A level English Literature| Summer Task

* A levels take a lot of independence, commitment and motivation. We’ve set these summer tasks to help you prepare for the new course but also so you can show your new English teacher what you can do.
* Your English teacher will collect your work during the first lesson in September.
* If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact Mr Rootham – subject leader for KS5 English & Film: [j.rootham@cns-school.org](mailto:j.rootham@cns-school.org) (NB: emails will only be answered during term time).
* You need to spend around an hour completing the tasks below.

1. **Written task**

For one of the following extracts, write an essay about how love is depicted. You should treat this as a piece of ‘unseen’ prose/poetry/drama so there is no need to include authorial context.

Different presentations of love may be: pursuit, betrayal, friendship, paternal, lust, unrequited, celebratory, forbidden, lost love etc.

* Your work can be typed or handwritten but should be no longer than a page and a half
* Your teacher will be looking for you to:
* Make thoughtful points about how love is presented in each text.
* Explore and compare the ways these types of love are similar / different.
* Use quotations from each text to support your points.
* Explore the techniques used by the writer (e.g. their choice of words, structure, use of imagery etc.)
* Use subject terminology in your analysis (e.g. word classes, simile, metaphor etc.)

1. **Purchase the following…**

As part of the course, you’ll be studying the following texts. You will need to purchase your own copy of the texts so you can make notes in them.

* ‘Oranges Aren’t the Only Fruit’ by Jeanette Winterson
* ‘Wuthering Heights’ by Emily Bronte
* ‘Cat on a Hot Tin Roof’ by Tennessee Williams
* ‘Feminine Gospels’ by Carol Ann Duffy
* ‘Othello’ by William Shakespeare

It doesn’t matter which editions you buy, and you can find second hand copies quite cheaply on the internet. If you are in receipt of a bursary, contact Mrs K. Blake [k.blake@cns-school.org](mailto:k.blake@cns-school.org) – you may be able to have help with purchasing these books.

**Poem of Sappho – Ancient Greek Translated by Julia Dubnoff**

Immortal Aphrodite, on your intricately brocaded throne,

child of Zeus, weaver of wiles, this I pray:

Dear Lady, don’t crush my heart

with pains and sorrows.

But come here, if ever before,

when you heard my far-off cry,

you listened. And you came,

leaving your father’s house,

yoking your chariot of gold.

Then beautiful swift sparrows led you over the black earth

from the sky through the middle air,

whirling their wings into a blur.

Rapidly they came. And you, O Blessed Goddess,

a smile on your immortal face,

asked what had happened this time,

why did I call again,

and what did I especially desire

for myself in my frenzied heart:

“Who this time am I to persuade

to your love? Sappho, who is doing you wrong?

For even if she flees, soon she shall pursue.

And if she refuses gifts, soon she shall give them.

If she doesn’t love you, soon she shall love

even if she’s unwilling.”

Come to me now once again and release me

from grueling anxiety.

All that my heart longs for,

fulfill. And be yourself my ally in love’s battle.

**Troilus and Criseyde – The Canterbury Tales – 1387**

**Geoffrey Chaucer**

In chaunged vois, right for his verray drede,

Which vois ek quook, and therto his manere

Goodly abaist, and now his hewes rede,

Now pale, unto Criseyde, his lady dere,

With look down cast and humble iyolden chere,

Lo, the alderfirste word that hym asterte

Was, twyes, 'Mercy, mercy, swete herte!'

And styntea while, and whan he myghte out brynge,

The nexte word was, 'God woot for I have,

As ferforthly as I have had konnynge,

Ben youres al, God so my soule save,

And shal, til that I, woful wight, be grave!

And though I dar, ne kan, unto yow pleyne,

Iwis, I suffre nought the lasse peyne.

* **Goodly abaist = totally humbled**
* **hewes = complexion**
* **humble iyolden chere = keeping his behaviour modest**
* **Stynte = broke off**
* **konnyge = knowledge**

**Othello – 1603**

**William Shakespeare**

**IAGO**  
 Awake! What ho, Brabantio! Thieves, thieves!

 Look to your house, your daughter, and your bags!  
 Thieves, thieves!  
  
⌜*Enter Brabantio,*⌝*above.*  
  
**BRABANTIO**  
What is the reason of this terrible summons

What is the matter there?  
**RODERIGO** Signior, is all your family within?  
**IAGO**Are your doors locked?  
**BRABANTIO**  Why, wherefore ask you this?  
**IAGO** Sir, you’re robbed. For shame, put on your gown!  
Your heart is burst. You have lost half your soul.  
Even now, now, very now, an old black ram  
Is tupping your white ewe. Arise, arise!  
Awake the snorting citizens with the bell,  
Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you.

Arise, I say!  
**BRABANTIO**  What tell’st thou me of robbing?  
 This is Venice. My house is not a grange.  
**IAGO**  I am one, sir, that comes to tell you your daughter  
and the Moor are ⟨now⟩ making the beast with  
two backs.

**Wuthering Heights – 1847**

**Emily Bronte**

'Yes, she's dead!' I answered, checking my sobs and drying my cheeks. 'Gone to heaven, I hope; where we may, every one, join her, if we take due warning and leave our evil ways to follow good!’

'Did SHE take due warning, then?' asked Heathcliff, attempting a sneer. 'Did she die like a saint? Come, give me a true history of the event. How did - ?’  He endeavoured to pronounce the name, but could not manage it; and compressing his mouth he held a silent combat with his inward agony, defying, meanwhile, my sympathy with an unflinching, ferocious stare. 'How did she die?' he resumed, at last - fain, notwithstanding his hardihood, to have a support behind him; for, after the struggle, he trembled, in spite of himself, to his very finger-ends.  'Poor wretch!' I thought; 'you have a heart and nerves the same as your brother men! Why should you be anxious to conceal them? Your pride cannot blind God! You tempt him to wring them, till he forces a cry of humiliation.'

'Quietly as a lamb!' I answered, aloud. 'She drew a sigh, and stretched herself, like a child reviving, and sinking again to sleep; and five minutes after I felt one little pulse at her heart, and nothing more!'

'And - did she ever mention me?' he asked, hesitating, as if he dreaded the answer to his question would introduce details that he could not bear to hear.

'Her senses never returned: she recognised nobody from the time you left her,' I said. 'She lies with a sweet smile on her face; and her latest ideas wandered back to pleasant early days. Her life closed in a gentle dream - may she wake as kindly in the other world!'

'May she wake in torment!' he cried, with frightful vehemence, stamping his foot, and groaning in a sudden paroxysm of ungovernable passion. 'Why, she's a liar to the end! Where is she? Not THERE - not in heaven - not perished - where? Oh! you said you cared nothing for my sufferings! And I pray one prayer - I repeat it till my tongue stiffens - Catherine Earnshaw, may you not rest as long as I am living; you said I killed you - haunt me, then! The murdered DO haunt their murderers, I believe. I know that ghosts HAVE wandered on earth. Be with me always - take any form - drive me mad! only DO not leave me in this abyss, where I cannot find you! Oh, God! it is unutterable! I CANNOT live without my life! I CANNOT live without my soul!'

He dashed his head against the knotted trunk; and, lifting up his eyes, howled, not like a man, but like a savage beast being goaded to death with knives and spears.

**A Doll’s House – 1879**

**Henrik Ibsen**

**NORA** (Shakes her head) You two never loved me. You only thought how nice it was to be in love with me.

**HELMER** But, Nora, what's this you are saying?

**NORA** It's right, you know, Torvald. At home, Daddy used to tell me what he thought, then I thought the same. And if I thought differently, I kept quiet about it, because he wouldn't have liked it. He used to call me his baby doll, and he played with me as I used to play with my dolls. Then I came to live in your house… What I mean is: I passed out of Daddy's hands into yours. You arranged everything to your tastes, and I acquired the same tastes. Or I pretended to... I don't really know… I think it was a bit of both, sometimes one thing and sometimes the other. When I look back, it seems to me I have been living here like a beggar, from hand to mouth. I lived by doing tricks for you, Torvald. But that's the way you wanted it. You and Daddy did me a great wrong. It's your fault that I've never made anything of my life.

**HELMER** Nora, how unreasonable... how ungrateful you are! Haven't you been happy here?  
NORA No, never. I thought I was, but I wasn't really.

**HELMER** Not... not happy!

**NORA** No, just settled. And you've always been so kind to me. But our house has never been anything but a play-room. I have been your doll wife, just as at home I was Daddy's doll child. And the children in turn have been my dolls. I thought it was fun when you came and played with me, just as they thought it was fun when I went and played with them. That's been our marriage, Torvald.

**HELMER** There is some truth in what you say, exaggerated and hysterical though it is. But from now on it will be different. Play-time is over; now comes the time for lessons.

**NORA** Whose lessons? Mine or the children's?

**HELMER** Both yours and the children's, my dear Nora.

**NORA** Ah, Torvald, you are not the man to teach me to be a good wife for you.

**The Waves – 1931**

**Virginia Woolf**

"Is he dead?" I thought, and kissed you, with my heart jumping under my pink frock like the leaves, which go on moving, though there is nothing to move them. Now I smell geraniums; I smell earth mould. I dance. I ripple. I am thrown over you like a net of light. I lie quivering flung over you.' 'Through the chink in the hedge,' said Susan, 'I saw her kiss him. I raised my head from my flowerpot and looked through a chink in the hedge. I saw her kiss him. I saw them, Jinny and Louis, kissing. Now I will wrap my agony inside my pocket handkerchief. It shall be screwed tight into a ball. I will go to the beech wood alone, before lessons. I will not sit at a table, doing sums. I will not sit next Jinny and next Louis. I will take my anguish and lay it upon the roots under the beech trees. I will examine it and take it between my fingers. They will not find me. I shall eat nuts and peer for eggs through the brambles and my hair will be matted and I shall sleep under hedges and drink water from ditches and die there.' 'Susan has passed us,' said Bernard. 'She has passed the tool-house door with her handkerchief screwed into a ball. She was not crying, but her eyes, which are so beautiful, were narrow as cats' eyes before they spring. I shall follow I shall go gently behind her, to be at hand, with my curiosity, to comfort her when she bursts out in a rage and thinks, "I am alone."

**Morning Song – 1961**

**Sylvia Plath**

Love set you going like a fat gold watch.

The midwife slapped your footsoles, and your bald cry

Took its place among the elements.

Our voices echo, magnifying your arrival. New statue.

In a drafty museum, your nakedness

Shadows our safety. We stand round blankly as walls.

I’m no more your mother

Than the cloud that distills a mirror to reflect its own slow

Effacement at the wind’s hand.

All night your moth-breath

Flickers among the flat pink roses. I wake to listen:

A far sea moves in my ear.

One cry, and I stumble from bed, cow-heavy and floral

In my Victorian nightgown.

Your mouth opens clean as a cat’s. The window square

Whitens and swallows its dull stars. And now you try

Your handful of notes;

The clear vowels rise like balloons.

**Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit – 1985**

**Jeanette Winterson**

My mother had been headstrong, and had got a job teaching in Paris, which was a very daring thing to do at the time. Then, one sunny say, without warning, she had been walking towards the river when she met Pierre, or rather Pierre had jumped from his bicycle, offered her his onions, and named her the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. `Naturally, I was flattered.' They exchanged addresses, and began to court one another. It was then that my mother experienced a feeling she had never known before: a fizzing and a buzzing and a certain giddiness. `Well, I thought it must be love.' But this puzzled her because Pierre wasn't very clever, and didn't have much to say. Perhaps he was handsome? But no, looking in the magazines, she realised he wasn't that either. But the feeling wouldn't go away. Then, on a quiet night, after a quiet supper, Pierre had siezed her and begged her to stay with him that night. The fizzing began, and as he clutched her to him, she felt sure she would never love another, and yes she would stay and after that, they would marry. `Lord forgive me, but I did it.' My mother stopped, overcome with emotion. `The worst is still to come.' I speculated on the worst, while she chewed her biscuit. Perhaps I wasn't a child of God at all, but the daughter of a Frenchman.

A couple of days afterward, my mother had gone to see the doctor in a fit of guilty anxiety. She lay on the couch while the doctor prodded her stomach and chest, asking if she ever felt giddy, or fizzy in the belly. `You may well be in love,' said the doctor, `but you also have a stomach ulcer.'

**Beloved – 1987**

**Toni Morrison**

Once more Sethe touched a wet forefinger to the stove. She opened the oven door and slid the pan of biscuits in. As she raised up from the heat she felt Paul D behind her. She straightened up and knew, but could not feel, that his cheek was pressing into the branches of her chokecherry tree. Not even trying, he had become the kind of man who could walk into a house and make the women cry. Because with him, in his presence, they could. There was something blessed in his manner. Women saw him and wanted to weep--to tell him that their chest hurt and their knees did too. Strong women and wise saw him and told him things they only told each other: that way past the Change of Life, desire in them had suddenly become enormous, greedy, more savage than when they were fifteen, and that it embarrassed them and made them sad; that secretly they longed to die--to be quit of it--that sleep was more precious to them than any waking day.

Therefore, although he did not understand why this was so, he was not surprised when Denver dripped tears into the stovefire. Behind her, bending down, his body an arc of kindness. He rubbed his cheek on her back and learned that way her sorrow, the roots of it; its wide trunk and intricate branches. Raising his fingers to the hooks of her dress, he knew without seeing them or hearing any sigh that the tears were coming fast. And when the top of her dress was around her hips and he saw the sculpture her back had become, like the decorative work of an ironsmith too passionate for display, he could think but not say, "Aw, Lord, girl." And he would tolerate no peace until he had touched every ridge and leaf of it with his mouth, none of which Sethe could feel because her back skin had been dead for years.

**Phaedra’s Love – 1996**

**Sarah Kane**

**STROPHE** Why don't you have an affair, get your mind off him.

**PHAEDRA** There's a thing between us, an awesome fucking thing, can you feel it? It burns. Meant to be. We were. Meant to be.

**STROPHE** No.

**PHAEDRA** Brought together.

**STROPHE** He's twenty years younger than you.

**PHAEDRA** Want to climb inside him work him out.

**STROPHE** This isn't healthy.

**PHAEDRA** He's not my son.

**STROPHE** You're married to his father.

**PHAEDRA** He won't come back, too busy being useless.

**STROPHE** Mother. If someone were to find out.

**PHAEDRA** Can't deny something this big.

**STROPHE** He's not nice to people when he's slept with them. I've seen him.

**PHAEDRA** Might help me get over him.

**STROPHE** Treats them like shit.

**PHAEDRA** Can't switch this off. Can't crush it. Can't. Wake up with it, burning me. Think I'll crack open I want him so much. I talk to him. He talks to me, you know, we, we know each other very well, he tells me things, we're very close. About sex and how much it depresses him, and I know -

**Hour – 2005**

**Carol Ann Duffy**

[Love’s time’s beggar](https://genius.com/3915856/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/Loves-times-beggar), but even a single hour,  
[bright as a dropped coin](https://genius.com/8049018/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/Bright-as-a-dropped-coin), makes love [rich](https://genius.com/7183292/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/Rich).  
We find an hour together, [spend](https://genius.com/7183295/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/Spend) it not on [flowers  
or wine](https://genius.com/10122160/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/Flowers-or-wine), [but the whole of the summer sky and a grass ditch](https://genius.com/8049028/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/But-the-whole-of-the-summer-sky-and-a-grass-ditch).  
For [thousands of seconds](https://genius.com/7183298/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/Thousands-of-seconds) we [kiss](https://genius.com/8895970/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/Kiss); your hair  
[like treasure](https://genius.com/10176752/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/Like-treasure) [on the ground](https://genius.com/28690813/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/On-the-ground); the [Midas](https://genius.com/7183301/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/Midas) light  
turning your [limbs to gold](https://genius.com/10122218/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/Limbs-to-gold). [Time slows](https://genius.com/10122222/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/Time-slows), for here  
[we are millionaires, backhanding the night](https://genius.com/7183303/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/We-are-millionaires-backhanding-the-night)  
[so nothing dark will end our shining hour,](https://genius.com/8049025/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/So-nothing-dark-will-end-our-shining-hour)  
[no](https://genius.com/28691025/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/No) [jewel hold a candle to the cuckoo spit](https://genius.com/7183306/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/Jewel-hold-a-candle-to-the-cuckoo-spit)  
hung from [the blade of grass at your](https://genius.com/10177530/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/The-blade-of-grass-at-your) ear,  
no [chandelier or spotlight](https://genius.com/7183308/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/Chandelier-or-spotlight) see you better lit  
than here. [Now](https://genius.com/7183314/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/Now). [Time hates love, wants love poor](https://genius.com/10122255/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/Time-hates-love-wants-love-poor)  
[but love spins gold, gold, gold from straw](https://genius.com/7183315/Carol-ann-duffy-hour/But-love-spins-gold-gold-gold-from-straw).

**love version of – 2018**

**Richard Scott**   
  
tonight I watched you sleep  
naked on the futon  
face down sweaty like a small child  
and knew that everything else was bullshit  
  
it’s so hard to stay alive these days  
or sane  
so keep on snoring danny  
while I guard you like a rottweiler  
  
being in love with you is fucking awful  
cause one day you’ll stop breathing  
in this grey light you already look dead  
  
but then you smile thank fuck  
what are you dreaming about baby wake up

tell me if the word soul still means anything