

The summer work builds on the induction lesson and prepares for test week:

- Part One – please re-read both poems, annotate them with ideas and then finish filling in each section of the AO grid in preparation for the first lesson back, including the AO5 boxes.
- Part Two – write a short paragraph considering how the poet's experiences and the societies in which they lived might have influenced their writing of the poems.

There are two additional sheets to help you, containing:

- Contextual information about the poets and critical views on their poetry – these will give you points to write about in the AO3 and AO5 boxes
- The Assessment Objectives explained
- Part Three – please purchase the following texts over the summer:



- Part Four – Read *A Streetcar Named Desire*

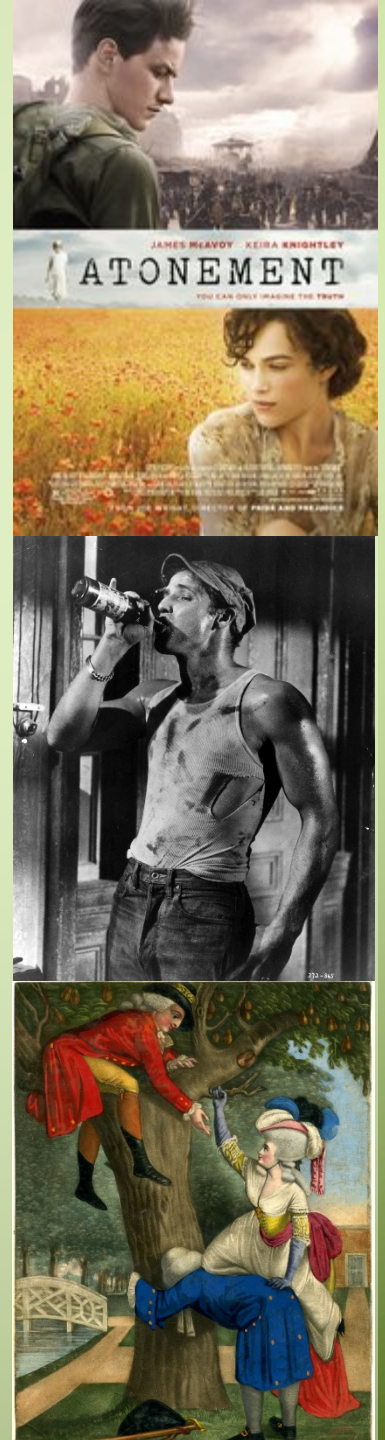


Welcome!

A-Level English Literature

Brief Overview

- Four Components (3 Exam-based, 1 Coursework-based)
- 1 – Poetry (Duffy & Larkin, *The Merchant's Tale*)
- 2 – Drama (*Hamlet* **or** *King Lear*, *The Duchess of Malfi* & *A Streetcar Named Desire*)
- 3 – Unseen (Unseen Poetry, Unseen Prose 1918-1939)
- 4 – Coursework (*Atonement* & *A Room with a View*)



Larkin and Duffy

- What do you already know about Larkin and Duffy?
- What do you expect from anthologies of poetry written by them?

Duffy – Brief Context



- **Lapsed Catholic**
- **Feminist – she grew up during 2nd Wave Feminism**
- **Scottish heritage but grew up in England**
- **Complex sexuality**
- **‘Mean Time’ – was written during the 1990s, after a relationship break-up and a move to a new town**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xNlacr3cXfU>

‘First Love’

- What does the title suggest about the subject of the poem?
- How do you think Duffy might approach the subject in terms of narrative, characters and imagery?
- Knowing Duffy, what stance is she likely to take on the subject?



‘First Love’ – AO1

- In pairs, consider the following AO1 questions and make notes on your grid under ‘AO1 – Content/Subject’:
 - What is happening in the poem?
 - What is the poem about in terms of subject/theme?
 - What is the speaker’s attitude towards the subject/theme?

Be prepared to feedback your ideas!



‘First Love’ – AO2 Group Analysis

- In groups, consider the following AO2 questions and make notes on your grid under ‘AO2’ sections:
 - Are there any particular words, phrases or techniques that stand out in your assigned stanza?
 - What do you think the intended effects of these are?
 - How might these intended effects relate to the Duffy’s message?
 - What is the stanza’s tone?

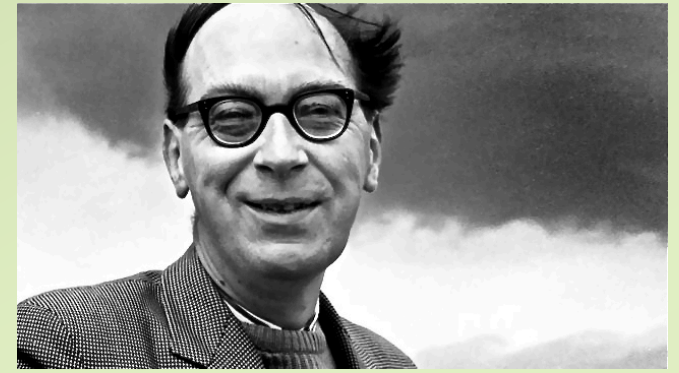


'First Love' – AO3 Contextual Influences

- In groups, now consider how Duffy's own life may have influenced her writing of this poem – here's a reminder:
 - *Lapsed Catholic*
 - *Feminist – she grew up during 2nd Wave Feminism*
 - *Scottish heritage but grew up in England*
 - *Complex sexuality*
 - *'Mean Time' – was written during the 1990s, after a relationship break-up and a move to a new town*



Larkin – Brief Context



- ***Bachelor/Serial Monogamist***
- ***Reluctant to be conventional – no marriage, children or mortgage***
- ***Cynical of fame – kept a day job as a librarian at Hull University***
- ***Great observer of British society and habits***
- ***Had a controlling father – not a happy home environment as a child***
- ***Generally considered an Atheist, but with some Agnostic traits***
- ***‘The Whitsun Weddings’ was written during the 1950s***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dqa6L22m0rY>

‘Wild Oats’

- What does the title suggest about the subject of the poem?
- How do you think Larkin might approach the subject in terms of narrative, characters and imagery?
- Knowing Larkin, what stance is she likely to take on the subject?



‘Wild Oats’ – AO1

- In pairs, consider the following AO1 questions and make notes on your grid under ‘AO1 – Content/Subject’:
 - What is happening in the poem?
 - What is the poem about in terms of subject/theme?
 - What is the speaker’s attitude towards the subject/theme?

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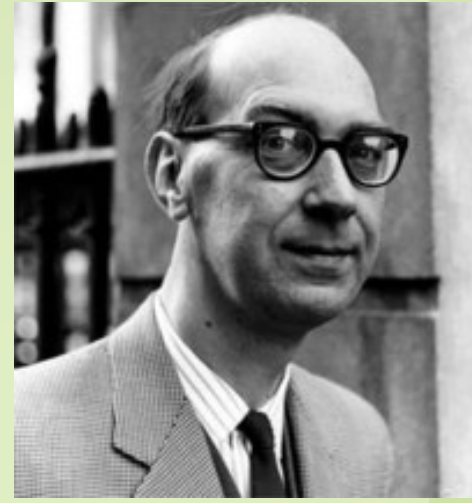


‘Wild Oats’ – AO2 Group Analysis

- In groups, consider the following AO2 questions and make notes on your grid under ‘AO2’ sections:
 - Are there any particular words, phrases or techniques that stand out in your assigned stanza?
 - What do you think the intended effects of these are?
 - How might these intended effects relate to the Larkin’s message?
 - What is the stanza’s tone?



'Wild Oats' – AO3 Contextual Influences



- In groups, now consider how Larkin's own life may have influenced her writing of this poem – here's a reminder:
 - *Bachelor/Serial Monogamist*
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AO4 Comparison

- In your pairs, consider these next questions and make notes in the AO4 section of your grid, between the AO1 boxes:
 - How do the two poems' presentations of relationships compare?
 - Does one present a more positive view of relationships than the other? How?
 - What about their form? How similar are they in their perspectives/voices?
 - How do the poets' use of language, devices and imagery compare?
 - What about the tone?

Again, be prepared to feedback you ideas!

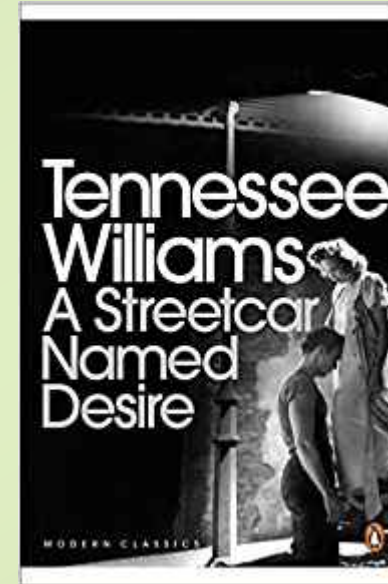
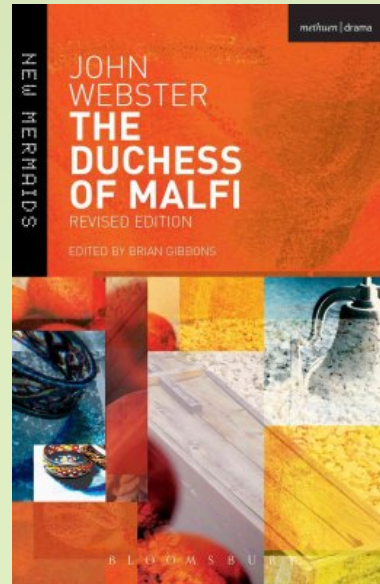
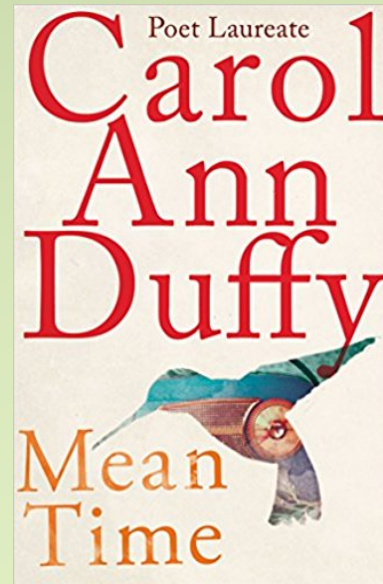


Summer Homework

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 - The Assessment Objectives explained

Summer Homework

- Part Three – please purchase the following texts over the summer:



- Part Four – Read *A Streetcar Named Desire*

A-Level English Literature Assessment Objectives

Below are the assessment objectives for this specification. Learners must demonstrate their ability to:

AO1 – Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression

AO2 – Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts through use of language, form, structure and dramatic/poetic devices

AO3 – Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received

AO4 – Explore connections across literary texts

AO5 – Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

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Duffy: Brief Context and Critics

AO3 - Biographical Notes:

- Carol Ann Duffy: 23 December 1955 in Glasgow – Present
- A poet and playwright who was raised in a strict Catholic household.
- Duffy attended the University of Liverpool in 1974 where she studied philosophy.
- She has been poet laureate since 2009.
- She is currently Professor of Contemporary Poetry at Manchester Metropolitan University.
- Duffy is a staunch feminist – a view which is apparent in many of her poems.
- Unlike Larkin, Duffy is not opposed to serious, long-term relationships, having had a 15 year-long relationship with fellow Scottish poet, Jackie Kay.
- She has a daughter by fellow poet Peter Benson.
- Duffy frequently writes about issues such as gender, violence, oppression, sexuality, relationships and identity, often in a way which is lauded as being more accessible and 'everyday' than many other contemporary poets.

AO5 - Critical Views of Duffy's Work:

- Brooks – “[Duffy treats poetry] as an everyday event and not as a special occasion.”
- Brooks describes Duffy as Larkin’s “more expansive, approachable descendant.”
- Jay – “[Duffy] has largely managed to transcend the issue [of her own sexuality] by virtue of writing good poems as opposed to gender studies.”
- Nye – Duffy’s writes love poems “as if she were the first to do so”.
- Brittan – In many of her poems, Duffy shows the “ability to express powerful emotions in detached ‘everyday’ language within the limits of set poetic form.”
- Brittan – “[Duffy takes the] Larkinesque tone that was so scrubbed with lyric pessimism and re-inscribes it on the life of a contemporary woman poet whose poetic register reaches all the way from a subversive eroticism to a self-conscious regionalism.”
- Malcolm – “Duffy carefully selects her ‘simple’ language to harmonise with the tone of the poems – from colloquial humour to gritty realism.”
- Malcolm – “Duffy’s use of humour and parody clearly serves as an effective technique in presenting an empowered female voice.”
- Dent – “[Duffy] is a democratic poet. She is a poet of the people, of the commonplace. Her characteristic style is lapidary, clipped. She seeks to build to an effect. The effect emerges slowly. She does not declaim. She enunciates the common experience to touch on what is shared.”
- Dent – “[Duffy’s] characteristic form is the monologue. It is often said to be dramatic, but this is inaccurate. It is interior and usually contains very little drama.”

Larkin: Brief Context and Critics

AO3 - Biographical Notes:

- Philip Larkin: 9 August 1922 in Coventry – 2 December 1985 in Hull
- A poet, novelist and librarian, working at the University of Hull library for 30 years up until his death.
- Attended Oxford University in 1940 where he developed a taste for ridicule and irreverence after meeting Kingsley Amis, a life-long close friend.
- Although Larkin never married or had children, seeing such aspects of life as a distraction from his writing, he had several romantic relationships.
- Time, death, chance, and choice have been identified by critics as the leading themes in Larkin's poetry. In fact, many people find Larkin's poetry a little bit miserable. That doesn't mean that what he says is not true, though!
- We can all be a bit sad and disappointed with life sometimes. The positive way of looking at Larkin is that he can remind us that we ALL feel like this sometimes. Don't believe all those boastful and happy Instagram and Snapchat posts. They're usually a bit fake. Larkin knew this, and focused on things that we all feel sometimes: disappointment in life, the pressures of society on the individual, the desire to escape those pressures together with the fear of the isolation such escape brings as well as oncoming old age and the encroachment of time.

AO5 - Critical Views of Larkin's Work:

- King suggests that Larkin's work is "a poetry of disappointment, of the destruction of romantic illusions, of man's defeat by time and his own inadequacies."
- King – "Although man clutches at his instinctive belief that only love will comfort, console and sustain him, such a hope is doomed to be denied. A lover's promise is an empty promise and the power to cure suffering through love is a tragic illusion."
- To Larkin, Brownjohn notes, life was never "a matter of blinding revelations, mystical insights, expectations glitteringly fulfilled. Life, for Larkin, and, implicitly, for all of us, is something lived mundanely, with a gradually accumulating certainty that its golden prizes are sheer illusion."
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- Larkin arrived at his conclusions candidly, concerned to expose evasions so that the reader might stand "naked but honest, 'less deceived' . . . before the realities of life and death," to quote King.
- Andrew Sullivan states that the whole tenor of Larkin's work is that of an "irrelevant and impotent spectator."
- Naremore – "Larkin is trying to assert his humanity, not deny it."
- Larkin – "[My poetry] represents the mastering, even if just for a moment, of the pessimism and the melancholy, and enables you—you the poet, and you, the reader—to go on."

Wild Oats

About twenty years ago
Two girls came in where I worked—
A bosomy English rose
And her friend in specs I could talk to.
Faces in those days sparked
The whole shooting-match off, and I doubt
If ever one had like hers:
But it was the friend I took out,

And in seven years after that
Wrote over four hundred letters,
Gave a ten-guinea ring
I got back in the end, and met
At numerous cathedral cities
Unknown to the clergy. I believe
I met beautiful twice. She was trying
Both times (so I thought) not to laugh.

Parting, after about five
Rehearsals, was an agreement
That I was too selfish, withdrawn,
And easily bored to love.
Well, useful to get that learnt.
In my wallet are still two snaps
Of bosomy rose with fur gloves on.
Unlucky charms, perhaps.

First Love

Waking, with a dream of first love forming real words,
as close to my lips as lipstick, I speak your name,
after a silence of years, into the pillow, and the power
of your name brings me here to the window, naked,
to say it again to a garden shaking with light.

This was a child's love, and yet I clench my eyes
till the pictures return, unfocused at first, then
almost clear, an old film played at a slow speed.
All day I will glimpse it, in windows of changing sky,
in mirrors, my lover's eyes, wherever you are.

And later a star, long dead, here, seems precisely
the size of a tear. Tonight, a love-letter out of a dream
stammers itself in my heart. Such faithfulness.
You smile in my head on the last evening. Unseen
flowers suddenly pierce and sweeten the air.

Explore connections between the ways in which Duffy and Larkin write about love and relationships.

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A01 – What do you understand ‘love and relationships’ to mean? (In other words, what is the question asking you to focus on?):

Wild Oats (Philip Larkin)		First Love (Carol Ann Duffy)	
AO1 – Content/Subject:	AO4 – Comparison:	AO1 – Content/Subject:	
AO2 – Language:	AO4 – Comparison:	AO2 – Language:	
AO2 – Devices:		AO2 – Devices:	
AO2 – Structure:		AO2 – Structure:	
AO2 – Form:		AO2 – Form:	
AO5 – Critical/Alternative Views	AO4 – Comparison:	AO5 – Critical/Alternative Views	