

English Literature – A-Level

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English Literature and Your Future

English Literature is a facilitating subject that is accepted by all Russell Group universities

An A-Level in English Literature can open doorways into the following:

- Creative Writing
- Journalism
- Geography
- History
- Law
- Economics
- Classics
- Drama
- Film

From a human perspective it...

- Informs
- Challenges preconceptions
- Encourages thoughtful reflection on politics, prejudice and human experience
- Promotes independence
 - Develops creativity
 - Strengthens empathy

Why English Literature?

At Furze Platt we want our A- Level students to be **INSPIRED, MOTIVATED AND CHALLENGED**

CHALLENGE

Throughout the course, students read a **diverse range of texts** from different eras. They are exposed to different **genres, perspectives and concepts**. The texts studied often **challenge students' understanding** of the world around them and the course encourages them to think and explore **critically** through group work and independent study.

INSPIRED

So many important cultural, historical and personal events are documented through literature. We want our students to be able to **thoughtfully reflect** on the human condition, politics and prejudice. We want our students to be able to **appreciate**, and be able to harness, the power of language and its ability to reach across people and nations.

MOTIVATED

Students will undertake **independent study** to explore their own appreciation and understanding of texts. The coursework component means students will study three texts, which they have the freedom to choose.

Component 1: Drama and Poetry Pre 1900



UNIT TITLE: Drama and Poetry

One Shakespeare text- Shakespeare's **Hamlet**

One Pre 1900 Drama- Ibsen's **A Doll's House**

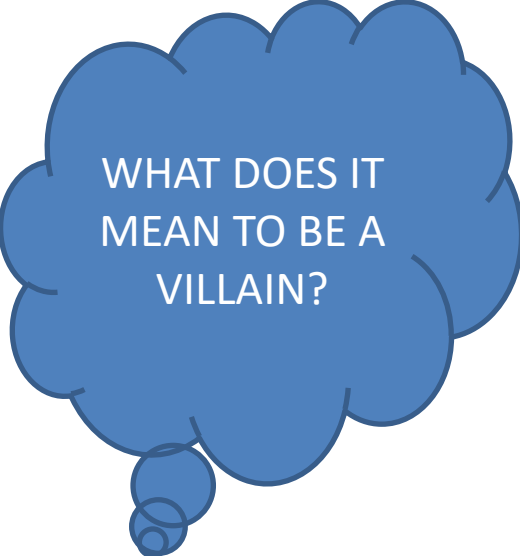
One Pre 1900 Poet- **Christina Rossetti** Anthology of poems

General Expectations

- Analysing the dramatic effects and language in Shakespeare's plays
- Exploring how the play has been interpreted by different audiences over time
- Critical interpretations are explored
- Comparative study between Rossetti's poems and Ibsen's A Doll's House
- Exam based

HAMLET

'ONE MAY SMILE, AND SMILE, AND BE A
VILLAIN.'



WHAT DOES IT
MEAN TO BE A
VILLAIN?

**We explore some of the
following themes:**

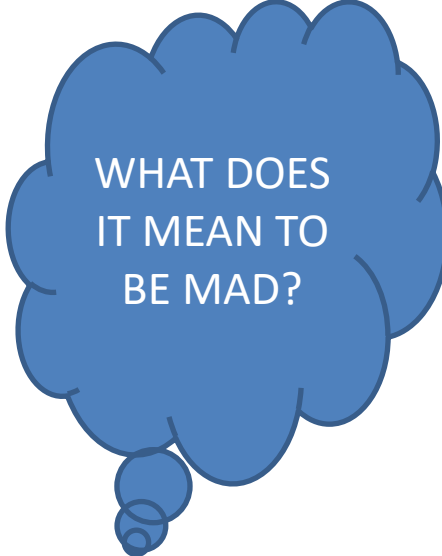
MORALITY

REVENGE

DECEIT

MADNESS

CONTROL



WHAT DOES
IT MEAN TO
BE MAD?

A new assessment objective means that students now engage with **critics and critical theory**. We **analyse the characters through different lenses** such as psychoanalytical interpretation.

This allows students to understand that texts may be read from **multiple perspectives and have multiple readings**.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

'She sucked and sucked and sucked the more fruits
which that unknown orchard bore.'

'It is difficult to read
Goblin Market without a
modern sexual
awareness, but such
interpretations would
not have been obvious
to Victorian Readers.'

Frances Thomas

Context and understanding of the **Victorian Era** helps students develop an appreciation of Rossetti's resilience and forward thinking.

We analyse how she explores:

CLASS

GENDER ROLES

ALIENATION

OPPRESSION

Rossetti's work is undeniably political and she is often considered a feminist symbol. In particular, **Feminist Theory** is applied to analysis of Rossetti and students explore how her work has a proto-feminist agenda.

A DOLL'S HOUSE

'A barbaric outrage!'

The play is compared to Rossetti's poems and explores the fate and limited opportunities for married women in a restrictive male-dominated society.

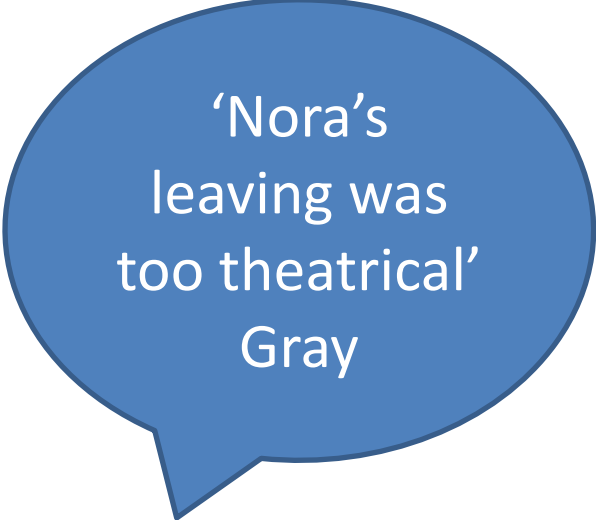
Students will compare:

SEXUALITY

AUDIENCE RESPONSE

CONTEXT

PRESENTATION OF CHARACTERS



'Nora's
leaving was
too theatrical'
Gray

Nora's character is a flirtatious and spirited woman which meant the play was revolutionary in its presentation of women, meaning the play was analysed fiercely by critics. Students will question the problems and limitations that can arise from a male writer discussing female struggles.

Because, apparently, women cannot even appear to leave a play correctly...

Example Exam Questions

'The play Hamlet shows a disturbing fascination with death.' How far do you agree with this?

'A great surprise of Hamlet is that Claudius has a conscience.' *How far, and in what ways do you agree with this?*

People are naturally inclined towards vain and selfish behaviour.

The outsider is always an intriguing figure in literature.

Component 2: The Immigration Experience



UNIT TITLE: Comparative and Contextual Study
The Immigrant Experience



Core text- **The Reluctant Fundamentalist**
Comparison Text- **The Namesake**

Also to be compared to **independent reading**- A reading list is provided

General Expectations

- Exploring the significance of context (political history, writer's life, current affairs)
- The unit provides the opportunity to read and research widely and independently
- One exam (2 questions: 1 question on the texts studied, 1 question on an unseen extract)
- Keeps students up to date with current affairs and encourages them to track immigration throughout history

THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST

‘Do not be frightened of my beard. I am a lover of America.’

What is a terrorist?

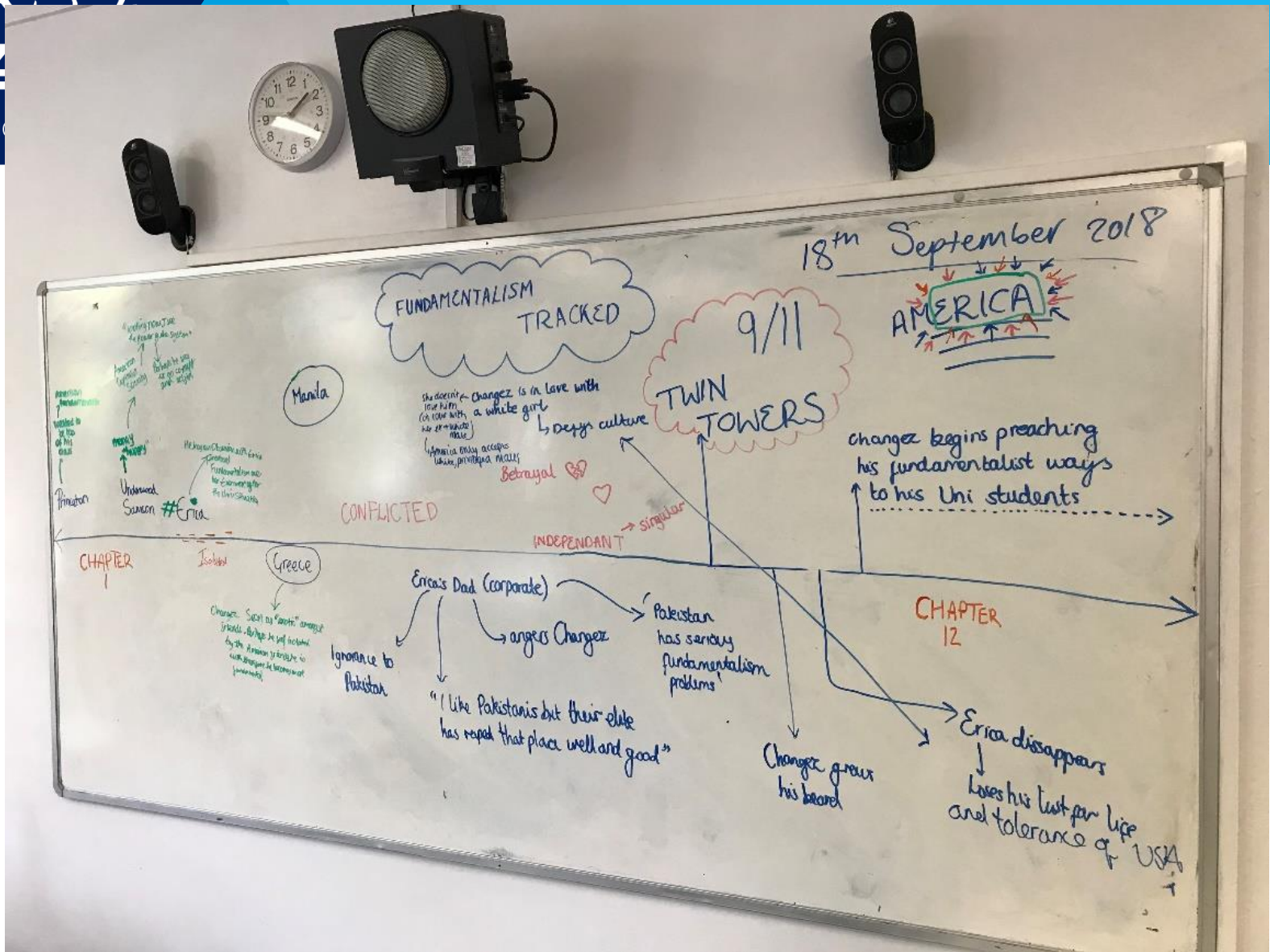
Students are challenged to explore their own stereotypes and to question the impact that prejudice can have on the individual and society.

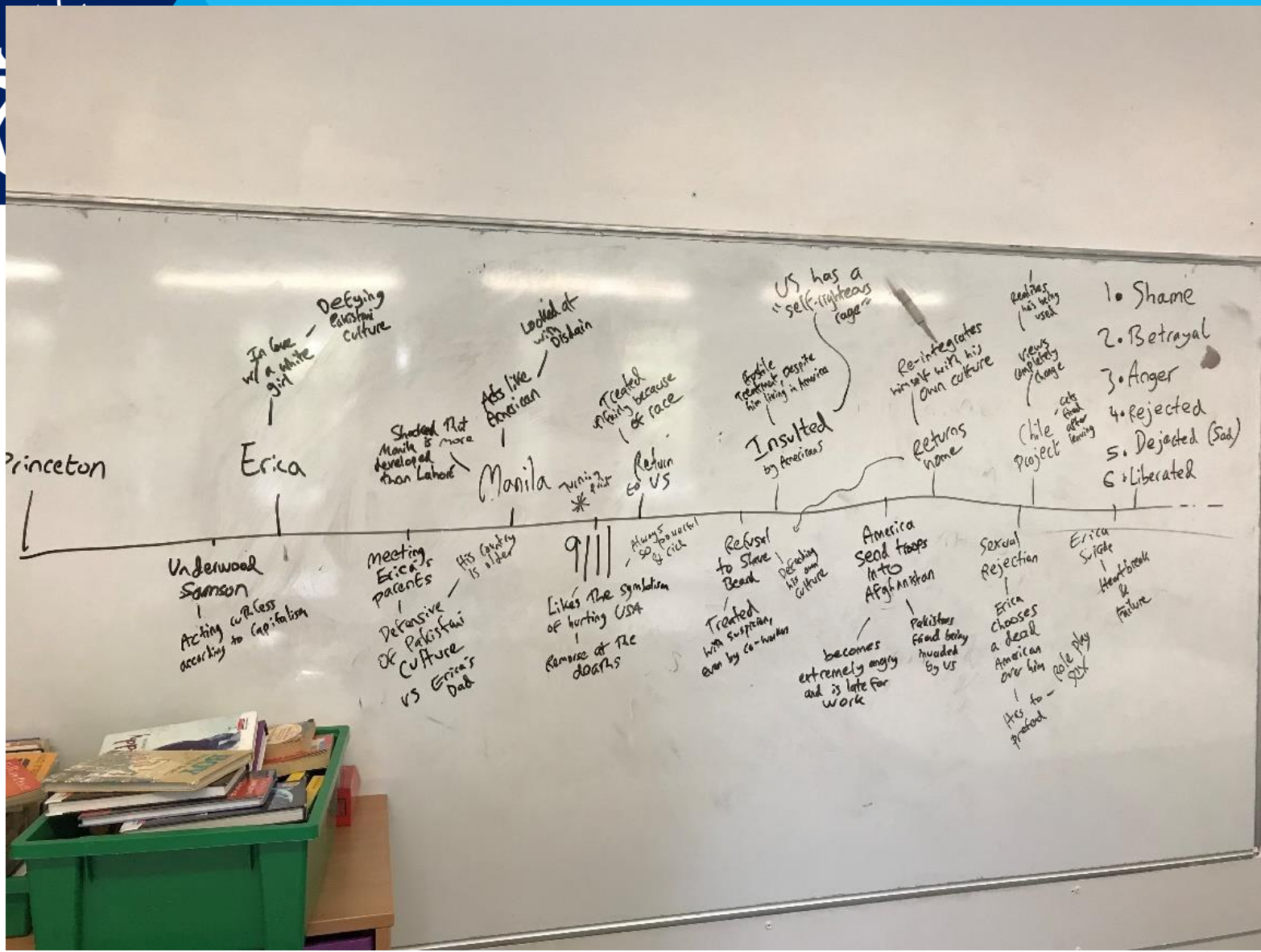
Alienation is the root of fundamentalism

Students are encouraged to research and question what they know and have been told by the media in relation to some of the following themes:

AMERICA
THE EAST vs WEST
PAKISTAN
PATRIOTISM

The module keeps students up to date on current affairs. More recently, students have researched immigration policies and have looked at how Britain’s policies have developed over the years and why.





★ ATTITUDES
★ RESEARCH FROM ARTICLES

♥ Bethany, Rose, Jessie ♥

America seen as a developed country → power → education → Authority
 → changez speaking in English
 → "if only you understood Urdu"

Hamid's novel is as relevant on issues of American Immigration for US citizens today, as it was when it was published in 2007

selective picking ↓ interviews, jobs, etc.
 They care about what benefits America. (shown 2007 + now)

2007 65% thought immigrant input was beneficial
 26% said they hurt U.S. economy
 Improved since 1994

View on Immigrants taking Jobs → Jobs
 Nations Borders secured 2007 + 2015
 Attitudes negative
 Relevant today and 2007
 Shows little change in attitudes
 Affects employers + employees

Authority
 → takes away America or a pedestal
 → "if only you understood Urdu"
 → intimidates American/stranger

Government
 → negative
 → similar to the American true purpose
 → forgetting changez
 → immigrants as scapegoats
 → use criminal past as excuse for arrests
 → flipped in novel compared to reality

Now school Shootings
 Maryland Texas
 orlando
 Florida
 possibility for more extremist views + groups

population → housing → money spent on building new flats
 Attitudes on birth rights (citizenship) positive

Evaluation of immigration change leading to statement
 From when Hamid's novel was written in 2007, the attitudes towards immigrants has mostly stayed the same.

The relevant issue of power presented in Hamid's novel is a foil to the power change and diaspora in America. In 2007, as Bush was more accepting of immigrants than as today Trump wants to get rid of them. → (less harmful) change influences American in novel.

We agree with the statement as the issues presented in the novel published by Hamid in 2007 are relevant and present in American society today, in particular the issue of stereotyping and discrimination. This is due to an increase in terrorism and similar acts which are then used to fuel misconceptions on particular groups.

Jobs money
 taking money from society
 Attitudes
 Discrimination
 American plane over Iraq shot down
 in Russia, US threatened denied say it was a plane...

Media → Exaggerate minority views
 influence community
 prejudice
 Attitudes: fear for safety
 stereotypes
 Judgement
 "Do not be frightened by my beard"

Same today as in 2007
 Changez → "Do not be frightened by my beard"
 fear for safety
 stereotypes
 Judgement
 Installing fear due to culture differences

Attitudes
 Discrimination
 American plane over Iraq shot down
 in Russia, US threatened denied say it was a plane...
 2011 made insurance
 France banned wearing a Burqa
 Muslims in particular.
 more attacks happened.

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THE NAMESAKE

'I WILL ALWAYS SEE MYSELF IN AN IN-BETWEEN ZONE, WHERE I AM A LITTLE BIT OF THIS AND THAT; I WILL NEVER BE SOMETHING WHOLEHEARTEDLY.'

'An individual's immigration journey will always undoubtedly end in loneliness and isolation.'

In the novel, students explore how the protagonist, Gogol, struggles to balance varying aspects of his personality:

STUDENT
INDIAN
AMERICAN
HUSBAND

Students explore the impact of having a multi-faceted identity and make links between the lives of the writers and their characters.

Students compare similarities and differences between the texts. Exploring how and why the experiences of the protagonists differ, but also mirror each other. Students broaden their thinking by considering why the experiences of individuals can be so diverse.

Example Exam Questions

The literature of immigration deals with conflict arising from cultural differences.

Immigrants in literature often feel compelled to discover their roots.

The literature of immigration is dominated by writers' social and political concerns.

Coursework

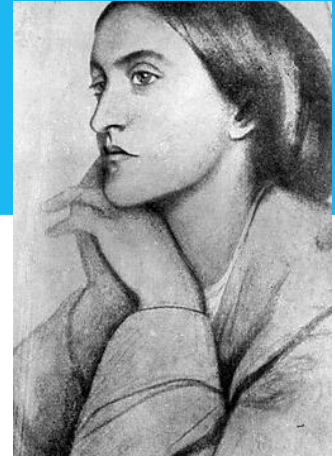
Non- Examination Assessment: Literature Post 1900 (one of these must be post 2000)

- Studying three texts of your choice, and with some guidance.
 - Two texts are compared in an analytical essay.
- Students have the option to do a re-creative piece or a critical piece of writing.
- Students also have the freedom to design the tasks and titles that they would like to study.

Past Examples of Coursework Titles:

- Compare the ways in which Plath and Williams present the restriction of gender roles in society in both *The Bell Jar* and *A Streetcar Named Desire*.
- Compare and contrast the presentation of identity in *Fences* and *The Colour Purple*
- Compare and contrast the presentation of fraternal relationships in *The Line of Beauty* and *The History Boys*

Final Thoughts



- Dynamic and engaging approaches to lessons.
- Students are encouraged to discuss, debate, challenge and appreciate a variety of ideas and concepts.
 - Students gain an understanding of the significance of language.
- Students learn about the experiences of others. Students consider the importance of context. Students will read widely and independently.

