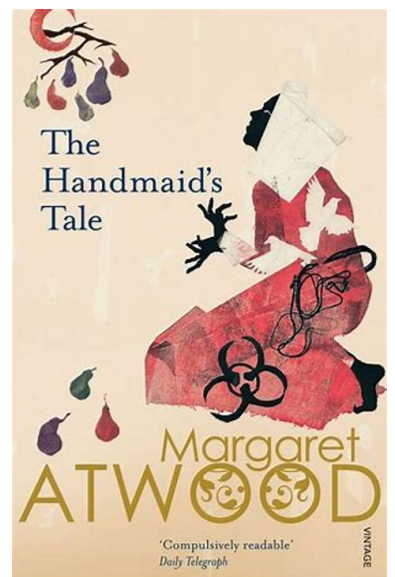
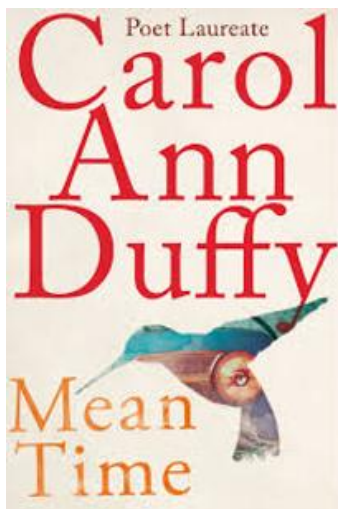


English Language and Literature A-Level



How to access these materials

We have included some work that will really help bridge the gap from GCSE to A Level if you are choosing to study A Level Language and Literature.

We have included 3 booklets and each of them are an introduction to the three of the modules that we will study in Year 12. They are as follows:

- An introduction to 'Paris'. We will begin with studying some of the texts in this anthology for the first four weeks and we will complete a short assessment. We will then look at the rest of the texts written about 'Paris' in the Spring term.
- An introduction to 'The Handmaid's Tale'. You will study this text in the Autumn term with one of your two A Level teachers
- An introduction to 'Duffy'. You will also study a range of Carol Ann Duffy's poems in the Autumn term after completing the initial introduction into the Paris Anthology.

We have also included an 'introduction to terminology' task that we suggest you start with.

Additionally, to get ahead, we would suggest reading (or even listening to an audio book if you prefer) of 'The Handmaid's Tale' (Your local library can supply you with both!).

You could also consider reading other books with a dystopian genre (for example, '1984' by George Orwell) or ones that are considered seminal feminist works (for example, 'The Bell Jar' by Sylvia Plath or 'The Yellow Wallpaper' a short story by Charlotte Perkins Gilman.)

If you have any questions, you can contact either of the A Level teachers on the following:

Mrs Watson: LWatson@bruntsacademy.org

Ms Simmons: ASimmons@bruntsacademy.org

We cannot wait to get started with you in September!



An introduction to English Language and Literature terminology

A huge aspect of taking English Language and Literature at A level is your ability to apply subject specific terminology to a range of texts - you will need to become Language experts. To make this easier for you, we want you to start now. For the terms that are listed below we want you to define them and to try to find an example. Your example can be taken from any text, but you may want to look ahead at the three workbooks where you will find some extracts that could be helpful.

Additionally, there is further information about syntax and modality that you will need to know so that you can apply this knowledge to all the texts you study and it will assist your understanding and analysis. These key areas of study will form part of the first few weeks of lessons. You could get ahead by learning about it in the summer. Perhaps you could create your own resources, such as flashcards or mind maps to support.

Key Term	Definition	Example
Semantic field		
Denotation		
Imperative Verb		
Modal Verb		
Intensifier		
Euphemism		
Colloquial Language		
Superlatives		
Trinomial		
Allusion		
Synecdoche		
Idiom		
Cliché		

Syntax

- ✓ Syntax simply is the way in which words are arranged to form phrases, clauses and sentences.

Simple Sentence - A sentence with one main clause. For example, 'She waited.'

Creates the effects of:

- Clarity
- Directness
- Finality

Can feel blunt, tense or dramatic.

Compound Sentence - Two (or more) main clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction.

For example, 'She waited, and he never came.'

Effects:

- Balance
- Equality of ideas
- Flowing or conversational tone

Complex Sentence - A main clause and at least one subordinating clause.

For example, 'She waited because she believed he would return.'

Effects:

- Adds detail or explanation
- Can reflect complex thought
- Often sounds reflective, analytical, or controlled.

Minor Sentence - Grammatically incomplete sentence.

For example, 'No escape.' or 'Too late.'

Effects:

- Mimics thought or speech
- Creates tension or pace
- Suggests emotion, panic or immediacy

AQA loves students who can say what the subordinate clause does (cause, condition, time, contrast).

Clause, Structure and Control

Subordination – one clause depends on another:

For example, 'Although she was afraid, she stayed.'

Effects:

- Shows hierarchy of ideas
- Can reflect power imbalance, hesitation, justification

Coordination – clauses of equal grammatical weight.

For example, 'She was afraid, but she stayed.'

Effects:

- Suggests balance or conflict
- Often used in speech-like or narrative styles.

Sentence Functions:

- ✓ Declarative
- ✓ Interrogative
- ✓ Imperative
- ✓ Exclamative

Declarative - Makes a statement.

For example: 'The room was silent.'

Effect:

Neutral, factual, authoritative.

Interrogative - Asks a question

For example, 'Why did she say that?'

Effect:

Engages reader, challenges ideas, shows doubt or curiosity

Imperative - Gives a command

For example, 'Leave now.'

Effect:

Authority, urgency, control (great for power analysis)

Exclamative - Expresses strong emotion

For example, 'What a terrible mistake!'

Effect:

Heightens emotion, intensity, drama

Word Order and emphasis

Fronted adverbials - Adverbials placed at the front of the sentence

For example, 'In the darkness, she waited.'

Effects:

- Shifts focus
- Creates atmosphere
- Controls pacing

NB: (Consider WHY)

Inversion -

Unusual word order:

For example, 'Gone was her hope.'

Effects:

- Poetic or formal tone
- Emphasises a key idea
- Can feel dramatic or unnatural (on purpose)

Active Vs Passive Voice

Active – subject does the action

For example, 'The guard opened the door.'

Effect:

- Clear responsibility, direct action.

Passive – action is done to the subject

For example, 'The door was opened.'

Effect:

- Removes or obscures responsibility
- Common in political, bureaucratic or manipulative language

Sentence Length and Patterning

Short sentence – 'He stopped.'

Effect: impact, tension, certainty

Long/cumulative sentences – 'He stooped, realising for the first time that the silence around him was not peaceful but threatening.'

Effect: reflection, build-up, complexity

Repetition of structure (parallelism) – 'She waited. She hoped. She believed.'

Effect: rhythm, emphasis, persuasion

Modality

Modality is how speakers show: possibility, certainty, permission, ability, obligation, or attitude.

Modality shows how sure, necessary, possible, or allowed something is.

Epistemic modality

About knowledge or certainty – it answers, 'How sure is the speaker?'

For example:

'It might rain.' – not certain

'She must be tired.' – very likely

'He could be right.' - possible

Deontic Modality

About rules, permission or obligation. – it answers, 'What is allowed or required?'

For example:

'You must wear shoes.'

'You may leave now.'

'Students should study.'

Dynamic Modality

About ability or willingness

For example:

'She can swim.'

'I will help you.'

Introduction to A-Level

Remembered Places:

Paris Anthology



- Activity 1 – Researching Paris.
- Activity 2 – Preparing to study the texts.
- Activity 3 – A look at the anthology (two texts).

Activity 1 – Researching Paris

You need to know about Paris and life as a Parisian before beginning to study the 'Paris Anthology'. Below are some areas you might want to consider researching:

- Places
- People (influential Parisians, famous artists etc)
- Food and Drink
- Entertainment
- Travel and Transport
- Language and Culture
- Buildings and Architecture
- Politics and World Events
- History
- Fashion

For each area you could create a mind map, poster or word document including key ideas you have found during your research. Think carefully about how best to record this information – read through your research and summarise information so it is relevant and useful for your future studies. Try to consider what life is like for Parisians and how this might contrast with the experiences of those choosing to visit Paris as tourists or those opting to live there.



Activity 2 – Preparing to study the texts

What types of texts does the anthology contain?

- Travel memoirs
- Advertisements
- Video travel guides
- Personal narratives
- Autobiographies
- Travel blogs
- Online guides
- Websites – online forums.
- Guidebooks
- Newspaper articles
- Pathé news reports
- History books
- Letters
- Conversations.
-



Think about what you might associate with the different text types listed above.

Consider the following and make notes:

- Would you expect the text to be written/visual/audio/multimodal?
- Where might you expect it to be published?
- Who might it be aimed at? (age? gender? Is it general or specific?)
- What style might you expect it to be written in?
- What might the purpose of the text be? Might it have more than one?
- What conventions might the text type adhere to?

Key terms for this unit are:

Genre: a way of grouping texts based on expected shared conventions.

Representation: the portrayal of events, people and circumstances through language and other meaning-making resources to create a way of seeing the world.

Context: the external factors that shape how texts are produced and received.

Point of view: the perspective(s) used in a text through which a version of reality is presented.

Register: a variety of language that is associated with a particular situation of use.

Literariness: the degree to which a text displays 'literary' qualities along a continuum rather than being absolutely 'literary' or 'non-literary'.

Activity 3

Now it's time to have a look at a couple of texts from the anthology.

Watch the two video texts and read the transcripts on the next pages:
'Stories are waiting in Paris' (Eurostar advertisement)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=NCyQo6rVrOI

'Paris City Guide' (Lonely Planet)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=5XYUHJ13KHM

Now copy and complete the grids below.

Do you need to check the definition of any of these linguistic features?

Eurostar - text 1	
Linguistic feature	Example
Contraction	
Adverb	
Preposition	
Active verb	
Conjunction	
Stative verb	
Modal verb	
Demonstrative pronoun	

Lonely Planet - text 5	
Linguistic feature	Example
Definite article	
Stative verb	
Concrete noun	
Superlative	
Possessive pronoun	
Proper noun	
Abstract noun	
Preposition	

Text 1: 'Stories are Waiting in Paris', Eurostar advert

((hurdy-gurdy style music plays))

Narrator: **maybe** (.) **maybe** you'll go left *((footsteps))* (1) **maybe** you'll go right *((rollerblading))* *((clattering sound, pigeons scatter))* (1) **maybe** you'll go **up** *((footsteps, skipping sound))* (1) **down** *((wooshing sound))* (.) round and round *((mechanical clicking sound, child's yell))* (1) **maybe** you'll go here (1) or **there** (1) to **this place** *((live music))* (1) **that place** (.) **maybe** you'll meet **him** *((arrow appears on screen pointing to man))* (.) **her** *((kissing sound))* (.) perhaps them (.) hopefully not him. (.) **maybe** you see **this** (1) *((dog barks))* **hear that** *((parrot squawks, siren))* (1) **eat this** (1) **maybe** you'll get lost (1) **maybe** it will rain *((rain))* (.) you shelter here and **this** will happen (2) but **maybe** it won't rain (.) instead you'll go **there** (.) and **fall** in love (.) with **this** *((car starts, door shuts))* (2) stories are waiting *((written text appears on screen: 'STORIES ARE WAITING'))* *((music fades, train door slides shut))* *((written texts appears on screen: 'Eurostar, #wheninparis'))*

Text 5: 'Paris City Guide', Lonely Planet travel video

((French-style, beat-heavy music plays))

((written appears across screen: Lonely Planet logo)) (4)

((written text appears across screen: 'PARIS CITY GUIDE')) (4)

Narrator: the **city** of light is the capital of France (.) and the **epitome** of romance (.) culture (.) and beauty (2) home to over **two** million people (.) Paris straddles the river Seine (.) and is divided into twenty districts called arrondissements (.) each with its own personality (2) ((whooshing sound, new, more traditional French music starts)) the **heart** of Paris has changed little since the mid nineteenth century (.) when its **grand** boulevards and art nouveau apartments were built (1) strict planning regulations have preserved its layout (.) and ensured an **almost total** absence of high-rises (1) to fully appreciate the city's charms (1.) you're best exploring Paris on foot (1) take a leisurely stroll along the Seine (.) or wander the cobblestone streets of Montmartre ((written text appears across screen: 'Clos Monmatre, near the junction of Rue des Saules and Rue Saint-Vincent is the last remaining vineyard in Paris.')) (6)

((music stops, whooshing sound, new, jauntier French music starts))

Narrator: Paris probably has more familiar landmarks than any other city on Earth (1) once a fortress and royal residence (.) the iconic **Louvre** is the city's greatest gallery (.) specialising in art from the **Middle Ages** (.) to the 1848 Revolution (3) ((music continues, whooshing sound)) stroll the Champs-Élysées to reach the mighty Arc de Triomphe (2) commissioned by Napoleon to celebrate his greatest military victories (4) ((music stops, whooshing sound, new music starts)) the Eiffel Tower is the most famous fixture on the city's skyline (.) built for the World Fair in 1889 ((written text appears on screen: 'The Eiffel Tower changes height with the seasons. It expands in summer and shrinks in winter.')) (8)

((music stops, whooshing sound, contemporary dance music starts))

Narrator: Parisians live and breathe fashion (.) have an innate sense of style (.) and dress with meticulous care (1) you can get the look (.) and max your credit card (.) in the boutiques of the **Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré** (.) often cited as the world's most fashionable address (2) ((music stops, whooshing sound, new, more traditional French music starts)) the side streets of Paris are full of quirky boutiques and specialty stores (1) ((ambient street-level sounds begin)) locals buy their pastries at the **pâtisserie** (.) bread at the **boulangerie** (.) and cheese from the **fromagerie** (.) this style of shopping not only offers a wealth of expertise (.) but a perfect excuse for Parisians to talk about their favourite subject (1) food (.) fresh ingredients ((louder ambient sounds begin)) (.) great chefs (.) and the refined style of French cooking (.) make Paris one of the best places on Earth to be hungry (.) ((street level sounds)) and if you subscribe to even half of the superlatives thrown at this city (.) it's one of the best places to be (.) full stop

((written text appears across screen: 'Lonely Planet logo')) (4)

((ambient street sounds fade, music stops))

Key

(.) indicates a pause of less than a second

(2) indicates a longer pause (number of seconds indicated)

Bold indicates stressed syllables or words

:: indicates elongation of a word

((italics)) indicates contextual or additional information

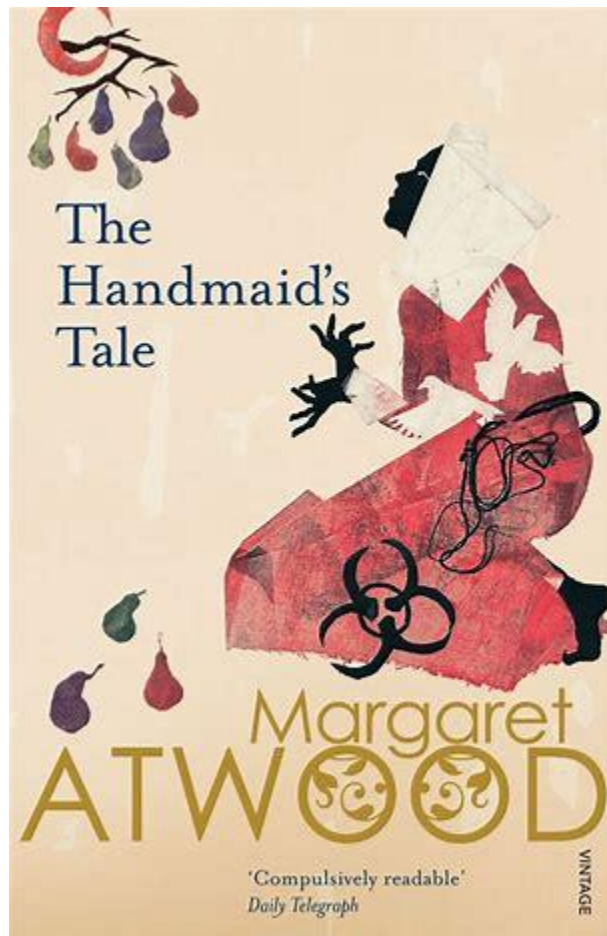
[] indicates the start and end points of simultaneous speech

Take a closer look at the texts:

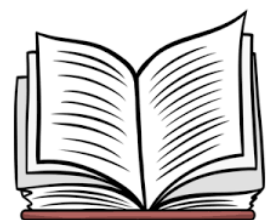
	Stories are waiting in Paris (1)	Paris City Guide (5)
Genre (and mode) Is the text written/visual/ audio or multimodal? Where is it published? What type of 'text' is it?		
Audience What age is it aimed at? Is it aimed at a particular gender? Is it general or specific? Is it aimed at people with a shared interest?		
Stylistics What type of language does the writer use? Is the tone friendly/ impersonal? Formal/informal? What atmosphere does the writer create?		
Purpose(s) What is the aim of the text? Is there more than one purpose?		

Introduction to A-Level

The Handmaid's Tale



- Activity 1 – The Author
- Activity 2 – The Novel



The Course Overview

Where does The Handmaid's Tale fit within the course?

Assessment Information		
Unit	Assessment	
Paper 1: Section A – Remembered Places.	One question on the AQA Anthology: <i>Paris</i> (40 marks). This section analyses the representation of place. This section is closed book .	Paper 1 One written exam – 3 hours. 100 marks. 40% of A-Level. Assessment of students ability to apply methods of language analysis are integrated into each section of the exam
Paper 1: Section B – Imagined Worlds.	One question from a choice of two on Margaret Atwood's <i>The Handmaids Tale</i> . (35 marks). This section analyses point of view and genre in prose. This section is open book .	
Paper 1: Section C – Poetic Voices.	One question from a choice of two on a set selection of poetry by Carol Ann Duffy. (25 Marks) This section analyses the form and function of poetic voices. This section is open book .	
Paper 2: Section A – Writing about society.	One piece of re-creative writing using F. Scott Fitzgerald's <i>The Great Gatsby</i> . (25 marks). One critical commentary (30 marks). This section assess student's ability to write re-creatively and to evaluate their own writing. This section is open book .	Paper 2 One written exam – 2 hours 30 minutes. 100 marks. 40% of A-Level. Assessment of students ability to apply methods of language analysis are integrated into each section of the exam
Paper 2: Section B - Dramatic Encounters.	One question from a choice of two on Shakespeare's <i>Othello</i> . (45 marks) This section analyses the representation of conflict in drama. This section is open book .	
Non-exam assessment.	A personal investigation of between 2,500 and 3,000 words that explores a specific technique or theme in both literary and non-literary discourse.	NEA Teacher assesses; moderated by AQA 50 marks – 20% of A-level

What to expect:

This is exciting and enriching new course draws on the study of the academic field of stylistics to integrate the study of literary and non-literary texts. You will develop your ability to critically analyse texts, research critical and academic concepts and write university standard essays.

Students will have the opportunity to explore the way that language choices are used to create representations of relationships, places and time in poetry, prose and drama. Students will also have the chance to produce re-creative writing, transforming an original text into a new creative work.

The non-exam assessment element requires students to produce a University style independent research project, investigating an aspect of the course they have found interesting through a text of their choice.

PAPER 1 – Remembered Places, Imagined Worlds and Poetic Voices

Paper 1 is worth 40% of your A Level.

You will take a three hour written exam and you may take blank copies of the exam texts in with you.

Section A – Remembered Places:

One comparative question based on a selection of texts from the AQA anthology 'Paris' that analyses the representation of place.

Section B – Imagined Worlds:

One essay question on 'The Handmaid's Tale' by Margaret Atwood that analyses point of view and genre in prose.

Section C – Poetic Voices:

One essay question on a selection of poetry by Carol Ann Duffy analyzing the form and function of poetic voice.

Paper 1 texts:

- 'The Handmaid's Tale' by Margaret Atwood
- 'Paris' an Anthology by AQA
- A selection of Carol Ann Duffy's poetry

PAPER 2 – Writing About Society and Dramatic Encounters

Paper 2 is also 40% of your A Level.
political protest writing'

You will take a two and a half hour written exam and you may take blank copies of the exam texts in with you.

Section A – Writing About Society:

You will produce one piece of creative writing based on 'The Great Gatsby' by F. Scott Fitzgerald and then write a commentary critiquing your own writing.

Section B – Imagined Worlds:

One essay question on 'Othello' by William Shakespeare analysing the representation of conflict in drama.

Paper 2 texts:

- 'The Great Gatsby' by F. Scott Fitzgerald
- 'Othello' by William Shakespeare

NON-EXAMINATION ASSESSMENT

20% of your A Level is a University style independent research project.

You will investigate an aspect of the course that you have found interesting by analysing a text of your choice and writing a report that explores your findings.

This module will include trips to local Universities to conduct academic research.

WHAT COULD THIS COURSE LEAD ONTO?

University courses in English Language, Literature, Stylistics or Linguistics.

English Language and Literature also strengthens most university applications, especially medicine and law, as universities like to see that applicants have good literacy skills and can analyse and interpret written texts.

Activity 1 – The Author



Complete research around the author of *The Handmaid's Tale*, the time during which she wrote the novel and anything about her life that might have influenced her work.

Try to find answers to the following questions:

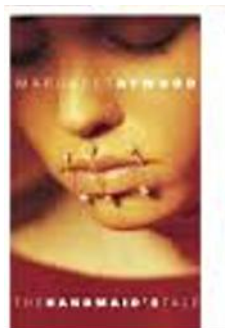
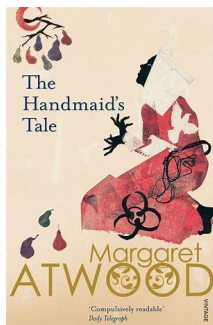
- Who wrote the novel?
- When was it published?
- What significant world events happened 10-15 years prior to its publication date?
- Where in the world had the author visited whilst writing the novel?
- What else has the author written?
- Does she write in a particular genre?
- Has she written anything else connected to *The Handmaid's Tale*?
- Does she hold any strong beliefs?
- Was she influenced by any other writers at the time of producing *The Handmaid's Tale*?
- Has she won any awards?
- Does she have any ancestors that are of relevance?
- What does she say about her own novel?



Top Tip

Don't just copy and paste huge chunks of information –
Read and process the information and then create a summary or list of facts.

Activity 2 – The Novel



Look at the four book covers above and write some predictions about what the covers tell you / clues given about the novel.

Complete research around the novel *The Handmaid's Tale*, the setting, key themes and key characters.

Try to find answers to the following questions:

- Where is the novel set? Is this a real place?
- When is the novel set?
- Within the story, where does the action take place? List any settings you can find.
- Who are the key characters? Make a list and bullet point anything about each character that you discover.
- What are the key themes in the novel?

You'll find lots of information here: <https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-handmaid-s-tale>

Top Tip

For each character and theme you discover, set up a key facts page to add to as you go along, including when you read the novel.

Analysis

Read the opening chapter below and complete the analysis table.

Night
Chapter 1

We slept in what had once been the gymnasium. The floor was of varnished wood, with stripes and circles painted on it, for the games that were formerly played there; the hoops for the basketball nets were still in place, though the nets were gone. A balcony ran around the room, for the spectators, and I thought I could smell, faintly like an afterimage, the pungent scent of sweat, shot through with the sweet taint of chewing gum and perfume from the watching girls, felt-skirted as I knew from pictures, later in miniskirts, then pants, then in one earring, spiky green-streaked hair. Dances would have been held there; the music lingered, a palimpsest of unheard sound, style upon style, an undercurrent of drums, a forlorn wail, garlands made of tissue-paper flowers, cardboard devils, a revolving ball of mirrors, powdering the dancers with a snow of light.

There was old sex in the room and loneliness, and expectation, of something without a shape or name. I remember that yearning, for something that was always about to happen and was never the same as the hands that were on us there and then, in the small of the back, or out back, in the parking lot, or in the television room with the sound turned down and only the pictures flickering over lifting flesh.

We yearned for the future. How did we learn it, that talent for insatiability? It was in the air; and it was still in the air, an after-thought, as we tried to sleep, in the army cots that had been set up in rows, with spaces between so we could not talk. We had flannelette sheets, like children's, and army-issue blankets, old ones that still said U.S. We folded our clothes neatly and laid them on the stools at the ends of the beds. The lights were turned down but not out. Aunt Sara and Aunt Elizabeth patrolled; they had electric cattle prods slung on thongs from their leather belts.

No guns though, even they could not be trusted with guns. Guns were for the guards, specially picked from the Angels. The guards weren't allowed inside the building except when called, and we weren't allowed out, except for our walks, twice daily, two by two around the football field, which was enclosed now by a chain-link fence topped with barbed wire. The Angels stood outside it with their backs to us. They were objects of fear to us, but of something else as well. If only they would look. If only we could talk to them. Something could be exchanged, we thought, some deal made, some trade off, we still had our bodies. That was our fantasy.

We learned to whisper almost without sound. In the semi-darkness we could stretch out our arms, when the Aunts weren't looking, and touch each other's hands across space. We learned to lip-read, our heads flat on the beds, turned sideways, watching each other's mouths. In this way we exchanged names, from bed to bed: Alma. Janine. Dolores. Moira. June.

Mini-Task – Look up any unfamiliar words and write their definitions.

Analysis Table

Aspect	Notes and Ideas including key quotations	Analysis – what effect does this create for the reader?
Narrator – who is telling the story as it begins? How do you know this? What do we learn about them? Is it past or present tense?		
Structure – What structure is used in chapter 1? Consider sentence types, paragraphing and anything to do with the chapter title 'Night'.		
Language – What language techniques are used in chapter 1? Try to find: • Inclusive or collective pronouns • Listing • Repetition • Rhetorical question • Imagery		

Introduction to A-Level

Poetic Voices:

Carol Ann Duffy and 'Mean Time'



Activity 1 – Analysing the titular poem of the anthology

Activity 2 – Applying this independently

The Course Overview

Where does Carol Ann Duffy fit within the course?



Assessment Information		
Unit	Assessment	
Paper 1: Section A – Remembered Places.	One question on the <i>AQA Anthology: Paris</i> (40 marks). This section analyses the representation of place. This section is closed book .	Paper 1 One written exam – 3 hours. 100 marks. 40% of A-Level. Assessment of students ability to apply methods of language analysis are integrated into each section of the exam
Paper 1: Section B – Imagined Worlds.	One question from a choice of two on Margaret Atwood's <i>The Handmaids Tale</i> . (35 marks). This section analyses point of view and genre in prose. This section is open book .	
Paper 1: Section C – Poetic Voices.	One question from a choice of two on a set selection of poetry by Carol Ann Duffy . (25 Marks) This section analyses the form and function of poetic voices. This section is open book .	
Paper 2: Section A – Writing about society.	One piece of re-creative writing using F. Scott Fitzgerald's <i>The Great Gatsby</i> . (25 marks). One critical commentary (30 marks). This section assess student's ability to write re-creatively and to evaluate their own writing. This section is open book .	Paper 2 One written exam – 2 hours 30 minutes. 100 marks. 40% of A-Level. Assessment of students ability to apply methods of language analysis are integrated into each section of the exam
Paper 2: Section B – Dramatic Encounters.	One question from a choice of two on Shakespeare's <i>Othello</i> . (45 marks) This section analyses the representation of conflict in drama. This section is open book .	
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The non-exam assessment element requires students to produce a University style independent research project, investigating an aspect of the course they have found interesting through a text of their choice.

PAPER 1 – Remembered Places, Imagined Worlds and Poetic Voices

Paper 1 is worth 40% of your A Level.

You will take a three hour written exam and you may take blank copies of the exam texts in with you.

Section A – Remembered Places:

One comparative question based on a selection of texts from the AQA anthology 'Paris' that analyses the representation of place.

Section B – Imagined Worlds:

One essay question on 'The Handmaid's Tale' by Margaret Atwood that analyses point of view and genre in prose.

Section C – Poetic Voices:

One essay question on a selection of poetry by Carol Ann Duffy analyzing the form and function of poetic voice.

Paper 1 texts:

- 'The Handmaid's Tale' by Margaret Atwood
- 'Paris' an Anthology by AQA
- A selection of Carol Ann Duffy's poetry

PAPER 2 – Writing About Society and Dramatic Encounters

Paper 2 is also 40% of your A Level.
political protest writing'

You will take a two and a half hour written exam and you may take blank copies of the exam texts in with you.

Section A – Writing About Society:

You will produce one piece of creative writing based on 'The Great Gatsby' by F. Scott Fitzgerald and then write a commentary critiquing your own writing.

Section B – Imagined Worlds:

One essay question on 'Othello' by William Shakespeare analysing the representation of conflict in drama.

Paper 2 texts:

- 'The Great Gatsby' by F. Scott Fitzgerald
- 'Othello' by William Shakespeare

NON-EXAMINATION ASSESSMENT

20% of your A Level is a University style independent research project.

You will investigate an aspect of the course that you have found interesting by analysing a text of your choice and writing a report that explores your findings.

This module will include trips to local Universities to conduct academic research.

WHAT COULD THIS COURSE LEAD ONTO?

University courses in English Language, Literature, Stylistics or Linguistics.

English Language and Literature also strengthens most university applications, especially medicine and law, as universities like to see that applicants have good literacy skills and can analyse and interpret written texts.

Activity 1 – Considering the titular poem ‘Mean Time’

For this section of your A Level course we will need to know 15 of Carol Ann Duffy’s poems in great detail and all of them are taken from her ‘Mean Time’ anthology.

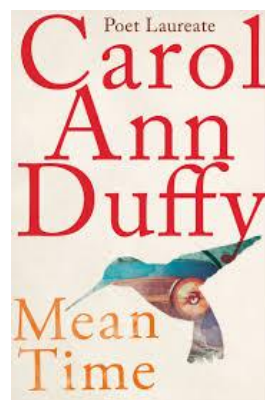
Have a look at the cover to the anthology and also the title of this collection: ‘Mean Time’. What can we begin to analyse from the title in terms of Duffy’s views on the nature of time? Can you think of 4 different ideas?

1)

2)

3)

4)



Throughout our studies of these poems, we will need to consider the following:

- **The presentation of time: understanding the past, reviewing past experiences, the manipulation of time.**
- The importance of place: locations and memories, the ways in which these are captured in voice(s), and their effect on individuals.
- How people and their relationships are realised through point of view, attitude, specific registers, physical descriptions, speech and thought.
- The presentation of events through the poet’s selection of material, the use of narrative frames and other poetic techniques.

Let's start by considering how 'time' is presented in the titular poem of the anthology. Read through the poem 'Mean Time' and underneath record your initial impressions. **How does Duffy present time here and her views towards the past?**

The clocks slid back an hour
and stole light from my life
as I walked through the wrong part of town,
mourning our love.

And, of course, unmendable rain
fell to the bleak streets
where I felt my heart gnaw
at all our mistakes.

If the darkening sky could lift
more than one hour from this day
there are words I would never have said
nor have heard you say.

But we will be dead, as we know,
beyond all light.

These are the shortened days
and the endless nights.

What are your initial thoughts and interpretations?

The difference in our studies of poetry at A Level, compared to GCSE, is the extreme level of analytical detail that we will go in to.

We are assessed on the following two Assessment Objectives for this component:

- **AO1:** Apply concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study as appropriate, using associated terminology and coherent written expression.
- **AO2:** Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in texts.

So, we need to be able to analyse the meaning presented in a poem, whilst applying subject specific terminology and methodology.

Can we now begin to apply this to the poem 'Mean Time'? Have a go at answering the analytical questions below (answer them as annotations on the poem above):

What is the impact of the dynamic verb 'slid' in the first line? What does it imply about the nature of time?	Where is time personified to be a 'villain' and why?	In the first stanza the pronoun shifts from 'my' to 'our'. Why could this be?	'Unmendable' is a strange adjective choice. What could Duffy be implying about the relationship through this choice?	What is the impact of the animalistic verb 'gnaw' in the second stanza?
What could the 'darkening' sky' be symbolic of?	Where do we see imagery associated with darkness and why?	There is a real lack of punctuation in the third stanza. What could this reflect?	Why do you think the pronoun then shifts to 'we' in the final stanza?	Look at the final two lines. What does this imagery suggest about the speaker's emotions?

We also need to think about the following Language levels when we approach a poem in this unit:

- 1) **Lexis and semantics:** This simply means the words and language techniques that we can see in a poem.
- 2) **Grammar:** Considering aspects like tense, punctuation and word order as well as sentence constructions.
- 3) **Phonetics, phonology and prosodics:** Here we need to consider the sounds that are present.
- 4) **Graphology:** This means investigating how the text looks on the page and any visual components.

We have already explored 'lexis and semantics' but let's consider the other areas. Again, add your ideas as annotations to the poem above:

Grammar

- 1) Why do you think the poem flits between past and present tense?
- 2) Look at the clauses that are in parenthesis (you may need to look this word up) 'of course' and 'as we know'. Why are commas used to mark off these phrases?
- 3) The third stanza begins with the conditional word 'if'. Why?

Phonology

- 1) The poem contains a fair amount of sibilance. Why might Duffy repeat this sound throughout?
- 2) Can you identify any rhyme in the poem? Consider which words Duffy chooses to rhyme and what she may be trying to emphasise.
- 3) The second stanza includes some harsh sounding words. What are they and what do they demonstrate about the speaker's feelings?

Graphology

Look at the way the poem is physically structured on the page.

- 1) Why in four stanzas each consisting of four lines?
- 2) Why does the final stanza look more disjointed than the rest?