



Reading Lists for English (2022-23)

In your first year at New College you'll be working towards 'Prelims', taken in Trinity Term. This consists of four papers. Paper 1, 'Introduction to English Language and Literature,' will introduce you to the formal study of the English language and to some recurrent problems in literary theory and history. What is literature and who decides? How important is the figure of the 'author' in determining meaning? What makes literary language different from other kinds of language? Much of the teaching for this paper happens through compulsory faculty lectures and classes, and it is assessed by a portfolio of two essays submitted in week 5 of Trinity term. You will also have additional tutorials and classes in college, spread across the three terms. The other papers are Paper 2 (Old English), taught across Michaelmas and Hilary terms; Paper 3 (1830-1910), taught in Michaelmas; and Paper 4 (1910-present) taught in Hilary. If you are studying English and Modern Languages, you will study Papers 1 and 2 and one of Papers 3 and 4. The latter, Paper 4, is the recommended option.

When term commences in October, you will be expected to have read *everything* on the Core Reading List and some of the material on the General List, where you should follow up your own enthusiasms and interests. Tutorials at Oxford operate on Nabokov's principle that 'a good reader, a major reader, an active and creative reader is a re-reader.' In term-time, then, we expect you to be rereading the basic primary texts alongside secondary criticism and more specialised material relevant to the essay topics you choose. There isn't time during busy Oxford terms with essays to write, criticism to read, lectures to attend (and any number of other things to do) to be desperately trying to get to the end of *Middlemarch*!

There will be a short test on the Victorian core list in 0th week of Michaelmas, to check that you've done the relevant reading.

CORE READING LIST

Introduction to English Language and Literature (Paper 1)

Stylistics, by Paul Simpson (Routledge English Language Introductions).

Old English (Paper 2)

A Guide to Old English, ed. B. Mitchell and F.C. Robinson 8th ed. (Oxford, 2012).

Please read as much of its Introduction as possible before arriving.

T.A. Shippey, *Old English Verse* (London, 1972)

S.B. Greenfield & D.G. Calder, *A New Critical History of Old English Literature* (New York,

1986)

The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature, ed M. Godden & M. Lapidge,
(Cambridge, 1991)

A Companion to Anglo-Saxon Literature, ed. P. Pulsiano & E. Treharne, (Oxford, 2001)

Victorian (Paper 3)

Charlotte Bronte: *Jane Eyre*, *Villette* [unless otherwise specified, I recommend that you buy the Oxford World's Classics editions]

Emily Bronte: *Wuthering Heights*

Joseph Conrad: *Heart of Darkness*

Charles Dickens: *Great Expectations*, *Sketches by Boz*

George Eliot: *Middlemarch*, *Daniel Deronda*

George Gissing: *New Grub Street*

Thomas Hardy: 'Hap,' 'Neutral Tones,' 'Thoughts of Phena,' 'I Look Into My Glass,' 'Drummer Hodge,' 'The Darkling Thrush,' 'The Self-Unseeing' (I suggest the OWC edition of the *Selected Poems*, ed. Samuel Hynes), *Jude the Obscure*

Gerard Manley Hopkins: 'The Caged Skylark,' 'Felix Randall,' 'Carrion Comfort,' 'No Worst,' 'Pied Beauty,' 'Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves,' 'Spring and Fall,' 'The Windhover' [the OWC includes some useful selections from the prose]

Henry James: *The Portrait of a Lady*

A. C. Swinburne: *Poems and Ballads: First Series*, especially 'A Ballad of Life,' 'A Ballad of Death,' 'Erotion,' 'Strange Love,' 'The Year of Love'

Alfred Lord Tennyson: *In Memoriam*, 'Ulysses,' 'Tithonus,' *The Princess*. [The Penguin *Selected Poems* edited by Christopher Ricks is the best edition to buy]

Walter Pater, *The Renaissance*

Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, 'The Critic as Artist,' 'The Decay of Lying'

Modern (Paper 4)

W. H. Auden: *Selected Poems* [buy the revised 2010 Faber edition, ed. Edward Mendelson]

James Baldwin, *Notes of a Native Son*

Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, *All that Fall*, 'Embers', 'Words and Music'

Elizabeth Bowen, *The Heat of the Day*

Joan Didion, *Slouching Towards Bethlehem* [the Fourth Estate edition is fine but if you can afford it, I would recommend the hardback Everyman edition of the collected prose]

T. S. Eliot: All of the poetry up to and including *Four Quartets*. [You should buy the Faber *Collected Poems 1909-1962*.]

David Foster Wallace, *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men* [any edition]

James Joyce: *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Ulysses* [You should buy Jeri Johnson's edition of the 1922 text for Oxford World's Classics.]

Robert Lowell, *Life Studies*

Sylvia Plath, *Ariel*

Virginia Woolf: *To the Lighthouse*, *Mrs Dalloway*, 'A Sketch of the Past' (in *Moments of Being*, ed. Jeanne Schulkind), 'Modern Fiction', 'Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown',

GENERAL READING LIST

Introduction to English Language and Literature

Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and Society, by Peter Trudgill.
Language and Power, by Andrea Mayr and Paul Simpson (Routledge English Language Introductions).

Victorian

Matthew Arnold: 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time,' *Culture and Anarchy*

Robert Browning: 'Porphyria's Lover,' 'My Last Duchess,' 'Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister,' 'The Bishop Orders His Tomb at St. Praxed's Church,' 'Fra Lippo Lippi,' 'Andrea del Sarto,'

Wilkie Collins: *The Woman in White*

Charles Dickens: *Hard Times, Oliver Twist, David Copperfield, Bleak House, Our Mutual Friend*

Paul Laurence Dunbar: *Lyrics of Lowly Life*

George Eliot: *Adam Bede*, 'Silly Novels by Lady Novelists'

Elizabeth Gaskell: *North and South, The Life of Charlotte Bronte*

Thomas Hardy: *Far From the Madding Crowd, The Mayor of Casterbridge, Tess of the D'Urbervilles*

Henrik Ibsen, *A Doll's House, Ghosts, When We Dead Awaken*

Henry James: *The Europeans, The American, The Aspern Papers*, 'The Middle Years,' *The Ambassadors, The Wings of the Dove, The Golden Bowl*

Herman Melville: *Bartleby, the Scrivener*

Charlotte Mew: 'Passed', *The Farmer's Bride*

Walter Pater, *Marius the Epicurean*

John Ruskin, *Sesame and Lilies*

Alfred Lord Tennyson: 'The Lady of Shalott,' 'The Lotus-Eaters,' 'Break, Break, Break,' *Maud*.

Modern

Samuel Beckett: *Murphy, Watt, Endgame, Krapp's Last Tape, Play*

Joseph Conrad: *The Secret Agent, Nostromo*

E. M. Forster: *Howards End, A Passage to India*

Sigmund Freud: *The Wolf Man*

James Joyce: *Dubliners*

D. H. Lawrence: *Sons and Lovers, The Rainbow, Women in Love*

Katherine Mansfield: 'Prelude,' 'The Garden Party,' 'Bliss,' 'The Little Governess,' 'The Tiredness of Rosabel,' 'The Daughters of the Late Colonel,' 'The Fly'

Ezra Pound: 'Homage to Sextus Propertius,' 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley', *Cantos I-XVI*

Zadie Smith: *White Teeth, Feel Free, Intimations*

Derek Walcott: *Omeros*

Virginia Woolf: *The Waves*, *Between the Acts*, *A Room of One's Own*

Among post-1950 writers, you should know the work of some of the following: Kingsley Amis, Martin Amis, J. M. Coetzee, John Fowles, Allen Ginsberg, William Golding, Seamus Heaney, Frank O'Hara, Ted Hughes, Ian McEwan, Philip Larkin, Doris Lessing, Vladimir Nabokov, V. S. Naipaul, Harold Pinter, Philip Roth, Anne Sexton, Tom Stoppard.

At this stage, I don't think it is helpful to focus on secondary reading (beyond the introductory essays to your editions of individual texts). But if you want to get an overview of *some* of the historical and cultural issues we will discuss, I recommend Robin Gilmour's *The Victorian Period: The Intellectual and Cultural Context of English Literature, 1830-90* (Longman, 1994) and Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane's *Modernism: A Guide to European Literature 1890-1930* (London: Penguin, 1991).

For Paper 1B, it would be useful to get copies of Jonathan Culler's *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2000) and David Crystal's *Making Sense of Grammar* (London, 2004).