

## Welcome to English Literature A Level at Salisbury Sixth Form College



“What an astonishing thing a book is. It's a flat object made from a tree with flexible parts on which are imprinted lots of funny dark squiggles. But one glance at it and you're inside the mind of another person, maybe somebody dead for thousands of years. Across the millennia, an author is speaking clearly and silently inside your head, directly to you. Writing is perhaps the greatest of human inventions, binding together people who never knew each other, citizens of distant epochs. Books break the shackles of time. A book is proof that humans are capable of working magic.”

*Carl Sagan – astrophysicist*

**Welcome. You are about to embark on a two year course of study introducing you to hundreds of years of English Literature. Enjoy it!**

**You will respond to the works by discussion and by essay – you will produce a couple of pieces of dynamic and original coursework – and you will sit two exams at the very end of the course.**

### To get the most out of this course you will need to:

- Be open-minded and willing to engage your imagination.
- Listen carefully to the input from the front, and to each other.
- Join in and share your ideas.
- Be confident in your own ability to work independently but make sure you ask for guidance or support as soon as you need it.
- Make notes and keep them in good order.
- Learn a list of literary terms.
- Buy and read the set texts promptly and in full.
- Commit to working on English Literature for up to four hours a week in your own time.

### Practically, you will need:

- Writing pens (not felt tips) in at least three colours.
- A couple of highlighter pens.
- A folder and paper.
- You will need to buy the texts we are going to be studying, as we go along.

## You need a copy of Hamlet:

We are starting with Shakespeare's Hamlet and you will need it from the start of the course. You need an actual book (not an e-book) so that you can annotate it. I don't mind which edition you buy as long as it isn't published by Wordsworth Classics. You should be able to get a used copy from ebay for under a fiver including postage.

## Two Summer Tasks

- 1) **Please read a couple of novels/some poetry and jot down your favourite quotations from them.** If you haven't already read these books, then you might like to choose from this list – these are all excellent but not difficult:

*The Book Thief – Markus Zusak*

*Inkheart, Inkspell, Inkdeath – Cornelia Funke*

*Lord of the Flies – William Golding*

*Of Mice and Men – John Steinbeck (will be helpful for our course)*

*The Help – Kathryn Stockett (also relevant to the course)*

*Strange Meeting – Susan Hill (relevant to coursework)*

*Regeneration - Pat Barker (relevant to coursework)*

*Never Let Me Go - Kazuo Ishiguro*

*The Handmaid's Tale - Margaret Atwood*

*Slaughterhouse 5 - Kurt Vonnegut*

*The Life of Pi – Yann Martel*

*The Kite Runner – Khaled Hosseini*

*Discworld series – Terry Pratchett*

*If you want a stretch then read Frankenstein, Tess of the D'Urbervilles, 1984, Cloud Atlas or The Grapes of Wrath (also very helpful for our course).*

**Happy reading.... one more task for you ...**

**2) Look up the definitions of these terms, and find an example - keep this list and bring it with you in September.**

<b><u>TERM</u></b>	<b><u>DEFINITION</u></b>	<b><u>EXAMPLE</u></b>
<i>Dynamic and stative verbs</i>		
<i>Active and passive voice</i>		
<i>Concrete and abstract nouns</i>		
<i>Imperatives</i>		
<i>Conditionals</i>		
<i>Foreshadowing</i>		
<i>Asyndetic list</i>		
<i>Polysyndeton</i>		
<i>Minor, simple, incomplete, compound and complex sentences</i>		
<i>Alliteration</i>		
<i>Assonance</i>		
<i>Euphony</i>		
<i>Cacophony</i>		
<i>Onomatopoeic language</i>		
<i>Contrast</i>		
<i>Juxtaposition</i>		
<i>Oxymoron</i>		
<i>Paradox</i>		

*Simile*

*Metaphor*

*Metonymy*

*Personification*

*Pathetic fallacy*

*Symbolism*

*Allusion*

*Connotation*

*Tone*

*Diction*

*Semantic field*

*First person narrative*

*Third person narrative*

*Omniscient narrator*

*Point of view*

*Unreliable narrator*

*Diegetic/Non diegetic narrator*

**Don't worry if you don't understand entirely - I will be teaching you - but a headstart is essential!**

**Welcome to the class - I am really looking forward to September.**

**Have a brilliant summer! Rebecca Anderson**