

## English Literature A Level

The best thing you can do before starting the course is to read the set texts and do some wider reading to support the set texts and to prepare for the coursework.

### The set texts

*A Streetcar Named Desire* - Tennessee Williams

*Never Let Me Go* - Kazuo Ishiguro

*Frankenstein* - Mary Shelley

*Measure for Measure* - William Shakespeare

This is quite tricky to read independently. You might be best looking at some plot synopsis/summaries first (eg. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kxijXqU6JhE>) and then watching a version of it. Probably the best, easily accessible version of the play is the 2015 Globe production, available on Globe Player <https://globeplayer.tv/videos/measure-for-measure-english>

We'll be starting the course with '*A Streetcar Named Desire*,' so once you have read the play, go to <http://www.60secondrecap.com/study-guide/tennessee-williams-a-streetcar-named-desire-introduction/> and watch each of the 60 second videos (there are 10 of them) to help you start thinking about some of the key ideas in the play.

### Wider Reading to support the set texts

*Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson. This is not a set text, but it's very helpful to know it, as it supports the work we do on '*Frankenstein*' and the gothic genre.

*A View from the Bridge* and */or All My Sons* by Arthur Miller. This will help support your work on modern tragedy.

*Oedipus the King (Oedipus Rex)* by Sophocles – you could read the play (in translation) or you could look at this <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ocqNsxD6Swl&t=83s> This is a Classical tragedy and will give you a sense of the origins of the genre

Shakespeare - it would be really helpful to have a good knowledge of a classic romantic comedy (eg. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Much Ado About Nothing*) and a tragedy (*Macbeth* is probably the most accessible independently). *Measure for Measure* (our set text) is a mixture of tragedy and comedy so it's really important to know the typical genre conventions of each.

### Wider Reading to Support Coursework -

For the coursework, you will be taught one text by your teacher and then you will need to choose a text that you want to compare it to. To prepare for this, you should read a selection from the following:

*Things Fall Apart* - Chinua Achebe

*Knowledge of Angels* - Jill Paton Walsh

*The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* – Angela Carter

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*1984* - George Orwell

*Oranges are Not the Only Fruit* - Jeanette Winterson

*The Handmaid's Tale* - Margaret Atwood  
*The Kite Runner* - Khaled Hosseini  
*Death of a Salesman* - Arthur Miller  
*The Great Gatsby* - F Scott Fitzgerald  
*Pride and Prejudice* - Jane Austen  
*Dracula* - Bram Stoker  
*Jane Eyre* – Charlotte Bronte  
*Wuthering Heights* – Emily Bronte  
*Great Expectations* – Charles Dickens  
*The Purple Hibiscus* – Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie  
*The Poisonwood Bible* – Barbara Kingsolver  
*A Picture of Dorian Grey* – Oscar Wilde

Many of the above texts are out of copyright and available free online, or in the college library, so check before you buy any. You will, however, need your own hard copies of the set texts. You should get the following editions: *Frankenstein* and *Measure for Measure* (Wordsworth Classics) *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Penguin Modern Classics) *Never Let Me Go* (Faber and Faber). They will be available to buy in the college library in September.