



English Literature 2025 Summer Task

Your **summer homework** is essential in helping you to prepare you for the first term of the course. When you start your course in September you will embark upon a unit which introduces you to the genre of TRAGEDY. In Year 12 you will study three texts through the lens of tragedy: Othello by William Shakespeare, Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller and selected poems by John Keats.

1. RESEARCH INTO TRAGEDY

In order to familiarise yourself with tragedy as a genre you will be conducting your own research into the genre of tragedy. Your task is to:

Research the characteristics of tragedy and the key aspects of the genre.

As a minimum, this should include definitions of the following terms:

Tragic hero

Tragic Villain

Harmartia

Hubris

Perepeteia

Anagnorisis

Catharsis

Aristotelian structure: Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, Denouement

You should also give examples from a tragedy you know – *Romeo and Juliet* or *Macbeth*, for example.

1. Create a timeline of tragedy, showing the key features of the type of tragedy (no more than 5 bullet points per tragedy). Note how one form of tragedy was influenced by its predecessor and the changes to the genre over time. Include any texts from the period and classification of tragedy on your timeline. DO NOT SIMPLY COPY AND PASTE.

Example Texts

- Greek tragedy (include here Aristotle's *Poetics*) *Oedipus Rex*

- Shakespearean Tragedy *King Lear*
- Renaissance Tragedy *The Changeling*
- Naturalistic or Bourgeois Tragedy *A Doll's House*
- Absurdist Drama *Waiting for Godot*
- 20th century dramatic tragedy *The Crucible*

2. PREPARATORY READING

Buy the two plays you will be studying in the Autumn term:

Death of a Salesman **Publisher:** Penguin Classics; New Ed edition

ISBN-10: 0141182741

ISBN-13: 978-0141182742

Othello: **Publisher:** Cambridge University Press; 3 edition

ISBN-10: 1107615593

ISBN-13: 978-1107615595

1. Read *Death of a Salesman* **in full**, then complete the following tasks:

***A plot summary** – this can be in the form of bullet points, but should be detailed.

***An overview of the following characters:** Willy, Linda, Biff, Happy, Charley, Ben

*Key themes and how they are explored in the text

*Links to tragedy (use your research)

2. Create the following to prepare for your study of *Othello*:

***A plot summary** – this can be in the form of bullet points, but should be detailed.

***An overview of the following characters:** Othello, Iago, Desdemona, Emilia, Cassio, Roderigo, Brabantio

*Key themes and how they are explored in the text

*Links to tragedy (use your research)

NOTE: You are not expected to read *Othello* before you start the course - use the following links as a starting point to familiarise yourself with the text:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bp6LqSgukOU>

<https://www.playshakespeare.com/othello/synopsis>

<https://www.litcharts.com/lit/othello/summary>