

**A LEVEL ENGLISH LITERATURE  
TRANSITION BOOKLET  
2020-2022**



## Welcome to English Literature

Having selected this course, you have made the decision to immerse yourself in a world of literary texts, of varying genres and time periods. You will be exploring how critics have viewed texts over the years as well as adding your own interpretation of texts.

English Literature is the study of Literary texts from all over the world. You will study American, Canadian and British writers to name but a few. The course is run over 2 years at the end of which you will be expected to write one extended essay – Non-Examined Assessment – which you complete in school and at home, as well as two exam papers.

### Contents

Lesson 1	Overview of the course
Lesson 2	Introduction to A-level English Literature
Lesson 3	Studying prose
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Lesson 7/8	How to approach a drama text
Lesson 9/10	What about the extended essay? Coursework

### Lesson 1: Overview

This is a two-year course which ends with **two** exam papers each carrying an equal weighting towards your final A-level grade (A\*-E). You will also produce one piece of coursework worth 20% of the course.

What will we study?

YEAR 12	YEAR 13
I Introduction to the theme of “Love Through the Ages”	Introduction to “Literature in Modern Times”
AQA Anthology: <b>Pre-1900 Poetry</b>	NEA: Coursework
Prose Text: <b>“The Great Gatsby”</b>	Poetry: <i>Carol Ann Duffy’s Anthology</i> <b>“Feminine Gospels”</b>
Drama: <b>“A Streetcar Named Desire”</b>	Shakespeare: <b>“Othello”</b>
Prose: <b>“A Handmaid’s Tale”</b>	Unseen Prose
NEA: Preparing for the coursework	Unseen Poetry

How are we assessed?

Both exam papers contain 3 questions that are equally weighted:

Paper 1:

“Othello” (25 marks)

Unseen Poetry (25 marks)

Comparing “The Great Gatsby” with “AQA Anthology Poetry” (25 marks)

Paper 2:

“A Streetcar Named Desire” (25 marks)

Unseen Prose (25 marks)

Comparing “A Handmaid’s Tale” with “Feminine Gospels” (25 marks)

Non- Examined Assessment (NEA)

Coursework 2500 words internally marked by teaching staff (25 marks)

The course operates using 5 Assessment Objectives:

AO1	The way you write and present your argument; use of writer’s methods and terminology; using quotations; using accurate expression, grammar and SPAG	7 marks
AO2	Analysis of writer’s methods; how writers create meanings through their methods	6 marks
AO3	Linking social, historical context and understanding how these link to the texts and the task set	6 marks
AO4	Making connections between texts; comparisons between texts studied; comparisons to other texts sharing similar theme or time period (wider reading)	3 marks
AO5	Engaging with the arguments in the task; evaluating; other critics of the texts	3 marks

In each piece of work you prepare during the course, you will be marked using these 5 Assessment Objectives.

Task 1

What prose texts will you study during the course?

.....

.....

How many marks are awarded for each question in the exam?

.....

What examples of love can you think of that might be covered in “Love Through the Ages”?

.....

## Lesson 2: Introduction to A Level Literature

### Expectations of the course:

- Lessons consist of taking notes, group discussions, watching relevant DVDs/documentaries, group work and PowerPoint presentations.
- Homework consists of note making, wider reading, researching critics, using Seneca, past exam questions, and essays. It is expected that about 5 hours a week will be spent on English Literature further study and homework.
- The **Reading and Watching List** below will help you to gain wider knowledge and an understanding of the texts covered in the course. It will also encourage you to develop a wider reading base for Assessment Objective AO4. You are encouraged to share what you have read on Microsoft Teams chat.
- Your progress will be reviewed on a regular basis. The review process will provide feedback at specific times throughout the year.
- You are expected to use the resources available to you in the Learning Resource Centre and Student Area of Park Hall Network.
- We would encourage you to use libraries outside of school, not just the internet.
- Use Microsoft Teams for a group chat and discussion.
- Your school workbooks will be checked on a regular basis to see if you are organised and up to date with your work. **You are expected to complete student feedback on the green teacher marksheets handed back with each piece of marked work.**
- USE YOUR STUDY TIME AND BE PRO-ACTIVE.

### READING LIST

- “The Great Gatsby” (F Scott Fitzgerald)
- “A Handmaid’s Tale” (Margaret Atwood)
- “Othello” (William Shakespeare)
- “A Streetcar Named Desire” (Tennessee Williams)
- English Review Magazine Articles
- RSC Website: <https://www.rsc.org.uk/othello/education> *Othello* resources
- Critical Studies: *Othello* by Fenella Salgado (Author), Gamini Salgado (Author)
- Study and Revise for AS / A level: *The Great Gatsby* by Anne Crow
- <https://www.literaryhistory.com/20thC/Fitzgerald.htm> literary criticism of *The Great Gatsby*
- An Introduction to Literary Criticism (York Handbooks S.), Dutton, Ric
- Study and Revise for AS/A-level: AQA Anthology: love poetry through the ages (Study & Revise for AS/A Level) by Luke McBratney
- The Truth about Love: A collection of Writing on Love Through the Ages by Stephen Siddall and Mary Ward
- <https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/handmaid/> online study guide “A Handmaid’s Tale”
- A wide range of newspapers including The Independent and The Guardian

## **WATCH/LISTEN LIST**

- Series One Channel 4 series “A Handmaid’s Tale”
- Baz Lurhmann’s film version “The Great Gatsby”
- Elia Kazan’s 1951 film version of “A Streetcar Named Desire”
- Iqbal Khan’s 2015 RSC production of “Othello”
- <https://youtu.be/9Z7LhHTkJWQ> audio version “A Handmaid’s Tale”
- <https://youtu.be/MrV5X3bQIFo> “A Handmaid’s Tale” discussing Offred
- <https://player.fm/podcasts/othello> Podcasts “Othello”
- <https://player.fm/featured/handmaids-tale> Podcasts “A Handmaid’s Tale”
- <https://player.fm/podcasts/Margaret-Atwood> Margaret Atwood
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01hpfv8> “The Great Gatsby”
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p017pz6y> “The Great Gatsby”
- <https://www.artofmanliness.com/articles/podcast-125-why-the-great-gatsby-endures-with-maureen-corrigan/> “The Great Gatsby”
- <https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=podcasts+free++a+streetcar+named+desire&qpv=podcasts+free++a+streetcar+named+desire&FORM=VDRE> “A Streetcar Named Desire”
- <https://youtu.be/nQr-vvui6fY> Feminine Gospels
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LY31t8rXIQ0> Feminine Gospels
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p07mvypf> “The Yellow Wallpaper”
- [https://youtu.be/\\_836WhwmoNQ](https://youtu.be/_836WhwmoNQ) “If I Were A Man” Charlotte Perkins-Gilman

## **Task 2**

Choose something from the Reading and Watching List - write a summary of what you read/viewed/listened to below.

## Lesson 3: Studying Prose

During the A level 'love through the ages' course, we will look at the themes of the pursuit of love, unrequited love, romantic love, marriage, forbidden love, jealousy, loss and betrayal as they are played out in literature in different historical times. It is vital that as we endeavour to research and analyse as a class, the emphasis and impetus of the learning must shift from the teacher to the student.

### Pointers for analysing unseen prose.

Identify the genre and the period

What are the characteristics associated with the period? Does the extract exemplify them?

Content

- What is the extract about? Is there a story?
- Can you identify any major themes?
- Are there characters? What are their roles?
- Is there a historical, social or political context?

### Key features of prose

- How the narrative starts
- Narrative voice and point of view
- Use of dialogue and voice
- How the narrative is structured
- Use of symbolism and motif
- Particular features of style and language
- Presentation of character and theme.

### Other Advice

- Don't be afraid to include your own opinion
- Always link your points back to the text
- Make sure you discuss other interpretations

### Task 3

Read the following extract from a novel. It is an example of an unseen prose text you may see in the exam. Answer the questions at the end of the extract.

#### **Kate Chopin (1851-1904)**



Chopin was an American author of short stories and novels, mainly based in Louisiana. She is now considered by some to have been a forerunner of the feminist authors of the 20th century of Southern or Catholic background, such as Zelda Fitzgerald.

**The Awakening**, originally titled *A Solitary Soul*, was first published in 1899. Set on the Louisiana Gulf coast at the end of the 19th century, the plot centers on Edna Pontellier and her struggle to reconcile her increasingly unorthodox views on femininity and motherhood with the prevailing social attitudes of the turn-of-the-century American South. Edna is married with two sons, Raoul and Etienne. The extract is from the end of the novel, when Edna learns that Robert,

the man she truly loves, has left forever as he is unwilling to enter into a relationship with a married woman.

Edna walked on down to the beach rather mechanically, not noticing anything special except that the sun was hot. She was not dwelling upon any particular train of thought. She had done all the thinking, which was necessary after Robert went away, when she lay awake upon the sofa till morning.

She had said over and over to herself: "To-day it is Arobin; to-morrow it will be someone else. It makes no difference to me; it doesn't matter about Leonce Pontellier—but Raoul and Etienne!" She understood now clearly what she had meant long ago when she said to Adele Ratignolle that she would give up the unessential, but she would never sacrifice herself for her children.

Despondency had come upon her there in the wakeful night and had never lifted. There was no one thing in the world that she desired. There was no human being whom she wanted near her except Robert; and she even realized that the day would come when he, too, and the thought of him would melt out of her existence, leaving her alone. The children appeared before her like antagonists who had overcome her, who had overpowered and sought to drag her into the soul's slavery for the rest of her days. But she knew a way to elude them. She was not thinking of these things when she walked down to the beach.

The water of the Gulf stretched out before her, gleaming with the million lights of the sun. The voice of the sea is seductive, never ceasing, whispering, clamoring, murmuring, inviting the soul to wander in abysses of solitude. All along the white beach, up and down, there was no living thing in sight. A bird with a broken wing was beating the air above, reeling, fluttering, circling disabled down, down to the water.

Edna had found her old bathing suit still hanging, faded, upon its accustomed peg.

She put it on, leaving her clothing in the bath-house. But when she was there beside the sea, absolutely alone, she cast the unpleasant, pricking garments from her, and for the first time in her life she stood naked in the open air, at the mercy of the sun, the breeze that beat upon her, and the waves that invited her.

How strange and awful it seemed to stand naked under the sky! how delicious! She felt like some new-born creature, opening its eyes in a familiar world that it had never known.

The foamy wavelets curled up to her white feet and coiled like serpents about her ankles. She walked out. The water was chill, but she walked on. The water was deep, but she lifted her white body and reached out with a long, sweeping stroke. The touch of the sea is sensuous, enfolding the body in its soft, close embrace.

She went on and on. She remembered the night she swam far out and recalled the terror that seized her at the fear of being unable to regain the shore. She did not look back now, but went on and on, thinking of the blue-grass meadow that she had traversed when a little child, believing that it had no beginning and no end.

Her arms and legs were growing tired.

She thought of Leonce and the children. They were a part of her life. But they need not have thought that they could possess her, body and soul. How Mademoiselle Reisz would have laughed, perhaps sneered, if she knew! "And you call yourself an artist! What pretensions, Madame! The artist must possess the courageous soul that dares and defies."

Exhaustion was pressing upon and overpowering her.

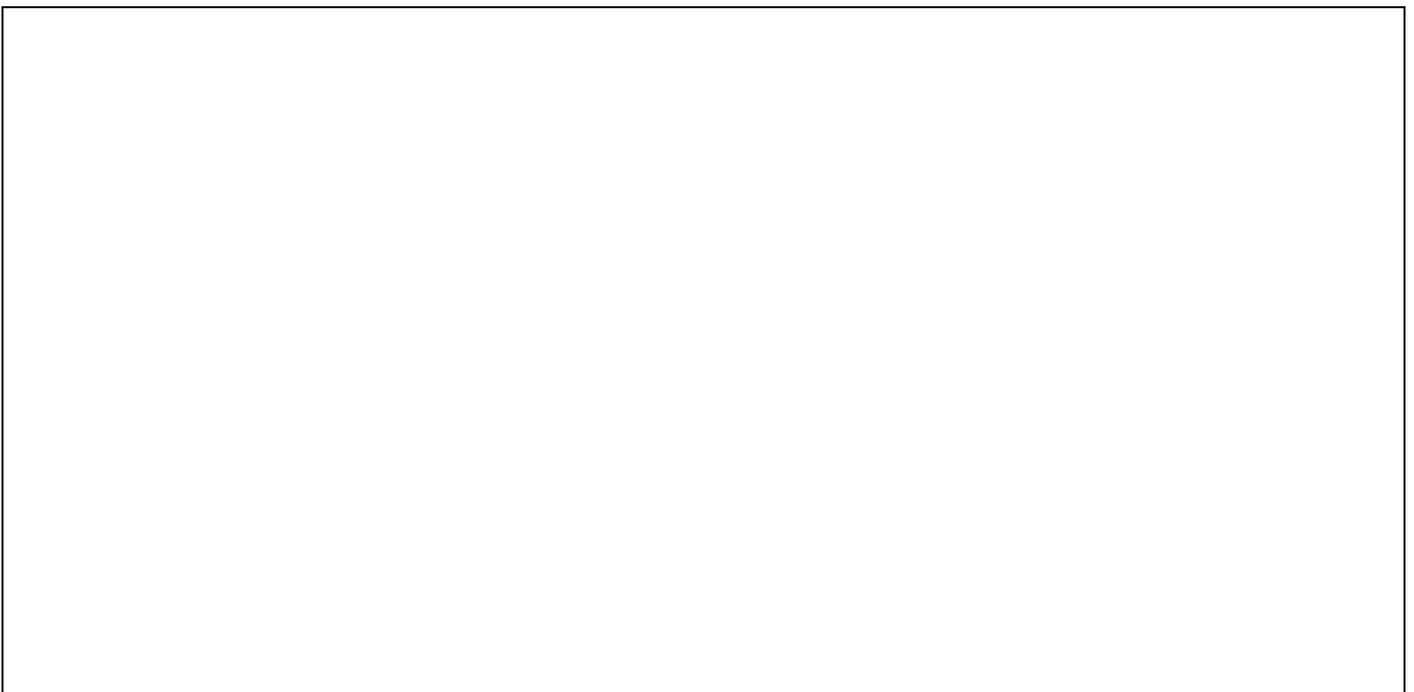
"Good-by—because I love you." He did not know; he did not understand. He would never understand. Perhaps Doctor Mandelet would have understood if she had seen him—but it was too late; the shore was far behind her, and her strength was gone.

1. How do you respond to this extract as the end of a novel?

2. Explore the ways Chopin structures the ending and the effects she achieves.



3. Compare the female experience of love in this story with your wider reading.



4. Examine the view that Chopin presents Edna as achieving a liberating triumph in this extract. Make close reference to the writer's methods in your response.

## Lesson 4: Exploring Poetry

**Starter Activity:** Artists have explored the universal theme of love for centuries. List as many different aspects of love as you can think of:

### Task 4

Read the following poem: *To the Virgins, To Make Much of Time* by Robert Herrick (1591-1674)

What does the title mean?

What's the Speaker's message?

How does the Speaker use time to persuade?

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,  
Old Time is still a-flying;  
And this same flower that smiles today  
Tomorrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,  
The higher he's a-getting,  
The sooner will his race be run,  
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,  
When youth and blood are warmer;  
But being spent, the worse, and worst  
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,  
And while ye may, go marry;  
For having lost but once your prime,  
You may forever tarry.



## Task 5

Read Marlowe's 'The Passionate Shepherd to His Love' and Raleigh's 'The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd'.

### **The Passionate Shepherd to His Love**

by Christopher Marlowe

1599

Come live with me and be my love,  
And we will all the pleasures prove  
That valleys, groves, hills, and fields  
Woods or steepy mountain yields

And we will sit upon the rocks,  
Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks  
By shallow rivers to whose falls  
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses  
And a thousand fragrant posies,  
A cap of flower, and a kirtle  
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool  
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;  
Fair lined slippers for the cold  
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivy buds,  
With coral clasps and amber studs;  
And if these pleasures may thee move,  
Come live with me and be my love.

The shepherds' swains shall dance and sing  
For thy delight each May morning:  
If these delights thy mind may move,  
Then live with me and be my love.

### **The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd**

by Sir Walter Raleigh

1600

If all the world and love were young,  
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,  
These pretty pleasures might me move  
To live with thee and be thy love.

Time drives the flocks from field to fold,  
When rivers rage and rocks grow cold;  
And Philomel becometh dumb;  
The rest complain of cares to come.

The flowers do fade, and wanton fields  
To wayward winter reckoning yields;  
A honey tongue, a heart of gall,  
Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall.

Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy bed of roses,  
Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies,  
Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten,  
In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy belt of straw and ivy buds,  
Thy coral clasps and amber studs,  
All these in me no means can move  
To come to thee and be thy love.

But could youth last and love still breed,  
Had joys no date nor age no need,  
Then these delights my mind might move  
To live with thee and be thy love.

**How do these two poems present sharply contrasting views on love?**

- Who are the speaker's addressing?
- The speaker's choice of words
- Evidence of the speaker's attitude towards love

<b>Shepherd's Line</b>	<b>Nymph's Reply</b>
"I will make thee beds of roses"	"flowers do fade"

## Lesson 5/6: Shakespeare

### An Overview:

- **Iago** is a soldier and close companion to his commanding officer, **Othello**, but is resentful of the fact that he hasn't had the promotion he thinks he deserves.
- Othello is a Moor, a black man, who has risen to high status because of his bravery in battle and success in preventing the Turks from damaging the commercial, colonial interests of his Venetian masters.
- He has recently secretly married a white Venetian woman, **Desdemona**, the daughter of **Brabantio**, much to Brabantio's anger and disapproval.
- **Roderigo** is a companion of Iago's, who loves Desdemona. He is upset and angry that she has married Othello, having been persuaded that Iago is helping him woo her for himself.

### Task 6

This is the scenario with which Shakespeare opens his play, in Venice...

If you were the playwright...

- Who would you have on stage, to open?

- Where would you position them?

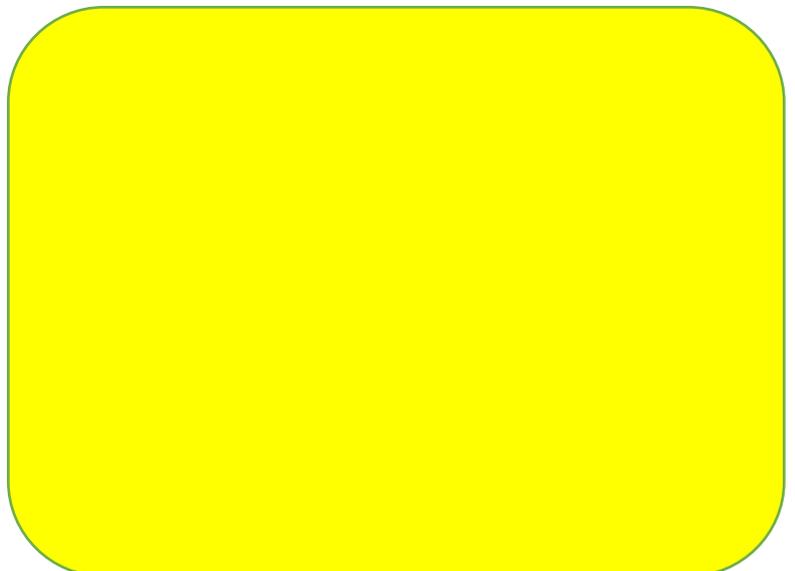
Justify your choices in terms of dramatic impact

### Task 7

Read this speech by Desdemona from Act 1 scene 3. How does she describe her love for Othello?

#### **DESDEMONA**

That I did love the Moor to live with him,  
My downright violence, and storm of fortunes,  
May trumpet to the world. My heart's subdu'd  
Even to the very quality of my lord.  
I saw Othello's visage in his mind,  
And to his honors and his valiant parts  
Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.  
So that, dear lords, if I be left behind,  
A moth of peace, and he go to the war,  
The rites for why I love him are bereft me,  
And I a heavy interim shall support  
By his dear absence. Let me go with him.



## Task 8

Look at the Watch/Listen list. Select one of the Podcasts to listen to or the RSC version of the play to watch. Make notes as you take part in your chosen media.

## **Lesson 7/8: Approaching a Drama Text**

A Level English Literature's set drama text is Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* and there is a link to a film version starring Marlon Brando which has been widely acclaimed.

Drama is different to other genres in that it requires an audience and consequently can feel lost at times when read in a classroom. During the course, we encourage students to read aloud, taking character parts. However, it is important to consider the actions the character would use or facial expressions, diction, pace and tempo of speech and this is where the opportunity to see live performance is important. We encourage live theatre and where a production is playing, we endeavour to see it!

## Task 9

Watch the short drama "The Last Call" (2019) by clicking on the link below.

<https://youtu.be/QNTtBPdypMM>

Savannah has got her best friend back and they're going to enjoy a night in just like the good old days... or so she hopes. As the reality behind their irreversibly altered friendship becomes too much to ignore, can they find it in themselves to make peace with the truth?

- The drama began with a script. Write the stage directions for the setting including props
- What was significant about Savannah physically turning her back on Ash? At what part in the drama did this happen? Why do you think the director made this decision for the actors?

## Task 10

Find out the meanings of the following drama terms:

MONOSYLLABIC	ANTAGONIST	ASIDE	PROTAGONIST
CHORUS	PROLOGUE	DUOLOGUE	DRAMATIC IRONY
CLIMAX	CATHARSIS	FOIL	HAMARTIA
STOCK CHARACTER	HUBRIS	AD-LIB	DENOUEMENT

Can you identify any of the drama terms that was evident in the short drama "The Last Call"?

Make a list below:

## Lesson 9/10: The Coursework (N.E.A.)

For some students, this will be the first time they will have produced a piece of coursework and can seem quite daunting! However, all of you will be used to writing essays under exam conditions, so you are capable of producing thoughtful analysis of language while referring to the text as support for your points.

Your NEA requires you to write 2500 words and compare two texts. You will study texts in lesson time and choose **one** of them to write about. You then have the freedom to choose your own text to compare to the teacher set one and you have the choice of your own title. The work will be broken down into smaller parts (500 words) and you will be assigned one teacher who will work with you during the process via one-to-one tutorials and written feedback.

### **Exemplar student response**

It has been said that 'Writers often blur the boundary between the respectable citizen and the criminal.'

Compare and contrast the presentation of the respectable citizen and the criminal in Great Expectations and A Clockwork Orange in the light of this view.

This is an example of a coursework title. The first part offers a statement, an opinion. The task then follows. Notice that it contains the command verbs **compare** and **contrast** which covers AO4. There are **two texts** "Great Expectations" and "A Clockwork Orange". The words **the presentation of** refers to how the writer uses literary methods to present the characters that are **respectable** and **criminal** which is the focus of the essay (AO2/AO1). **In light of this view** opens up AO5, the opportunity to offer a critical perspective of the statement, your own opinion.

### Task 11

Look at the paragraph below.

*Dickens and Burgess choose to tell bildungsroman stories through first person narrators. Pip and Alex each speak retrospectively, feeding the narratives with their own opinions; however, Pip speaks as a reformed gentleman, condemning from a great distance, whereas Alex never repents, but simply grows up to tell his story affectionately just two years from its beginning. Despite their vastly different narrative perspectives, both characters, at different stages of their journeys, could be deemed either criminal or respectable, in terms of both legality and morality. This not only blurs the boundary between the two, but leaves readers questioning whether a line, or indeed any distinction, truly exists*

1. What literary techniques can you identify?
2. What words in the paragraph directly link to the coursework title?
3. Are there any places where the texts are compared?

## Task 12

Think back to your earlier work on poetry and drama. Write a paragraph responding to the question: How do the two poems present sharply contrasting views of love?

- Make sure you include AO4 – comparing/contrasting
- Make sure you refer to the theme of the question (AO1)
- Make sure you include some analysis of language (AO2)
- What do you know already about the presentation of love in texts? (AO3)
- Make sure you include your own opinion/critical viewpoint (AO5)

## AND/OR

Watch the short drama “The Last Call”. Write a paragraph responding to the following: “Critics of this drama have suggested that the ending comes as quite a surprise.”

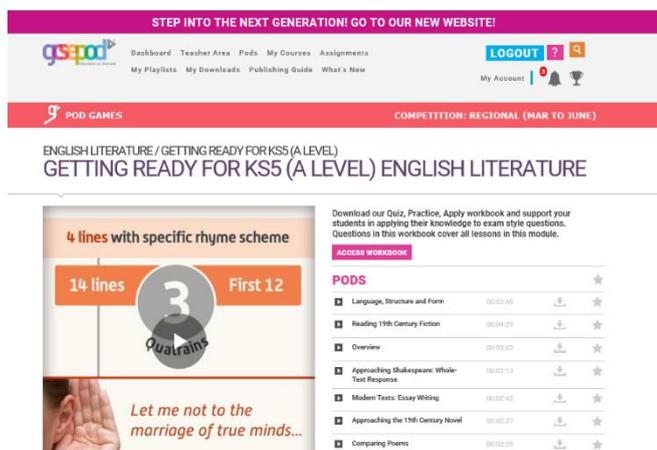
How would you respond to this view of the drama?

- What drama techniques does the director use? (AO1)
- How successful are the drama techniques in telling the story? (AO2/AO5)
- What genre of drama is this? (AO3 – your knowledge of drama here)
- How does the writer use the protagonist (Savannah) to tell her story? Is this similar or different to other dramas that you already know/have seen? (AO4)

## FINALLY.....

Check out the website GCSE Pod. There are 28 pods that are useful in getting ready for KS5 English Literature. As you work your way through them, make notes on ideas that you find useful

or helpful.



The screenshot shows the GCSE Pod website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Dashboard, Teacher Area, Pods, My Courses, Assignments, My Playlists, My Downloads, Publishing Guide, and What's New. A 'LOGOUT' button is also visible. Below the navigation bar is a red banner for 'POD GAMES' with the text 'COMPETITION: REGIONAL (MAR TO JUNE)'. The main content area is titled 'ENGLISH LITERATURE / GETTING READY FOR KS5 (A LEVEL) GETTING READY FOR KS5 (A LEVEL) ENGLISH LITERATURE'. On the left, there is a promotional graphic for '4 lines with specific rhyme scheme' featuring '14 lines', '3 Quatrains', and 'First 12'. Below this is a quote: 'Let me not to the marriage of true minds...'. On the right, there is a list of 'PODS' with a table of contents:

PODS	Download our Quiz, Practice, Apply workbook and support your students in applying their knowledge to exam style questions. Questions in this workbook cover all lessons in this module.
Language, Structure and Form	00:00:45
Reading 19th Century Fiction	00:04:29
Overview	00:00:00
Approaching Shakespeare: Whole-Text Response	00:00:13
Modern Texts: Essay Writing	00:00:42
Approaching the 19th Century Novel	00:00:27
Comparing Poems	00:00:35