the *aesthetic* pleasure a poem's *creativity* provides – *both* through the ideas and meanings it evokes *and*, equally importantly, in the way it is crafted by the poet – its shape, sound, form, structure, tone, style, imagery, and so on, and the way it plays with and makes patterns from words.

It may seem ironic for me to say, in an article about writing about poems in exams, that one of the things I'm looking for is a sense that *poems are not intended to be written about in exams* – but it's an important point. To really understand and analyse poetry, you have to be able to see poems as works of art, lovingly crafted by poets to tell stories, make arguments, reflect on experiences and evoke feelings, using language in a very particular, often playful, way. They are not like crossword puzzles or maths problems that need to be solved. Each poem is a carefully shaped whole employing a variety of poetic techniques to create an object of beauty – a work of art – and a thought-provoking experience. Your job, in an unseen commentary, is to explore this fragile object without losing a sense of its purpose and wholeness, its real life outside the classroom and the exam hall.

Why might anyone *want* you to write about poems in exams, when that's not what they are *for*? To understand *that*, you need to reconcile yourself to the difference between *reading* and *studying* poetry: they are not the same thing, although of course they are strongly connected. In 'the real world', people read poetry for pleasure in their leisure time, or turn to poems for solace or joy at times of difficulty or celebration, or use them to bold effect in performances and advertisements – and so on. When you *study* poetry in an A level literature course, you are setting out on the path to becoming an expert in a specialist academic field – learning about the history and methods of a powerful and influential form of communication, to analyse the subtleties of skilled thought and language, and to develop your own subtleties of response. In your response to the unseen poem, you have the opportunity to show that you can apply the knowledge you've gained in class about how to think and write about poetry.

Reading a poem, in various ways, is of course *part* of studying it, and when you approach an unseen poem your *first* readings of it are crucial: it's the nearest you'll get to the experience of reading the poem for pleasure in 'the real world'. It's at this point that you need to let the *impact* of the poem speak to you. What *kind* of poem is it? What does it sound like? What does it feel like? What shape or form does it have? What feelings or thoughts does it evoke? What images or words immediately stand out? Imagine you are looking at a painting in an art gallery and listening to a piece of music at the same time. What sounds and images grab your attention?

Then there's the question of what the poem is *about.* Again, this should strike you as part of your first impressions of the poem: a general impression of the theme of the poem, or its overall message (if there is one). And don't forget that the *title* of the poem is usually significant too! You'll probably need to read the poem two or three times before you begin to be clear about these things – and this is before you even *start* to think in detail what it *means*. But don't lose these first impressions of the poem. A poem is more than just the meaning of its words: it's also about its aesthetic impact – and a good response will convey this.

Many of my students want to go straight to *what the poem means* and *what techniques are used in the poem*, skipping the question of what the poem is *like*, and what impact it has. Once they begin writing, some are too keen to launch in at this point, instead of establishing the impact of the poem and its overall narrative or meaning to anchor the rest of their analytical answer for their reader. So when I introduce poems to my classes, I try to read them aloud in a way that emphasises the sounds and structures of the poem as well as its meanings, or I ask them to prepare readings which do the same. I try to impress on them how important it is to *hear* the poem in your head when you read it. Many poems use sound effects – rhyme, assonance, consonance and alliteration – often, but not always, creating some kind of onomatopoeia – which contribute to the pleasure of the poem, and may also reflect the meanings in the poem. But such sound effects are only part of the way a poem sounds: the silences, breaks and pauses in a poem are part of its effect, as are the poem's overall pace, rhythm, tone, mood and atmosphere.

Once you've thought about the impact of the poem, you can start to reflect in more detail on the *content* of the poem, and the way it's structured: what the poem actually *means*, what the argument or narrative of the poem is, how the various parts of the poem connect, and how the poem develops from beginning to end. It's vital to remember here that meaning is constructed *by the reader* as a response to what the poet has written. In many poems, meanings are deliberately ambiguous: the poet wants the reader to engage *actively* in deciding what the poem might be about. Such ambiguity is again intended to be part of the *pleasure* and *interest* of much poetry. In these cases, a good response will tentatively *suggest* what a poet *might* mean, or offer more than one possible interpretation. So, for example, an answer that establishes 'the poet describes a relationship between two people, possibly one that is about to end, and explores both its sensual and destructive qualities', before going on to explore relevant sections of the text, is more carefully crafted than an answer which asserts 'the poet describes a failed relationship which has ended and has had a destructive effect on him'.

Finally, you can begin to think in detail about the *form and language* of the poem: the techniques which the poet has used to convey its images and ideas. There's no mystery here. I teach my students about the 'bag of tricks' that poets carry about – the various verse forms they can choose from; the way they use stanza, rhyme, metre, end-stopping and enjambement; the way they choose and combine words and sentences to create a particular tone, mood, atmosphere or style; the way they use literal and figurative imagery (description, metaphor, simile) and rhetorical devices.

After *identifying* these techniques, I know that the real work my students have to do is to learn how to write subtly and sensitively about the *effects* these techniques have in the context of the whole poem – how they contribute to the meaning of the poem and the experience of reading it. The candidate who writes 'The poem is constructed in four stanzas of five lines each', with no more about how that structure reflects on the poem's content, might be well advised to remove this comment completely. A response which comments 'the progress of the four stanzas charts the progress of the speaker's movement from emotional pain to acceptance', and goes on to analyse how the poem's language reflects this, is building a stronger analytical essay.

Now that you've thought about all these things, you're ready to start writing. The introduction to your essay is where you can show that you have thought carefully about the experience of the poem as a whole work of art – briefly indicating what it's about, what kind of poem it is, what its impact is, what kind of language it uses, what kind of message or meaning it might have. By the end of your introduction, the examiner will be happy because you've already shown that you have a pretty good idea of how poetry *works* and what it is *for* – and there's a good chance that they can sit back and enjoy whilst you talk them through your detailed analysis of the content, language and form of the poem.

Remember that the unseen commentary is only *one* way of writing about poetry. It's a type of exercise known as 'literary appreciation' which is designed to cultivate your knowledge of poetry as a literary craft and your sensitivity to the ways writers use language and readers respond to it. It's important to be aware that there are other critical ways of writing about poetry which are more concerned with evaluating the *cultural significance and value of* poets' work, and of poetry in general. Once you've got the basics of poetry sorted, you'll be ready for that next step!

Further reading:
If you're going to read lots of poetry, it makes sense to start by reading poems that have been identified as really good, interesting or worth reading by the people who put together poetry anthologies. Some of these anthologies are designed specifically to introduce readers to a range of really great poems of many different sorts by many different writers.

• *Poem for the Day*, Nicholas Albery and Peter Ratcliffe (eds.), Chatto and Windus, 1994: this is one of the best anthologies, which gives you one poem to read each day.

• *The Nation's Favourite Poems*, Griff Rhys Jones (ed.), BBC Books, 1996: another good anthology, which focuses on some of the best-known and best-loved poems.

• *Penguin's Poems for Life*, Laura Barber (ed.), Penguin Classics, 2007: you could also try this anthology, which organises poems around different stages of life, from birth to death.

Also try finding the poetry anthology shelf in your local bookshop. You'll find a huge range of anthologies on offer – from collections of poems about love, war, Scotland, sport and so on, to collections of comic verse and 'Poems That Make Grown Men Cry'.

Example coursework titles

Text 1: *Hawksmoor* (Peter Ackroyd)	**Text 2:** *London: The Biography* (Peter Ackroyd)
Proposed title: Henry James observed that the streets of London were 'packed to blackness with accumulations of suffered experience.' Consider how Peter Ackroyd uses suffering and experience as ways of representing the city in *Hawksmoor* and *London: The Biography*.	

Text 1: *The Bell Jar* (Sylvia Plath)	**Text 2:** *The Remains of the Day* (Kazuo Ishiguro)
Proposed title: 'The point of using an unreliable narrator is indeed to reveal in an interesting way the gap between appearance and reality, and to show how human beings distort or conceal the latter.' (David Lodge, *The Art of Fiction*) Compare and contrast the ways in which Sylvia Plath in *The Bell Jar* and Kazuo Ishiguro in *The Remains of the Day* make use of unreliable narrators.	

Text 1: *King Lear* (William Shakespeare)	**Text 2:** *The Madness of King George* (Alan Bennett)
Proposed title: 'My crown is called content: / A crown it is that seldom kings enjoy.' (3 Henry VI, 3:1) Explore the different ways in which Shakespeare in *King Lear* and Alan Bennett in *The Madness of King George* explore the discomforts of kingship.	

Text 1: *Regeneration* (Pat Barker)	**Text 2:** *Birdsong* (Sebastian Faulks)
Proposed title: 'The war that had promised so much in the way of "manly" activity had actually delivered "feminine" passivity, and on a scale that their mothers and sisters had scarcely known.' (Pat Barker, *Regeneration*). How do Pat Barker in *Regeneration* and Sebastian Faulks in *Birdsong* explore ideas of masculinity and femininity in relation to conflict?	

Text 1: *1984* (George Orwell)	**Text 2:** *The Kite Runner* (Khaled Hosseini)
Proposed title: Both *1984* and *The Kite Runner* deal with the impact of political extremism. Compare and contrast the ways in which George Orwell and Khaled Hosseini present this in their work.	

Text 1: Songs of Innocence and of Experience (William Blake)	**Text 2:** The Duchess of Malfi (John Webster)
Proposed title: 'If Gothic works "do not come out right", this is because they deal in psychological areas which themselves do not come out right …' (David Punter, *The Literature of Terror*) How and in what ways do William Blake in *The Songs of Innocence and of Experience* and John Webster in *The Duchess of Malfi* explore the human experience in ways that 'do not come out right'?	

Text 1: *Death of a Salesman* (Arthur Miller)	**Text 2:** *The Great Gatsby* (F Scott Fitzgerald)
Proposed title: In what ways do the predicaments of Willy Loman in *Death of a Salesman* and Jay Gatsby in F Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* relate to one another? Which writer do you feel more effectively exposes the contradictions at the heart of their central character?	

Text 1: *Jerusalem* (Jez Butterworth)	**Text 2:** *Light Shining in Buckinghamshire* (Caryl Churchill)
Proposed title: Actor Mark Rylance described *Jerusalem* as 'satisfying a hunger in audiences for wildness and defiance. There's a feeling that they've eaten something they haven't eaten for years – something they'd forgotten, that's really needed for their health.' *Light Shining in Buckinghamshire* depicts a volatile time when parliament's mission was to build the new Jerusalem in England. Compare the ways in which these plays present the tensions between idealism, freedom and authority.	

Text 1: *Mansfield Park* (Jane Austen)	**Text 2:** *Emma* (Jane Austen)
Proposed title: Jane Austin writes of Emma's 'insufferable vanity' and 'unpardonable arrogance'; Tony Tanner describes Fanny Price as 'a very unpopular heroine'. Compare the ways in which the author engages the reader's interest in these two seemingly unlikeable heroines.	

Text 1: *Red Dust Road* (Jackie Kay)	**Text 2:** *The Adoption Papers* (Jackie Kay)
Proposed title: *Red Dust Road* opens with a quotation from Hélène Cixous: 'All biographies like all autobiographies like all narratives tell one story in place of another story.' Compare the ways in which Jackie Kay tells and re-tells her own story in prose and verse.	

Text 1: *Red Dust Road* (Jackie Kay)	**Text 2:** *Once in a House on Fire* (Andrea Ashworth)
Proposed title: A critic commented that the 'novelistic' structure of Ashworth's memoir gave it a 'cumulative impact'. Compare the ways in which the writers of *Once in a House on Fire* and *Red Dust Road* construct the accounts of significant periods in their lives.	

Text 1: *Mean Time* (Carol Ann Duffy)	**Text 2:** *Once in a House on Fire* (Andrea Ashworth)
Proposed title: All the lies told here, and all the cries of love, suddenly swarm into the room, sting you, disappear (*Mean Time*, 'Never go back') Compare the ways in which Carol Ann Duffy and Andrea Ashworth portray childhood, adolescence and becoming an adult.	

Text 1: *White Teeth* (Zadie Smith)	**Text 2:** *Small Island* (Andrea Levy)
Proposed title: Insiders and outsiders: compare the presentation of identity in *White Teeth* and *Small Island*.	

Text 1: *Mister Pip* (Lloyd Jones)	**Text 2:** *True History of the Kelly Gang* (Peter Carey)
Proposed title: The power of the story: compare narrative methods in *Mister Pip* and *True History of the Kelly Gang*.	

Text 1: *The Bell Jar* (Sylvia Plath)	**Text 2:** *Selected Poems* (Sylvia Plath)
Proposed title: Compare Sylvia Plath's treatment of female identity in *The Bell Jar* and *Selected Poems*.	

Text 1: *Northanger Abbey* (Jane Austen)	**Text 2:** *Jane Eyre* (Charlotte Brontë)
Proposed title: Compare the use of the Gothic tradition in *Northanger Abbey* and *Jane Eyre*.	

Text 1: *The Color Purple* (Alice Walker)	**Text 2:** *The Bluest Eye* (Toni Morrison)
Proposed title: 'Beauty was not simply something to behold; it was something to do,' Toni Morrison writes in the foreword to *The Bluest Eye*. Compare the presentation of the notions of beauty and identity in *The Color Purple* and *The Bluest Eye*.	

Possible Coursework Task 1:

Text 1:	Text 2:
Proposed title:	

Possible Coursework Task 2:

Text 1:	Text 2:
Proposed title:	

Exemplar coursework response

Explore the destruction of idylls in *Brideshead Revisited* and *Paradise Lost*.

Tellingly, the idylls explored in *Brideshead Revisited* and *Paradise Lost* are portrayed with the knowledge of their destruction. The novel opens with Charles asa disillusioned soldier at the end of the Second World War; the narrative progresses to a retrospective of an idyll. Charles fondly reflects upon a period of his life, presented as a golden age, where his friendship with Sebastian in the setting of Oxford induces happiness that he strives for throughout the rest of his life, but never truly attains again; this seeming idyll is destroyed and all that is left are the realities of a post-lapsarian world. Similarly in *Paradise Lost*; the title itself combined with the fact that the story starts 'in media res' reminds the reader, before Eden is even mentioned, of the consequences of 'Man's first disobedience.' Waugh wrote *Brideshead Revisited* in 1944 while on leave from the army; the portrayal of a pointless and disjointed world certianly stems from Waugh's first-hand experience of the Second World War. Edmund Wilson, writing about *Brideshead Revisited*, declared that 'seen now from the bleak shrivelled forties…everything – the freedom, the fun, the varied intoxications of youth – has taken on a remoteness and pathos.' This statement perceptively identifies the nature of the retrospective revelation of lost idylls. The Marchmain family, with whom Charles was so enchanted, is revealed to be far from perfect and among many of the characters there is a search for love and happiness in a world where everything seems to be pointless. Similarly, in *Paradise Lost*, an idyllic paradise is depicted; this is a world where the emotional and physical connection between humans and God is flawless. With the temptation of Eve by Satan leading to Original Sin, Milton portrays a transformation of the world they inhabit. Their connection with God is no longer pure and harmonious but becomes problematic; their love for each other also becomes a struggle. Both Waugh and Milton were devoutly religious and both texts (written post-war) assert the difficulties of relationships, in all forms, in a post-lapsarian world.

For Charles, Sebastian initially represents beauty, charm and innocence. Charles falls in love with the idea of Sebastian; his character, his background, his family. Sebastian is described as 'entrancing, with that epicene beauty which in extreme youth sings aloud for love and withers at the first cold wind'; this gives a vivid impression of his attractive character, yet the reader is also made aware of the transient, vulnerable nature of this idyll. Sebastien has a spot on the back of his neck, symbolic of the flawed nature of his beauty. Charles Rolo astutely describes his love as 'Ryder's discovery of a magic world of freedom and intoxicating pleasures.' Charles describes this joyous episode of his life with Sebastian as 'a brief spell of what I had never known, a happy childhood.' Because Charles 'had lived a lonely childhood and boyhood straitended by war and overshadowed by bereavement,' for him, Sebatian represents the idyll of childhood (accentuated by the teddy bear, Aloysius) which he did not have the fortune to enjoy, 'the joy of innocence': 'I like to remember Sebastian as he was that summer…' 'The langour of Youth – how unique and quintessential it is! How quickly, how irrevocably, lost!'

Both these texts exploit the power of the monosyllabic, unequivocal word 'lost.' However, Sebastian's childhood was not as idyllic as it may seem (it is partly a fantasy created by Charles and Sebastian): his father left the family when Sebastian was young and the readre is told that Cordelia's nurse drowned herself, providing a proleptic sense of destruction to come. Similarly, in *Paradise Lost*, before the Fall, Eve represents the idea of beauty. She is described as 'fairest unsupported flower'; she is most beautiful, yet

vulnerable and temporary. Eve has 'celestial beauty' and is 'the fairest resemblance of they maker fair.' The modified epanalepsis, although emphasising the heavenly beauty she attains through her pure connection with God, also exposes her difference from him. Her beauty almost cures Satan 'of enmity disarmed, of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge. The repetition of 'of' suggests the enormity of the possible redemption of Satan, but his hatred of the world and jealously of God's love for man is too strong.

In the idyll portrayed at the beginning of Brideshead Revisited, Charles is not only charmed by the character of Sebastian but also the allure of upper class life. On the very first page of Chapter 1, Charles reminisces about Oxford in 'the rare glory of her summer days,' and 'a day of peculiar splendour' with descriptions of his surroundings as idealised and sensual: 'theditches were creamy with meadowsweet and the air heavy with the scents of summer.' They 'ate strawberries and drank the wine,' 'it's heaven with strawberries'; as exemplified by the langugae used, this way of life, t the beginning of Charles's days in Oxford, is luxurious and free of troubles. 'While the blue-grey smoke rose, untroubled by any wind…and the sweet scent of tobacco merged with the sweet summer scents around us and the fumes of the sweet, golden wine'; the scene is described as harmonious and peaceful, reminiscent of Paradise before the Fall, accentuated by the sibilance and repetition of 'sweet' adding a melliflous tone to the passage. Charles finds a door 'which opened on an enclosed and enchanted garden,' reflecting the Garden of Eden; he is searching for a paradise and he states in retrospect, 'I believed myself very near heaven.' Yet the word 'believed' suggests he was wrong: 'When I was old and ugly and miserable, I could …remember' the temporary paradise he found. Charles also falls in love with Sebastian's family home, Brideshead, 'rejoicing in all its clustered feats of daring and invention.' He is only truly happy painting when he is 'trying to draw the fountain' at Brideshead andto capture the beauty he feels in the house. In *Paradise Lost* (before the Fall) there also exists a harmony between Adam and Eve and their surroundings: 'sacred light began to dawn in Eden on the humid flowers, that breathed their morning incense…forth came the human pair.' Milton was a puritanical Calvinist and believed in the importance of hard work. In Paradise Adam and Eve have 'growing work' to maintain their natural surroundings (unlike Charles and Sebastian in their paradise). However before the Fall there was pleasure in work, 'our pleasant task', due to the connection with nature and God.

At the beginning of both texts the emotional idylls are presented with descriptions of beauty and happiness; yet as the stories unfold, unhappiness, disillusionment and life in a world disconnected from God take their place. The desire for freedom from God's will is shown to be a destructive force which leads to resentment and hate; in the Christian faith true freedom can only be attained through a connection with God. In *Brideshead Revisited* the golden age for Charles is short-lived. The character of Sebastian fades into self-destruction and the love between him and Charles also diminishes as soon as their relationship is tested. Lord Marchmain's mistress Cara states that 'Sebastian is in love with his own childhood. That will make him very unhappy. His teddy-bear, his nanny…'; what was stated previuosly as the 'joy of innocence' is now an escape from the real world into the 'illusions of boyhood.'Sebastian 'drank to escape' rather than for enjoyment. 'The shadows were closign round Sebastian,' and 'there was mid-winter in Sebastian's heart,' are phrases that foreshadow change and a darkness coming, through the use of 'shadows' and 'winter'. 'A succession of diasters came on hime so swiftly and with such unexpected violence,'; 'and thus marekd the beginnnign of a new epoch in his melancholy record, another stride in the flight from his family which brought him to ruin.' He wants to escape from his family and background; no longer is he a charming, happy and beautiful character

but one drowned in melancholy. Cara provides an insight into the Marchmain family; 'they are full of hate –hate of themselves', somewhat explaining Sebastian's desire to escape, 'I shalllgo on running as far and as fast as I can.' The name Flyte itself implies a desire for freedom. Henry Reed argues that 'Sebastian is tormented by his mother, whom he cannot bear to be with'; this does appear to be the case, but his desire for escape can also be interpreted as his running from God, especially as Lady Marchmain is –in the novel – symbolic of the Church. The idyll of the Marchmain family is revealed to be far from perfect. When Charles visits Lord Marchmain in Venice, he comments on, 'the fact of living under the roof of an adulterous couple,' for, like Sebastian, Lord Marmain desired to escape, leaving his family and propery in England. Lord Marchmain's mistress tells Charles (about Lady Marchmain) that, 'he hates her; but you can have no conception of how he hates her.' Anthony Blanche speaks of Lady Marchmain as manipulative and dangerous: 'they never escape once she's had her teeth into them. It is witchcraft.' When Charles goes to Casablanca to try and find Sebastian, he is told by the British consul: 'I'm delighted someone has come to look after young Flyte at last,' suggsting a lack of love from the family. These episodes imply a serious flaw at the heart of the Marchamin family – a broken family 'full of hate.'

In *Paradise Lost*, the paradise is destroyed by Satan (who himself fell from heaven), who is so consumed by hate that he wishes only to destroy all that is beautiful: 'and beauty, not approached by stronger hate, hate stronger.' The poem was written a year after the Great Fire of London in 1666, and following the immense devastation 'burning' is rendered reflective of Satan and destruction. The reader is given an insight into the character of Satan: 'the hot hell that always in him burns….the more he sees of pleasure not for him ordained: then soon fierce hate he recollects.' Satan's destructive nature and internal torment may explain his will to devastate humanity, earth and God. He supposedly hated God and Heaven because he resented the power of God. His dissatisfation with Heaven and his desire for freedom shows that perhaps there is no such thing as a physical idyll unless it is accompanied by an emotional idyll. However, it has been argued that Milton was an early apostle of Liberalism and he was c ertainly a great believer in greater political freedom in a time of great political upheaval and constitutional change. He supported Oliver Cromwell and the parliamentarians in the civil war of 1642 but became disillusioned with the restoration of the Stuart monarchy. This failure of an ideal is reflected in *Paradise Lost*, however the epic poem also portrays that hope (through love of God) can grow after despair and this was particularly relevant to those who were experiencing political defaet and religious persecution under the restoration settlement at the time.

In *Brideshead Revisited* love is a struggle in the post-lapsarian world. Charles Rolo argues that 'in his (Waugh's) entire work there is not a single truly convinding trace of love' (love, which he describes as a crucial quality of the religious writer). However, instead of the lack of convinving love being a flaw, it could be seen as a conscious effort by Waugh to show the difficulties of love in the mosern world. This can be seen in the charatcer of Rex who sees marriage as business deal:'he wanted a woman; he wanted the best on the mrket.' He also symbolises lfe in a godless world; when he claims 'I'll make all the "promises" they want' he talks of religion without values or belief. Clinton-Baddeley, commenting on the comic scens on the novel, cites, 'Father Mowbray's patient attempts to instruct the infidel Rex in the rudiments of Christian belief.' This scene does appear to be comic yet it also acts as a disturbing metaphor for modernity's disconnection with God. Arguably there are no successful relationships in the novel because, for Waugh, real love does not seem to exist in the modern world. Charles says to his wife, 'No, I'm not in love,' negating all ideas of love in marriage. When he has sex with Julia (even though he says he

is in love) he states, 'I was making my first entry as the freeholder I would enjoy and develop at leisure,' again describing a relationship as a business deal. However, even though, as Charles Rolo argues, 'Waugh loooked out on the world around him and saw it as a wasteland,' there is a glimmer of redemption at the end of the novel where Charles and Julia sacrifice their love for God and also later when the chapel at Brideshead is re-opened. Charles begins to understand religion and takes the first step, of sacrifice, to attaining a connection with God. Edmund Wilson said that, 'the sceptical hero, long hostile and mocking, eventually becomes converted; the old chapel is opened.' However, he also argues that the reason for Charles kneeling at the deathbed of Lord Marchmain 'is not, perhaps, for the sign of the cross, but for the prestige, in the person of Lord Marhcmain, of one of the oldest families in England.' This statement suggests that there are no real redemptive powers of religion in the novel, but only a love of the upper classes. Charles describes his life after the 'golden age' with Sebastian as 'ten dead years', showing the pointlessness of life presented in this novel: 'Never during that time, except sometimes in my paintings, did I come alive as I had been during the time of my friendship with Sebastian.' When Charles is on the boat, a storm is portrayed: 'the gale which, unheard, unseen, unfelt, in our enclosed and insulated world, had for an houor, been mounting over us.' This part of the novel is set in round 1934-35 with the rise of the Nazis and the coming of doom, death and chaos, chaos being the world also of Satan. This strom bears direct reference to the storm in *Paradise Lost* after the Fall ('high winds worse within began to rise') both of which can be interpreted as pathetic fallacy and symbolic of man's distance from God.

Similarly when Eve eats the apple, 'her rash hand in evil hour forth reaching to the fruit,' the physical and emotional idylls are destroyed with the birth of sin. Immediately the relationship with nature is damaged, no longer is it harmonious: 'earth felt the wound, and nature from her seat sighing through all her works gave signs of woe, that all was lost;' the prosonomasia of 'sighing…signs' prolongs nature's sigh throughout the line. Eve starts to hint at her disconnection with God; 'heaven is high, high and remote.' She speaks of God in a negative manner as 'Our great forbidder, safe with all his spies;' she even starts to reflect Satan's feelings of discontent with God's power: 'for inferior, who is free?' The change of tone in the writing is reinforced by the passage describing Adam awaiting Eve's return; 'waiting desirous her return, had wove of choicest flowers a garland to adorn her tresses.' Milton juxtaposes the idyllic way of life in which Adam still exists (before he discovers what has happened), with Eve's suffering and sin; she repeats the word 'death' to accentuate their recent mortality. Adam still maintains the pure and easy love of before the Fall; however, this changes to 'the agony of love' as soon as she tells him of her sin: 'astonied stood and blank, while horror chill ran through his veins.' Sex is also no longer a beautiful thing, no longer morally fine; no longer the 'virgin majesty of Eve,' but instead 'in lust they burn', 'carnal desire inflaming'. Part of the punishment of original sin becomes the pain of childbirth: 'earth trembled from her entrails, as again in pangs, and nature gave second groan. In *Brideshead Revisited* this disharmony with nature is reflected in the strility of the mofdern world, exemplified by Julia's baby who 'was born dead.'

Both writers build a presentation of a perfect idyll and then systematically destroy the beauty that has been portrayed. In *Paradise Lost*, Milton shows the repercussions of original sin leading to a disconnection from God and nature and the birth of sin and death. Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* shows life in an implicitly post-lapsarian world where, in contrast to *Paradise Lost*, the idyll presented in the beginnign was only a transient illusion and certainly flawed –as is revealed later in the novel. Both texts present the challenges to

relationships, love and happiness in a world disconnected from God; the tragic fall from paradise.
(2796 words)

Moderator's comments:

- This is a lucid, sustained study which shows clear evidence of independent thought.
- The two texts are ideally chosen to help the candidate access all the AOs.
- It is evaluative in approach and there is sophisticated use of contexts and of alternative readings.
- Despite some confused use of the semi-colon, it's very well-written.

33 + 24 = 57/60
