

A-level ENGLISH LITERATURE B

Hub school network meeting

Presentation slides

Published: Spring 2020

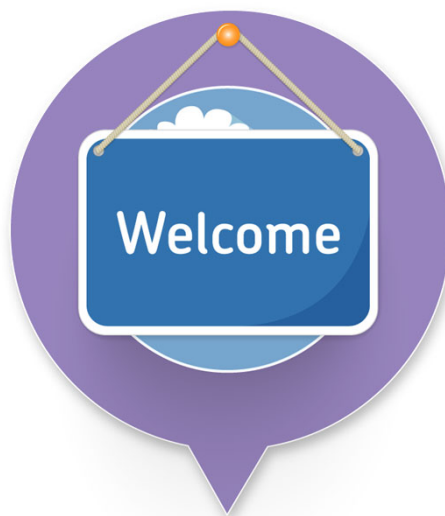


Hub school network meeting: A-level English Literature B

Presented by
Spring 2020



Welcome



This event will be recorded

Exam boards have an Ofqual requirement to record event audio.

Recordings are kept for the lifetime of the specification and not shared as an accompaniment to session resources.

The recording will begin now.

Session focus

Preparing for the unseen extracts

- Paper 1: Shakespeare
- Paper 2

Paper 1: Shakespeare unseen extract

Key points from the 2019 *Report on the exam*

What are successful students doing?

- Revising their texts thoroughly – secure, sound knowledge of character, plot, genre etc. They know the ‘facts’, as it states in the report.
- Confidently engaging with the dramatic narrative: what’s just happened? What’s happening in the passage? What’s about to happen next?
- Responding in a focused way to the task set.
- Carefully selecting relevant points from the extract – specifically points that allow them to write about the text as a drama.
- Making relevant, appropriate links to the wider play.

Key points from the 2019 *Report on the exam*

What are the ongoing issues?

- Making references to the wider play and then drifting away from the focus on the passage.
- Not selecting points to write about very wisely; sometimes missing or avoiding the most relevant, pertinent points.
- Not securely understanding the finer details of the passage: who is being referred to? Who is there, but not speaking?

(continued on following slide)

Key points from the 2019 *Report on the exam*

What are the ongoing issues?

- Not securely understanding the finer details of the play, which can lead to sweeping statements when engaging with a passage.
- Students remembering work they've done in class or on past papers, and trying to link that work to the passage in front of them.

Sharing experiences, generating discussion

- What do lower ability students find the most challenging when they are dealing with the Shakespeare passage?
- Why do some students find it difficult to progress beyond the middle bands?
- What targets do we set our higher achieving students?
- What do they find easier than the lower ability students?

Tracking the narrative

- When starting the Shakespeare play, it might be useful for students to start tracking the story and the plot from the very beginning – even getting some ideas together before they've read anything.
- This can often support lower ability students as it prepares them for something that they are probably feeling quite intimidated by.

Tracking the narrative

‘A well-respected soldier and a newly married man, Othello seems to have it all; however, when his close friend and colleague plants doubt in his mind about his wife’s faithfulness and honesty, Othello is gradually consumed by lies, becoming a shadow of his former self. In this moving tragedy, innocence is destroyed and trust is shattered. Shakespeare’s greatest villain manages to manipulate each and every character, driving the play to its predictable, yet heart-breaking conclusion.’

Nicola Jeffs

Tracking the narrative

Annotate the summary on page 8 of the *Resources* booklet and label it with any key thoughts and observations. The following questions may help.

1. Who do we expect to be the key characters?
2. What do we learn about these characters from this short summary?
3. What does the summary suggest are the key themes and ideas that we expect to be explored in the play?

Tracking the narrative

These initial notes would be a good starting point for students to build on as they read more. They can make links between ideas and points, and add development, quotations, colour and images as they read more of the story.

- On paper – individually
- Rolls of paper – class effort
- IT – Google Docs or OneNote which can be shared with the class or individuals

Dealing with the passage: fishbowl activity

In groups of three, give yourself a role:

- Scribe – noting down key ideas
- Speaker – discussing thoughts/observations
- Listener – listening to the speaker.

Work with either of the Shakespeare extracts from AS Paper 1A, May 2019 (*Othello* or *King Lear*) for this activity.

1. What happened just before this extract?
2. What part of the story is being told here?
3. What happens just afterwards?

From fishbowl to first paragraph ...

Based on what you have discussed, you potentially have the necessary information to create your first paragraph: the introductory overview.

Your overview should establish the extract's narrative and the tragic trajectory. Staying in your threes, using the notes you have just made, each of you needs to give yourself a number (1, 2 or 3) and contribute two or three sentences:

- before the passage
- what is in the passage itself
- after the passage.

Sharing experiences

- What kinds of tasks/activities have you used with your own groups that have worked well when approaching the play as a whole and/or the passage?
- Have you successfully tackled some of the challenges our students face?

Sharing experiences

- **Engaging with the story**
Writing summaries, reflections, thoughts. Writing tasks don't always have to be essays.
- **Faster, uninterrupted reading**
Do we 'interrupt' the narrative too much with essays and other tasks? Does this make it more difficult for students to keep up with the plot?

Paper 2: Unseen extract

Key points from the 2019 *Report on the exam*

What are successful students doing?

- Creating clear, coherent arguments.
- Producing clearly written responses that convey meanings and ideas successfully.
- Analysing texts in detail with good supportive quotations.
- Spending time thoroughly planning.
- Starting with the extract, and then making relevant links to the genre.
- Clear overview of the whole extract.
- Carefully reading the introduction given before the extract.

Key points from the 2019 *Report on the exam*

What are the ongoing issues?

- Not reading the introduction provided on the extract.
- Jumping into single-word language analysis.
- Imposing a memorised list of generic conventions upon the extract.
- Trying to make extracts 'fit' genres/sub-genres.
- Careless, hurried readings that lead to confusion and errors.
- Commenting on what is not there (probably as a result of revising and memorising a checklist of conventions).

Sharing experiences, generating discussion

- Do your students find the Paper 2 unseen extract more or less challenging than the Shakespeare?
- Do they find it easy to transfer skills between the two unseen extracts?
- What do the students need to understand about the differences between the Shakespeare and the genre extract?

Deciding what to write about

First of all, let's establish what we know of the genre. You can choose either crime (extract from *The Blank Wall* by Elisabeth Sanxay Holding, A-level Paper 2A, June 2019) or protest writing (extract from *The Winslow Boy* by Terence Rattigan in A-level Paper 2B, June 2019).

- What are the conventional features of these stories?
- What methods are used by writers in these narratives?

Use the prompt cards from page 9 of the *Resources* booklet for the following activity.

Deciding what to write about

1. Individually, spread the cards around the extract you have chosen.
2. Choose which three cards/methods you think are the most relevant to this passage. Put the others away.
3. In pairs, take it in turns to discuss which three you chose and why – connect them to the extract.
4. In your pairs, looking at all the cards you picked, choose two (one each) that you think have good value; cards that you think will give you some interesting things to write about. Write a paragraph in response to your card.
5. Share your responses with each other, offer feedback.

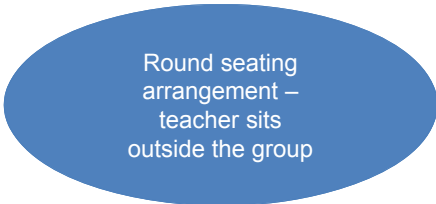
Sharing experiences

- What kinds of tasks/activities have you used with your own groups that have worked well when approaching the genre passage?
- Have you successfully tackled some of the challenges our students face?

Generating discussion and thoughts

Harkness discussions

A student-led teaching idea to encourage independence of thought



Round seating
arrangement –
teacher sits
outside the group

Harkness discussions

1. Could do this with some preparation of the passage or no preparation – perhaps just enough time to read the text through.
2. Teacher sits outside the circle with a ‘map’ of the seating arrangement so that interactions between students can be tracked.
3. Explain to the students that it’s not a competition to say the most: it’s a group discussion. No need for hands up.
4. Explain the different ways of contributing: raising new ideas; linking ideas to quotations; commenting on other people’s contributions; asking questions; asking people to explain what they mean; asking someone to join in.

Harkness discussions

Teacher makes a note of specific details:

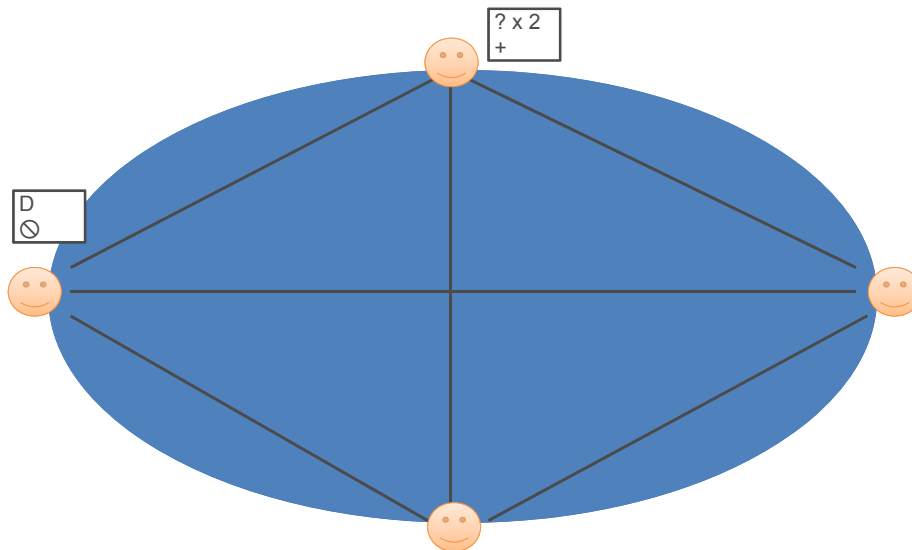
- ? asks an interesting question
- + refers specifically to the text
- advances the conversation
- ⊘ off topic
- C meaningful connection to another comment/contribution
- D disrespectful and/or dominates
- ! raises a new idea or point
- ★ group interaction: involving; encouraging; organising.

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Harkness discussions



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Resources

Take advantage of our extra resources in the 'Plan', 'Teach' and 'Assess' sections of our website.

Teaching resources

Plan

11

Prepare for your teaching year. Information, support and services to help you deliver the specification.

[All planning resources >](#)

Teach

11

Teaching resources that you can use to plan your lessons and support your students' learning.

[All teaching resources >](#)

Assess

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Prepare your students for assessment. Past papers, mark schemes and example answers.

[All assessment resources >](#)

Event materials

The electronic materials from this event will be made available to you in the customer portal of our online booking system.

Once we receive notification that you have attended the course, you will be sent a certificate of attendance email. When you receive the email, please log in to your account and the materials will be available on the 'my resources' tab on the welcome screen.

How did we do?

Please take a moment to complete a brief evaluation form for today's event. Your feedback is very important to us as it helps us improve and plan future training.

You should have been emailed the evaluation form. Please check your inbox (possibly your junk mail folder). If you haven't received it please give your trainer your name, centre name/number and email address so that we can look into it for you.

Thank you.

Get in touch

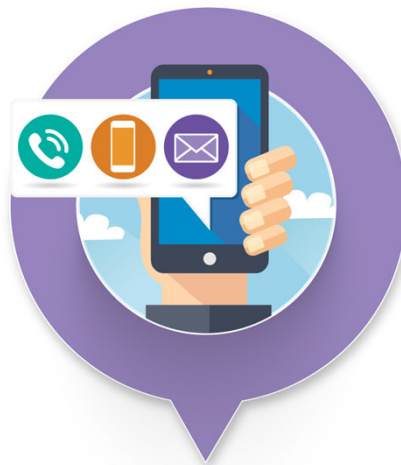
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Thank you

Contact us

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