

A Level English Independent Study

Types of Tasks:

(Note: these are only some ideas – please feel free to add you own and to adapt any of the below)

- **Digging deeper** – look up a word that may have come up during lesson – get a larger definition for it and / or explore its etymology and / or find examples / samples and / or find wider reading on it (eg. From a Massolit lecture on *Death of a Salesman*, the word ‘naturalistic’ was used to describe the play *All My Sons* – students could dig deeper into the meaning of this word and also decide if DAOS seems to fit with this word)
- **Mini extracts** – Language & Literature – as practised in lessons – select a mini extract; write or print it in the middle of a page; around it write in linguistic terms which you have identified; then quickly think through which of these you can best explore – perhaps just pick 2 or 3 – then write up an exploration paragraph – practising analysis (interweaving of linguistics into literary analysis)
- **Mind Maps** (Theme; character; scene; chapter; genre etc)
- Massolit **Lecture Notes** (Massolit have lectures relevant across the board, from *Othello* to *Gatsby*, from Narrative to Tragedy, from *Tess* to *Streetcar* – with new lectures being added all the time)
- ‘Mining a Text for **Nuggets**’ sheet
- **Cornell** Note taking sheet
- **Yes, and..... Yes, but** (respond to a section of criticism by applying these prompts)
- **Maps** (relevant to settings, such as Hardy’s Wessex); or a self –created map such as for Susie’s neighbourhood and key areas in *The Lovely Bones*)
- **Lectures**, podcasts, Ted talks, documentaries – written responses to these (could be a paragraph, could be a set of notes, could be a summary)
- **Key terminology** – Literary terms; linguistic terms; elements of fantasy genre terms etc – these could be in the form of **glossaries** or posters. Alternatively, students should already have the aforementioned in their folders – so it would be excellent for students to create additional glossaries – perhaps with different examples and slightly different definitions
- **Genre samples** – students find a sample of another text in the genre they are studying (such as Tragedy, Crime Fiction, Fantasy, American tragedy etc) and have an annotated copy of it in their I/Study section
- **Data sets** – for Language & Literature, students could create their own set of data based on an area of stylistics such as Spoken Language, gender theory, taboo language, accents and dialects, child language acquisition, language change over time etc. They might record an interview or a conversation and produce the transcript – from this they might generate a small set of results / findings
- **Articles** – many articles are given to students as part of their main body of work and which are directly linked to their set texts and the genres they are studying – but

students are encouraged to find and source their own articles of interest – for these they can print out the article and stick it in, highlighting interesting sections and writing their own thoughts and connections in the ‘margins’. Students are encouraged to utilise articles found on eMagazine; JStor and Digital Theatre Plus

- **Pick a Title** – students look at the eMagazine archive and read previous (or current) article titles. Students then choose a selection which sounds interesting / relevant and write the titles into a table (first column). They can create three further columns – one to tick off once its read; one to write down a few key quotes or ‘takeaways’; one to write down which texts it could relate to
- **Presentations** – Lang & Lit students present on Paris Anthology texts as well as poetic Voices texts; Literature students present on Crime Fiction – place a copy of your presentation into your I/Study section. Perhaps ask classmates for a copy of theirs too. If you have done an additional presentation / master class – print it out and have a copy in your I/Study section
- **Character profiles** – students can create character mind maps – to make these more literary and suitable for A level, students go above and beyond the more obvious details of a character and also consider three key areas: what are the character’s values? What is this character a symptom of? How is this character different at different parts of the story?
- **Facts of the text** – as knowing the facts of the text and its sequencing is so important, and knowing the story, students can produce timelines and chapter summaries to support this learning. Literature students can also create ‘Who said it?’ quizzes to use on classmates. Literature students can also compile a series of Othello extracts with which to practise ‘what happened before’; ‘what happens after’
- **Genre booklets** – students can create factual booklets on Genre (Literature students create a ‘Tragedy’ booklet in Year 12) – this (or a copy of it) can be placed in the I/Study section of folders. Lang & Lit students can create a ‘Fantasy Genre’ booklet
- **Blurting**: blurting is when you time yourself (say 5 minutes) and for that time you simply write freely – literally penning the thoughts as they come into your head – about a certain topic or section. This has some real benefits – it reminds you that you **do** know quite a bit about that topic or section – and it can reveal to you where you need to focus your study / revision more (example: blurt on a Othello extract – just focusing on what makes it compelling and dramatic; blurt on Blanche Du Bois as we find her at the opening of the play). You could therefore have a selection of ‘Blurts’ in your I/Study section
- Use **past questions** from AQA’s website (or for generic-style questions make your own) and write detailed plans for these; also write essay responses and use the mark scheme to assess yourself
- Take part in **competitions** such as the Christopher Tower poetry competition – place a copy of your entry into your I/Study folder / section