



SIXTH FORM SUMMER PROJECTS 2026

A Level English Literature

This element of the Summer Project is designed to support you with a foundation understanding of the things you'll need to know that are relevant to the novels you'll study in September.

Some things you may already know - in which case, feel free to just fill in the answers - but some of it you will certainly need to research!

SECTION 1: CREATION AND BIBLICAL KNOWLEDGE

According to the book of Genesis in the Bible, how was the Earth and everything in it created?	
According to Genesis, how, specifically, were humans created?	
What was the Garden of Eden?	
What does 'the fall of man' refer to?	
What does the term 'original sin' mean?	
Who is Lucifer, and what happened to him?	

SECTION 2: GREEK MYTHOLOGY

Who are Zeus, Poseidon and Hades?	
Who was Prometheus and what did he do?	
How are creation myths from Greek mythology similar to (or different from) the story in the Bible?	
Which story in Greek mythology could be said to mirror the fall of man in the Bible?	
Who were Orpheus and Eurydice?	
Find out about an additional God/Goddess Summarise what we learn from them here CHALLENGE: find a connection to a modern retelling (novel, play or even film!)	

SECTION 3: ROMANTICISM

What time frame is associated with Romanticism (or the Romantic movement?)	
What are considered to be the main characteristics of the Romantic movement?	
Find three examples of writers who were particularly associated with Romanticism.	
Which other branches of the arts were involved in the Romantic movement?	
What was happening in Europe during the Romantic movement? (How might that link to the style of Romantic writing?)	
Read a poem from one of the authors (identified above). Summarise what it's about. Where possible, find examples of techniques used by the poet too.	

SECTION 4: GOTHIC GENRE

When is the Gothic genre thought to have appeared, and what is an early example of the genre?	
What are some of the key features of the Gothic genre?	
Find three famous examples of Gothic novels (from the key Gothic period)	
Suggest two examples of modern texts (this could include film or TV too) which could be classed as Gothic. Briefly explain why.	

SECTION 5: DYSTOPIAN FICTION

What is the meaning and etymology of the word 'dystopia'?	
What is the general purpose or aim of dystopian fiction?	
What is the earliest example of dystopian fiction that you can find?	
Suggest two examples of modern texts (this could include film or TV too) which could be classed as dystopian.	

RESEARCH PROJECT

Both of the novels we read (*Frankenstein* and *The Handmaid's Tale*) are classed as speculative fiction. We would like you to conduct a small research project on literary texts from speculative fiction (e.g. fantasy, sci-fi, dystopian)

You will need to read a minimum of 3 short stories (or 3 opening chapters) and create a short presentation which you will deliver to the rest of the class showing how your chosen texts fit into that genre.

You might wish to consider:

- A brief summary of what your texts were about
- Typical features/shared traits of that genre (with examples!)
- Historical context/writer's influences and message
- Archetypal characters linked to narrative e.g. an 'outsider'
- Close analysis of writer's craft (language, form and structure)

The expectation will be that your presentation allows you to demonstrate your **sound knowledge of the texts** that you have chosen. You should aim to present for **3-5 minutes** and **be prepared to respond to questions** from your peers.

Example authors to consider:

Ray Bradbury, H. G. Wells, Aldous Huxley, Margaret Atwood, E.M. Forster, Kazuo Ishigoru, Shirley Jackson, Yann Martel, George Orwell

Wider reading to prepare you for the course (optional, but helpful):

- *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* by Samuel Taylor Coleridge (or Part 1)
- Read George Orwell's *1984* (referenced a lot in *The Handmaid's Tale*)
- Read John Milton's *Paradise Lost* - the start of Book 1
- Read about Mary Shelley and the Romantic Poets influences
- Read about Margaret Atwood's influences
- Watch this documentary: 'BBC Documentary 'The Birth of a Monster' *Frankenstein* and Mary Shelley'
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=73im4ovhd0g>
- Read another text by Margaret Atwood e.g. *Penelopiad*

You will need your own copies of the novels for September 2026 so that you can annotate them. For ease, the book should be the same version that we use in lessons (so you can follow page numbers easily) - see below.



Vintage

0099740915 / 9780099740919



Scholastic

1407144049 / 9781407144047



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