



**Specification:** AQA English Literature Specification B:

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/as-and-a-level/english-literature-b-7716-7717>

Of the books/ activities listed below, you need to choose **at least two**. Immediately after each of these (before you forget), you should complete the Sixth Form Induction Tasks Worksheet.

If you are unsure of what to go for, look for those marked with an asterix \* (or two \*\*).

### Books

- **\*\*David Lodge, *The Art of Fiction***  
(Thoroughly recommended as an excellent and easy-to-read introduction to understanding the author's craft. A series of very short and accessible chapters, using short extracts from a wide range of texts to explore key aspects of the art of fiction writing (including narrative voice, a sense of place, symbolism, lists, allegory, stream of consciousness etc). An excellent way of increasing your alertness to the authorial methods you will be analysing during the A level course.)
- **Thomas Hardy, *Jude the Obscure***  
(You will be studying Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* at A level, and so reading another tragic novel by Hardy will be useful in getting to grips with the genre.)
- **\*George Orwell, *1984***
- **Margaret Atwood, *Oryx and Crake***
- **Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go***  
(All of the above novels are examples of the genre of dystopian novels, which is a sub-genre of the Political and Social Protest writing that you will be studying. Reading these will give an invaluable head-start for what is a challenging genre to study. They are all good reads as well!)
- **Kamila Shamsie, *Home Fire***  
Excellent recent novel, exploring the factors that go into making a fundamentalist – both personal and political. Engaging and relatively 'easy' read. Useful as an example of the Political and Social Protest Genre for Paper 2.
- **\*Naomi Alderman, *The Power***  
Another dystopian novel in which women have all the power. It's likely you will not just be shocked by the novel, but by your reaction to it as well. Again, an engaging and 'easy' read, and an example of the Political and Social Protest genre.



- **Dickens, *Oliver Twist***  
(Dickens is well known for the social criticism embedded within his novels. This is one of his easier novels to read, and a good example of how he uses fiction for the purposes of ‘social protest’ – again useful for building up an understanding of this genre.)
- **Madeleine Thien, *Do Not Say We Have Nothing***  
(Published in 2016 and short listed for the Man Booker Prize, this is a brilliantly constructed, incredibly moving, and deeply disturbing novel. It almost reads like a dystopian novel, but it is set very firmly in the real events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century’s Cultural Revolution in China. It is a fantastic book, and, again, very useful for increasing your understanding of the Political and Social Protest genre.)
- **\*Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein***  
(Clearly a ‘classic’, and, again, could be read as part of the Political and Social Protest genre. Worth reading too for its potential as a text for coursework – a rich text for feminist readings. It could also be seen as part of the tragic genre, so has potential as a ‘multi-purpose’ text.)
- **Bram Stoker, *Dracula***  
(A great read, and may well be a possible text when it comes to the coursework as there is potential for reading this from both a feminist and a Marxist perspective.)

### Activities

- **\*\**Hamlet* and/or *Othello* at the Globe Theatre:** <http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/whats-on>  
Follow the link above NOW to book tickets for both these Shakespearean tragedies at the Globe Theatre. You will be studying the genre of tragedy and need to have a detailed understanding of it. This is a great way to start! You can get in to stand as a ‘groundling’ for only £5 (and as an under 18 you get £3 off all other ticket prices).  
*King Lear* is one of the texts you will be studying, so to see it on stage before reading it in class (it’s a challenging work) will put you at a huge advantage.  
You will be studying dramatic tragedy for Paper 1, so, if you enjoy theatre, you might also consider booking for the other Shakespearean tragedy at the Globe this Summer: *Romeo and Juliet*.
- **\**King Lear*:** You will be studying *King Lear* and it is one of Shakespeare’s more challenging plays, so try to get hold of as many DVDs/ productions of the play as you can and watch it – the more the better!
- ***Macbeth* on YouTube/ DVD:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yqRhtMxF9a4> or buy the DVD for £5 on Amazon: [https://www.amazon.co.uk/s/ref=nb\\_sb\\_noss\\_1?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=macbeth+dvd](https://www.amazon.co.uk/s/ref=nb_sb_noss_1?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=macbeth+dvd)  
This recent film of *Macbeth*, while occasionally deviating from the original text is still a great performance and an engaging watch. Another Shakespearean tragedy.