If you’re planning on studying English Literature at degree level, there are a number of things you can do to get uni-ready.

1. **Keep reading widely** – we have attached a reading list with some suggestions to get you started

2. **Engage with the literary world** – studying English doesn’t just mean reading literature; there are plenty of podcasts, open lectures and blogs to keep you busy

3. **Engage with literary context** – stepping back and looking beyond the texts you’ve studied to consider the development of English literature and literary periods is a great way to work out which modules you might be interested in studying later on in your course

4. **Look into university courses** – most university English departments outline their core and optional modules online. Some also provide pre-reading lists. Looking into these might help you get a head start or even help you decide on a final university option if you haven’t already

### 1. Keep reading widely

Reading widely sometimes means reading beyond your comfort zone. To really understand the changing face of English Literature, you need to read across different time periods and different genres.

Try to compile your own reading list using the following ideas:

- ask friends and family for suggestions
- read from a genre away from your comfort zone e.g. sci-fi or romance
- add a prize-winning novel
- add a non-fiction text
- add one from a booklist e.g. 20 best books of this century etc.
- a volume of poetry
- an ‘easy’ book – a guilty pleasure like a teen book; something you’ll fly through
- a teacher’s suggestion
- a literary criticism book – feminism, Marxism etc.

At the bottom of this document is a recommended reading list but as mentioned earlier, looking at university departmental pages will also give you lots of ideas too.
2. Engage with the literary world

A simple Google search will bring up a huge array of podcasts, open lectures, blogs etc. that discuss literature in all its forms. These are some that we recommend:

**Podcasts**

* Slate’s Audio Book Club
  
  *Monthly book club discussions including new releases and relevant popular fiction (IE: The Handmaid’s Tale)*

* BBC World Book Club
  
  *More formal than Slate’s book club but the BBC invite the author to attend*

* The Guardian Books Podcast
  
  ‘A weekly look at the world of books’. Rather than focusing on a book a week, the presenters look at different themes and ideas across authors and genres.

**Websites and open lectures**

* The British Library*
  
  *has excellent resources organised in chronological order. At A Level, we study from the Renaissance up to modern 21st century literature. However, it is useful to look at the medieval section to gauge an understanding of what paved the way for Renaissance writers.*

* Oxford University Open Lectures*
  
  *They have a brilliant Shakespeare collection (including Antony and Cleopatra which is studied at A Level) along with pretty much every other era of English literature possible.*

* EMC Magazine*
  
  *We subscribe to the English and Media Centre magazine which releases new articles each month. Search for topics you didn’t cover at A Level to get started.*

Username: GarfEng    Password: Garforth2020

**MASSOLIT**

Until the end of April, we have free access to MASSOLIT which provides lectures across a range of literary topics. It is designed for A Level study; however we recommend you investigate a different area of literature that you didn’t study at A Level such as Chaucer.

Please see below your login for the trial which gives you free access until 31 April:

**URL:** www.massolit.io

Username: jcs009@jcsonlineresources.org
Password: JCSFoundation

**The National Theatre**

The National Theatre are streaming a class production every Thursday night on YouTube. You can also use your school email to access their 30 productions at any time.
3. Engage with literary context

Across your English Literature A Level, you have studied specific genres really closely. However, at degree level you will usually be expected to study literature from the Old English Period up the present day and everything in between. This is a great opportunity to develop your understanding of the timeline of English Literature and the conventions of different literary movements and eras. We recommend you research the literary periods outlined below for the following:

- Style and genre
- Purpose and effect on readers
- Historical context
- Examples

Literary periods:

1. Medieval period
2. The Renaissance
3. The Neoclassical period
4. The Romantic period
5. The Victorian period (link to Realism)
6. Existentialism
7. The Modern period
8. Postmodernism

Resources above such as The British Library and MASSOLIT have excellent resources. Some timelines differ slightly and some have more specific movements within these periods.

4. Look into university courses

If you have decided which university you plan to attend, try searching through the information available for your course is a great place to start. Most universities advertise core and optional modules so you can get a head-start on what you might be studying next year. Some universities also provide their reading lists on their open site – most are provided to students through a secure website – which will give you an idea of texts to look up if you would like to do some pre-reading.

Leeds University outlines all of its English Literature modules and their accompanying reading list

The University of Manchester has a search facility where you can look up key words or just simply ‘English’ to access their module texts

Edge Hill University has a similar facility to Manchester which allows you to search through their lists. Edge Hill also has a lot of resources for English Language and Media if you’re doing a combined course.

MOOCs

You will have heard about MOOCs throughout sixth form and now you have more time on your hands they’re a great way to keep your mind busy. You can access these short online courses for free through Unifrog or through individual university websites. You don’t need to stick to English – the options are endless so try something new!
Recommended Reading List

Chinua Achebe  
Things Fall Apart

Maya Angelou  
I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

Margaret Atwood  
The Blind Assassin  
Surfacing  
Cat’s Eye

Jane Austen  
Pride and Prejudice  
Persuasion  
Sense and Sensibility  
Mansfield Park  
Northanger Abbey

J. G. Ballard  
Empire of the Sun

Iain Banks  
The Wasp Factory

Pat Barker  
Regeneration

Charlotte Bronte  
Jane Eyre  
Villette

Emily Bronte  
Wuthering Heights

John Bunyan  
The Pilgrim’s Progress

Anthony Burgess  
A Clockwork Orange

Albert Camus  
The Outsider  
The Plague

Lewis Carroll  
Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland

Angela Carter  
Wise Children  
The Bloody Chamber  
Nights at the Circus

Agatha Christie  
The Murder of Roger Ackroyd  
Murder on the Nile

J.M. Coetzee  
Disgrace  
Foe

Wilkie Collins  
The Woman in White  
The Moonstone

Joseph Conrad  
Heart of Darkness  
Nostromo

Louis de Bernieres  
Captain Corelli’s Mandolin

Daniel Defoe  
Robinson Crusoe

Charles Dickens  
Our Mutual Friend  
Bleak House  
David Copperfield

George Eliot  
The Mill on the Floss  
Middlemarch

Sebastian Faulks  
Birdsong

Henry Fielding  
Tom Jones

F. Scott Fitzgerald  
Tender is the Night  
The Great Gatsby

E.M. Forster  
A Room with a View  
A Passage to India

John Fowles  
The French Lieutenant’s Woman
The Collector
The Magus
Elizabeth Gaskell
North and South
Charlotte Perkins Gilman
The Yellow Wallpaper
Graham Greene
The Third Man
Brighton Rock
Thomas Hardy
Far from the Madding Crowd
Jude the Obscure
Tess of the D’Urbervilles
The Return of the Native
L. P. Hartley
The Go-Between
Nathaniel Hawthorne
The Scarlet Letter
Ernest Hemingway
A Farewell to Arms
For Whom the Bell Tolls
Henry James
Portrait of a Lady
The Turn of the Screw
Jerome K. Jerome
Three Men in a Boat
James Joyce
A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man
D. H. Lawrence
Sons and Lovers
Lady Chatterley’s Lover
Doris Lessing
The Grass is Singing
Andrea Levy
Small Island
Gabriel García Márquez
One Hundred Years of Solitude
Cormac McCarthy
The Road
Ian McEwan
Atonement
John McGрегor
If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things
Toni Morrison
Song of Solomon
Iris Murdoch
The Sea The Sea
Vladimir Nabokov
Lolita
V. S. Naipaul
A Bend in the River
A House for Mr Biswas
Michael Ondaatje
The English Patient
George Orwell
Animal Farm
1984
Sylvia Plath
The Bell Jar
Edgar Allan Poe
Fall of the House of Usher
Pit and the Pendulum
Tales of Mystery and Imagination
Lynne Reid Banks
The L-shaped Room
Erich Maria Remarque
All Quiet on the Western Front
Samuel Richardson
Pamela
Clarissa
Jean Rhys
Voyage in the Dark
Wide Sargasso Sea
Arundhati Roy
The God of Small Things
Salman Rushdie
Midnight’s Children
Shame
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J. D. Salinger</td>
<td><em>The Satanic Verses</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernhard Schlink</td>
<td><em>Catcher in the Rye</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Walter Scott</td>
<td><em>The Heart of Midlothian</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Ivanhoe</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Scott</td>
<td><em>Staying On</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Shelley</td>
<td><em>Frankenstein</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zadie Smith</td>
<td><em>White Teeth</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muriel Spark</td>
<td><em>The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Loitering with Intent</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurence Sterne</td>
<td><em>The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bram Stoker</td>
<td><em>Dracula</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Styron</td>
<td><em>Sophie’s Choice</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick Suskind</td>
<td><em>Perfume</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graham Swift</td>
<td><em>Waterland</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Last Orders</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan Swift</td>
<td><em>A Modest Proposal</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donna Tartt</td>
<td><em>The Secret History</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. M. Thackeray</td>
<td><em>Vanity Fair</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>The Luck of Barry Lyndon</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Pendennis</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthony Trollope</td>
<td><em>The Way We Live Now</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>The Warden</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Twain</td>
<td><em>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jules Verne</td>
<td><em>Twenty Thousand Leagues Under The Sea</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Around the World in Eighty Days</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>From the Earth to the Moon</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice Walker</td>
<td><em>The Color Purple</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Meridian</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evelyn Waugh</td>
<td><em>Brideshead Revisited</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>A Handful of Dust</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Vile Bodies</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Decline and Fall</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.G. Wells</td>
<td><em>The Time Machine</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>The History of Mr Polly</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Island of Dr Moreau</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>War of the Worlds</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oscar Wilde</td>
<td><em>The Picture of Dorian Gray</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeanette Winterson</td>
<td><em>Oranges are not the Only Fruit</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>The Passion</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Woolf</td>
<td><em>To the Lighthouse</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Mrs Dalloway</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Orlando</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Poetry suggestions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elizabethan</td>
<td>Wyatt, Spenser, Sidney, Shakespeare, Jonson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metaphysical</td>
<td>Donne, Herbert, Vaughan, Marvell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restoration</td>
<td>Milton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romantic</td>
<td>Blake, Clare, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Keats, Shelley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victorian</td>
<td>Tennyson, Browning, Barrett-Browning, Arnold, Rossetti, Southey, Arnold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early C20</td>
<td>Blunden, Lawrence, Graves, de la Mare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War Poets</td>
<td>Brooke, Owen, Rosenberg, Sassoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>