

Gosford Hill Sixth Form
Bridging Work – Summer 2026

A Level Subject: English Literature
 Teachers: Miss McCarthy [EMY] and Mr La Porte [JLT]

*Please complete the work set below over the summer.
 Do not feel obliged to complete every task.*

You will receive a recommended reading list, as well.

*We will invite you to a Google Classroom, where you can post
 your completed pieces.*



Task Description	Resources needed	What is expected for your first lesson in September 2026
Week 1 - Let A Poem Brew Over Time	Choose a poem. You could choose one from your exam anthology or (and this would be both more fun and more useful for you as a student of Literature) browse the websites listed below. Online poetry libraries Poetry Foundation https://www.poetryfoundation.org/ / The Saturday Poem https://www.theguardian.com/books/series/saturdaypoem National Poetry Library https://www.nationalpoetrylibrary.org.uk/online-poetry/poems Poem Hunter https://www.poemhunter.com/ Poetry by Heart anthology https://www.poetrybyheart.org.uk/anthology/ Scottish Poetry Library https://www.scottishpoetrylibrary.org.uk/ Library of Congress Archive https://www.loc.gov/collections/archive-of-recorded-poetry-and-literature/about-this-collection/ https://poets.org/ https://poets.org/ Use the Google Classroom to swap poems. Set a timer for 10 seconds: Do a 'snapshot' look at the poem for 10 seconds – don't try to read it – and jot down anything you notice about it. Do the same again but this time for 30 seconds.	Be prepared to share some of your findings - in a group or whole class presentation

	• Now put the poem to one side. On three different days over the next week or so, spend about 10 minutes reading the poem and writing about it in any way you want. You might write about what you like or what you are puzzled by or you might just ask questions. It's up to you whether you read over what you wrote on the previous occasion – there are advantages to both ways. Over the course of the next few weeks you could try the activity both ways. On the last day, read the poem again, read over all your writing, then make a few notes or record a voice message exploring how your response to the poem changed and developed. <u>Sharing what you notice:</u> If possible, use the Google Classroom to join up with your partner. Together talk both about the poems and your thoughts on how your response to the poem changed and developed over time.	
Week 2 - <i>Books on TV</i>	Watch (or think back to) a film or TV adaptation of a novel you know, for example <i>Northern Lights</i>, <i>Noughts and Crosses</i>, <i>Emma</i>, <i>David Copperfield</i>, <i>Sherlock Holmes</i>, <i>Agatha Christie</i>. (See BBC iPlayer for freely available dramas; Netflix and Amazon Prime have a wide selection if you have a subscription. Some complete dramas are also available on YouTube) Read Jenny Grahame's article for MediaMagazine about the recent adaptation of David Copperfield in the 'emagazine Resource Pack'. https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1lgBIJ9qoZCMF4Z80rjSPv8jhaPCMqqbA - pp.50-56 Write your own review of the adaptation you have watched. <u>Your own adaptation</u> Now write a pitch for a different novel you think would make a great film or film adaptation. Explain why and how you would approach it.	

Week 3 - Emag clips - <i>Experts in the Spotlight</i>	The emagazine website includes a collection of video interviews with leading writers, academics and critics. A taster selection from emagClips is available without a subscription to accompany this download: https://www.englishandmedia.co.uk/video-clips/clip-listing/making-the-leap-moving-from-gcse-to-a-level-literature-study-emagclips On this page you will find short discussions on a wide range of literary texts and topics including: how to read 19th-century novels (and how to read poems), The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time, why George Orwell's novel Nineteen Eighty-Four continues to be important, William Blake's poem 'London' (along with a reading of it), the difference between horror and terror, and dialogue in novels. Over the next few days or weeks dip into these clips. You could make a note of new ideas you come across or share them with classmates or you could just let them brew in your head. As you complete some of the other activities in this pack, you might want to return to specific clips to help you develop your thinking. Once you have done some of the reading, thinking, writing and discussion activities in this pack, why not record your own emagClip? In your role as the expert, talk for three or four minutes about an aspect of one of the stories, novels, poems or plays you have read, watched or listened to. (<i><u>You might find it helpful to ask and then answer a specific question.</u></i>)	Present your 'expert' findings on a text of your choice (see specific instructions below)
Week 4 - <i>Try Exploratory Writing</i>	Choose a short text you have not studied before. This could be the opening of a	Students to share what they

	novel, a poem, a scene from a play – it doesn't matter what. (<i>Some suggestions for where you can find extracts from different types of texts are suggested below.</i>) • Read the text, without making notes. Now write about it. Just write, in any way you want, almost as though you are having a conversation with yourself. Let your ideas develop and change, contradict yourself, ask questions – it's up to you. The only rule is that you should write in full sentences, not notes or bullet points. <u>For novels, poetry, non-fiction, drama</u> Amazon's 'Look inside' feature for a wide range of its book (search for a book, then click on 'Look inside') https://www.amazon.co.uk <u>Short stories</u> A Personal Anthology https://apersonalanthology.com/ Granta https://granta.com/discoveries-24/ New Yorker (limited number of articles/stories per month before subscribing) https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/fiction Electric Literature https://electricliterature.com/ Selected Shorts: Let Us Tell You Story https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/selected-shorts/id253191824 <u>First chapters</u> New York Times – First Chapters Archive https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/first/first-fiction.html <u>Online poetry libraries</u> Poetry Foundation https://www.poetryfoundation.org/ The Saturday Poem https://www.theguardian.com/books/se	have written in small groups and receive feedback
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	ries/saturdaypoem National Poetry Library https://www.nationalpoetrylibrary.org.uk/online-poetry/poems Poem Hunter https://www.poemhunter.com/ Poetry by Heart anthology https://www.poetrybyheart.org.uk/anthology/ Scottish Poetry Library https://www.scottishpoetrylibrary.org.uk/ Library of Congress Archive https://www.loc.gov/collections/archive-of-recorded-poetry-and-literature/about-this-collection/ https://poets.org/ https://poets.org/	
Week 5 - <i>Play with a Text</i>	Playing and messing about with a text or transforming it in two or three different ways is a really effective and fun way to investigate and clarify for yourself what is distinctive about the original. It's something both creative writers and critics do. Read Andrew McCallum's emagazine article on recreative and transformative writing. (See the 'emagazine Resource Pack' https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1lgBIJ9qoZCMF4Z80rjSPv8jhaPCMqgbA - pp.65-68.) Now experiment with one or more of the activities suggested here: <u>Experimenting with the form and layout of a poem</u> : Choose a poem you like. This could be one you have studied at school or one you find online. Some great websites to browse to find a poem are suggested here. <u>Online poetry libraries</u> Poetry Foundation https://www.poetryfoundation.org/	As before, students to share their writing / part of it in small groups during first lessons

	The Saturday Poem https://www.theguardian.com/books/series/saturdaypoem National Poetry Library	
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<https://www.nationalpoetrylibrary.org.uk/online-poetry/poems>
[Poem Hunter](#)
<https://www.poemhunter.com/>
[Poetry by Heart anthology](#)
<https://www.poetrybyheart.org.uk/anthology/> [Scottish Poetry Library](#)
<https://www.scottishpoetrylibrary.org.uk/>
[Library of Congress Archive](#)
<https://www.loc.gov/collections/archive-of-recorded-poetry-and-literature/about-thiscollection/>
<https://poets.org/>

Copy and paste the poem into a Word / Google document or type it up. Make a copy of it and arrange it, so that it looks like one continuous piece of prose.

Now experiment with different ways of making the lines break. What different effects can you create? Try reading your different versions out loud. Do your line breaks make you read it differently?

If you enjoy doing this, you might be interested in reading this Poetry Foundation article:

(<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/70144/learning-the-poetic-line>).

A transformation from prose to drama

Take a short extract from a novel you know well (for example, *A Christmas Carol*, *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*) and try turning it into a piece of drama.

What changes do you have to make? Is anything lost in the transformation? Is anything gained?

A visual experiment with fonts

In 2012 graphic artists were invited to play with the first page of '*Great Expectations*' using their choice of font and layout to reveal the meaning they see in the opening to the novel. Each designer was also asked to explain the thinking behind their transformation. Their designs were

	collected in the book <i>Page One</i>. Look at some examples here. https://www.graphicdesignand.com/product/page-1-great-expectations Can you do the same for a text you know well? Present the original and transformed text side by side, along with a short reflection on what you have discovered. Share it with your classmates via the Google Classroom.	
Week 6 - <i>The Art of the Essay</i>	We know that essays are what you write in English. But, beyond knowing they are the way you show your knowledge in an English exam, <i>what is an essay?</i> And can its meaning outside the classroom help us write better essays inside the classroom (and get more enjoyment from doing it)? Spend a couple of minutes jotting down what you think an essay is. (Does it have anything in common with a review, for example? Does it have to answer a question? Can you write an essay about anything?) If possible, share your ideas with classmates via the Google Classroom. Now read these short definitions of the essay: Essay is derived from the French word <i>essayer</i>, which means 'to attempt' or 'to try'. A short form of literary composition based on a single subject matter, and often gives the personal opinion of the author. A famous English essayist, Aldous Huxley defines essays as, "<i>A literary device for saying almost everything about almost anything.</i>" (Aldous Huxley, novelist and essay writer) A short piece of writing on a particular subject - Oxford English Dictionary A scholarly work in writing that provides the author's personal argument.	Essays can be shared on the Google Classroom and parts / whole can be read out and shared within groups during opening classes

	A short piece of writing on a particular	
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subject, especially one done by students as part of the work for a course.

Essays are how we speak to one another in print — caroming thoughts not merely in order to convey a certain packet of information, but with a special edge or bounce of personal character in a kind of public letter. (*Edward Hoagland, Introduction, The Best American Essays: 1999*)

The novelist and essayist Blake Morrison explores the art of essay in 'A Loose Sally of the Mind', an article published in *emagazine*. In itself it is a great example of what the essay can do. **This essay is included in the accompanying 'emagazine Resource Pack':**
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1lgBIJ9goZCMF4Z80rjSPv8jhaPCMqgbA> - pp.70-75

Have a go at reading his essay – don't panic if it feels like a bit of a challenge. *Read it slowly, read it out loud, write out short quotations which grab your attention or which interest you.*

Dip your toe into the world of the essay by reading (bits of) some really brilliant examples of the form. *Try to think about which ones you like, which ones you want to carry on reading, which ones help you discover something new or understand something better. How much is it to do with the subject matter? How much is it to do with the style and voice of the essay?*

The ideas below are just suggestions to get you started. If while browsing these you spot another essay title that intrigues you, read it instead:

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: "Beware Of Feminist Lite" From We Should All Be Feminists
<https://ideas.ted.com/Beware-Of-Feminism-Lite>

Zavi Kang Engles: My Mother's Tongue
<https://therumpus.net/2019/04/My-Mothers-Tongue/>

	1. George Orwell: Politics of the English	
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	Language https://www.orwell.ru/library/essays/politics/english/e_polit Zadie Smith: Some Notes On Atunement https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/12/17/some-notes-on-attunement Now read a short extract from Professor Judy Simon's chapter on the essay in The Literature Reader, EMC's book for A Level students. (See the accompanying 'emagazine Resource Pack' - https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1lgBIJ9goZCMF4Z80rjSPv8jhaPCMqgbA - pp.36-39) It's now over to you to join the long tradition of essay writers... Choose a topic – it might be related to a book you've read, but it doesn't have to be. Think about what you liked in the essays you dipped into. Imagine your reader. And have an 'essai' at an essay. Put your essay away. In a few weeks either come back to this essay and redraft it. Alternatively, choose another topic and have another stab at essay writing.	
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