

# A-Level English Literature – Wider Reading list

## Reading List – Pre1900 Poetry and Drama- Ibsen and Rossetti

- Hedda Gabler, Henrik Ibsen
- Ghosts, Henrik Ibsen
- Henrik Ibsen : The Father of Modern Drama, Dr. Azher Suleiman
- Modern Drama in Theory and Practice 1: Realism and Naturalism, JL Styan
- Learning not to be the First: The Life of Christina Rossetti, Kathleen Jones
- All articles on the English and Media Centre linked to Ibsen or Rossetti
- All articles on the English and Media Centre linked to the genres of social realism and naturalism

## Reading List –wider Reading for Coursework

### ***Drama:***

- Top Girls, Caryl Churchill
- Numbers, Caryl Churchill
- A Streetcar Named Desire, Tennessee Williams
- Things I Know to be True, Andrew Bovell
- Fefu and her Friends, Maria Irene Fornes
- The Homecoming, Harold Pinter
- Fences, August Wilson
- The History Boys, Alan Bennett
- Look Back in Anger, John Osborne
- The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night, Mark Haddon
- Arcadia, Tom Stoppard
- Journey's End, RC Sherriff
- Translations, Brian Friel
- Equus, Peter Shafer

**Poetry:**

- The Bees, Carol Ann Duffy
- Feminine Gospels, Carol Ann Duffy
- The World's Wife, Carol Ann Duffy
- Still I Rise, Maya Angelou
- Skirrid Hill, Owen Sheers
- Too Black, Too Strong, Benjamin Zephaniyah
- Ariel, Sylvia Plath
- North, Seamus Heaney
- The Whitsun Weddings, Phillip Larking

**Prose:**

- A Thousand Splendid Sons, Khaled Hosseini
- The Kite Runner, Khaled Hosseini
- The Color Purple, Alice Walker
- Half of a Yellow Sun, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- The Bell Jar, Sylvia Plath
- The Line of Beauty, Alan Hollinghurst
- Atonement, Ian McEwan
- Enduring Love, Ian McEwan
- What We Talk About When We Talk About Love, Raymond Carver
- To the Lighthouse, Virginia Woolf
- Regeneration, Pat Barker

## Hamlet: Additional Reading

- **Bloom, Harold. *Shakespeare: The Invention Of The Human*. New York: Riverhead Books, 1999.**

Literary critic Harold Bloom believed that Shakespeare invented the very concept of 'personality' as we understand it today. This book develops that argument, devoting a chapter to each of Shakespeare's plays.

- **Bradley, A. C. *Shakespearean Tragedy*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, Reprint Edition 2007.**

This influential work created a new way to think about Shakespeare's tragedies. Bradley imagined Shakespeare's characters as real people, with offstage lives, as a way to explore Shakespeare's skill in creating psychological portraits. This approach has gone in and out of fashion over the years, but it remains compelling.

- **Eliot, T. S. "Hamlet And His Problems." In *The Sacred Wood*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Reprint Edition 1997.**

Poet and critic T.S. Eliot dared to suggest that *Hamlet* is an artistic failure: in this essay he argues that Hamlet is mysterious because Shakespeare could not find a way to express Hamlet's emotion in a way the audience can access. Understandably controversial, Eliot's essay remains an important starting-point for many conversations about *Hamlet*

- **Frye, Northrop. *Fools Of Time: Studies In Shakespearean Tragedy*. Toronto: University Of Toronto Press, Reprint Edition 1996.**

This series of lectures by one of the twentieth century's most important critics argues that all Shakespeare's tragedies share the central theme of 'being in time': the suffering caused by the unique human understanding that death is the inevitable end of life. Frye subdivides the tragedies into three types, each with a different approach to 'being in time,' and analyses them with reference to the plays

- **Greenblatt, Stephen. *Hamlet In Purgatory*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001.**

Stephen Greenblatt tries to imagine the experience of death and grief in Shakespeare's lifetime, when religious upheaval had radically changed English people's beliefs about the afterlife. Combining historical scholarship and empathy, Greenblatt offers a fascinating new way to read *Hamlet*.

- **Husain, Adrian A. *Politics And Genre In Hamlet*. New York: Oxford University Press, Reprint Edition 2007.**

This short essay considers the Renaissance political theories that might have shaped *Hamlet*. Husain argues that the play's genre is not fixed but in transition, reflecting a political transition in Shakespeare's England.

- **Kerrigan, William. *Hamlet' S Perfection*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.**

Kerrigan's readable study focuses on the way Hamlet's character grows over the course of the play. He argues that *Hamlet's* mysteries and complexities make it the perfect literary reckoning with the complex historical moment in which it was written.

- **Kinney, Arthur F. *Hamlet: Critical Essays*. Oxford, UK: Routledge, Inc., 2001.**

This collection of ten essays examines *Hamlet* from many different angles. Topics include the stage history of the play, race in *Hamlet*, and the play's reception by readers in the twentieth century.

- **Wilson, John Dover. *What Happens In Hamlet*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1951**

What Happens in Hamlet is a classic of Shakespeare criticism, and still one of the most influential studies of Hamlet. Dover Wilson explores each of the play's many

mysteries—Hamlet’s madness, why Hamlet is so angry with Gertrude, and so on— and offers compelling explanations for most of them.

## Other Sources of Information

“Hamlet and Revenge,” November 16, 2015.

<https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/hamlet-and-revenge>.

This extensive article discusses the theme of revenge in *Hamlet*, with quotations and images from the hundreds of sources in the British Library’s collection. The article also links to many other BL resources relating to Shakespeare and *Hamlet*.

“Benedict Cumberbatch - Hamlet Interview”, November 8 2016.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l0ky\\_tQxwgo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l0ky_tQxwgo)

Actor Benedict Cumberbatch played Hamlet at the National Theatre in London in 2015. Here he talks with respected arts journalist Melvyn Bragg about the challenges of the role, offering a range of insights about the play from a performer’s perspective.

“The Hamlet Collection”, January 9 2017 <https://www.folger.edu/hamlet>

The Folger Library’s website provides access to a vast range of material about Shakespeare’s life and works. The *Hamlet* collection includes a gallery of images from the play’s production history.

## The Immigrant Experience Reading List

- The Reluctant Fundamentalist Mohsin Hamid
- The Namesake Jhumpa Lahiri
- Call it Sleep Philip Roth
- The Jungle Upton Sinclair
- Goodbye Columbus Philip Roth
- Sour Sweet Timothy Mo
- Brick Lane Monica Ali
- Small Island Andrea Levy
- The Secret River Kate Grenville
- Terrorist John Updike
- A Distant Shore Caryl Phillips
- Londonstani Gautam Malkani
- Pigeon English Stephen Kelman
- Anita and Me Meera Syal
- White Teeth Zadie Smith
- The God of Small Things Arundhati Roy
- The Joy Luck Club Amy Tan
- The Lowland Jhumpa Lahiri
- 'Calypso in London' Ways of Sunlight Samuel Selvon
- Wide Sargasso Sea Jean Rhys
- Reef Romesh Gunsekera
- The Kite Runner Khaled Hosseini
- Americanah Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- The Colour Purple Alice Walker
- A Suitable Boy Vikram Seth