



The Lantern English Co.
Advanced Literature

Intro to British Literature

Course Description: British literature holds the history of the English language, traced from the rhythms of Anglo-Saxon storytelling to the vivid poets of World War I. In this course, we'll see language and history unfold as we delve into one era of British literature per week. While the majority of literature assigned will be English, introducing students to the largely-English touchstone literature for this grade level, we'll also explore Scottish, Welsh, and Irish texts. Students will be encouraged to read thoughtfully, respond critically—interacting with the texts through analysis, close-readings, and creative responses—and, of course, have fun!

Please see below for a complete reading list. While we will learn basic British history to better grasp our texts, the focus will be on literary study.

Course Outline & Required Texts:

Please note that, on heavier reading weeks, we will have shorter or lighter written assignments. Our goal is that students are understanding and enjoying the texts!

The student should have access to the following works. Selections cover as wide a geographical and cultural background as possible, while still including the essential works of the British literary canon.

Note on content: *While we always strive to pick clean and uplifting works, some highly valuable texts result from cultural backgrounds that involve some negative or challenging content. Therefore, we recommend that a parent or trusted adult at least briefly review works and reach out if they would like to substitute a work that matches student and/or family values.*

Note: If you have any trouble finding a work, please let me know promptly so that I can help!

Week One: Anglo-Saxon & Medieval

Reading: Excerpts from *Beowulf*, “*The Ruin*,” and *The Canterbury Tales*’ “General Prologue” (PDF provided)

Assignment: Reflection on the student’s experience with British literature and history

Week Two: Renaissance

Reading: Select one Shakespeare play from the following list that the student hasn’t previously read:

- *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Julius Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Tempest*, *Twelfth Night* (Selected for value and brevity)

Assignment: Language worksheet

Week Three: Regency

Reading: Select a Jane Austen novel that the student hasn’t previously read:

- *Emma*, *Persuasion*, *Pride & Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, *Northanger Abbey*, *Sanditon* (delightful but unfinished & unedited draft), *Sense & Sensibility*

Assignment: Reading questions

Week Four: Regency

Reading: Finish the selected Jane Austen novel

Assignment: Argumentative essay

Week Five: Romantic

Reading: Selected poems from Robert Burns, John Keats, and William Wordsworth (PDF provided)

Assignment: Creative response

Week Six: Victorian

Reading: Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*

Assignment: Enjoying literature experiment & reflection

Week Seven: Victorian

Reading: Short excerpt from Browning’s “Cry of the Children” (PDF provided) AND Doyle, “The Red-Headed League”

Assignment: Close-reading

Week Eight: Modernist

Reading: Siegfried Sassoon, “Repression of War Experience” (poem — PDF provided); Dylan Thomas, “Out of a War of Wits” (poem — PDF provided); AND James Joyce, “Araby” (short story from *Dubliners*)

Assignment: Short compare-and-contrast essay **OR** historical context essay

There is no required edition; the student must simply cite the edition used. **Please make sure that your copy of the text is not abridged.** Other works will be provided in PDF format to the students, although they are more than welcome to find their own print copies!

We recommend that students interact with the text (highlighting and marginal notes), but students are *not* required to own copies of the works—texts from the library are perfectly all right! If you would like to own, inexpensive copies can be found online and at used bookstores.

As students tend to experience stronger reading comprehension when not reading on a screen, we would highly recommend that students have access to a hard copy of the works (a printed out PDF works well, too!).

Grading Information: All assignments will be graded using *The Advanced Writer Rubric* and averaged to receive a final course grade