

Y7: Literature Through Time

Why?

Many of the stories we know and love today – whether they be from the pages of our favourite book or depicted on screen through films or games – are based on and built around pivotal stories of the past. This unit will help students to make links between texts, explore based on historical knowledge of the era and experience literary firsts as we journey through seminal texts from some key times in literary history.

Springboard Texts:

The Bible - Genesis: The Story of Original Sin
 Dante's Inferno – Canto III
 Wordsworth – Daffodils
 Stevenson – Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde
 Bradbury – Fahrenheit 451

Key Concepts

Context – The understanding of the social and historical knowledge surrounding a text helps us to understand its purpose.

Ambition/Greed/Desire – Ambition and desire can be seen as positive emotions but can soon become damaging as they turn into greed and the moral consequences of immoral/sinful actions.

Symbolism – Where one singular concept, idea or object can hold much deeper meaning which can transcend time.

Nature – Writer's – particularly Romantic writers – often include the healing and powerful aspects of nature in their works to show the relative insignificance of Man.

Human Nature – The fundamental way we act and react to any given situation. There are certain common features that all humans regardless of origin share – e.g. grief or love

Duality (of Man) – Humans are complex beings with many internal and external feelings. This duality refers to the often hidden (through fear or societal shame) sides of our persona.

Oppression – the prolonged unfair treatment of someone or something to hold authority or power over them.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary	Definition
Morality	The principles which distinguish right from wrong. The ability to know the difference between good and bad behaviour.
Doleful	Expressing deep sorrow.
Torment	Severe physical and mental suffering.
Purgatory	A place or state of suffering where the souls of sinners repent and pay for their sins before going to heaven.
Repugnant	Where the idea of something or someone is utterly disgusting and offensive.
Duality	The quality of between dual – having two sides.
Barbarous	Extremely brutal, cruel and savage.
Grotesque	A very ugly, deformed, distorted figure or image.
Epigraph	A phrase, quotation or poem which is set at the beginning of a text which serves to set the tone and invite thoughts prior to reading.
Dystopian	A futuristic, imagined universe in which society is manipulated by the people in power.

Key ideologies by era (chronological)					
Biblical	Renaissance	Romanticism	Victorian	20 th Century	21 st Century
For many, the bible is seen as the first text. From 1AD the population believed devoutly in God and accepted his presence as omniscient. Scientific discoveries were rare, and religion was not questioned.	This era brought about huge changes in attitudes towards religion. Art and Literature became popular and discoveries in cosmology and science meant that people started to question the existence of God.	The Romantics had a preoccupation with the sublimity of nature and the preservation of human freedoms. They began to reject the constraints of society and the power certain groups had over them in favour of freedom of the individual.	The Victorian Era saw many developments in science, medicine, and physiology in particular, and encouraged and even wider rejection of religious ideologies. Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution dispelled the myth of Adam and Eve.	This era saw huge changes in society. Rights for marginalised groups were changing. The two world wars changed many people's outlooks and lifestyles. Literature began to be used to speak out and criticise society.	As sci-fi began to develop as a genre in the 20 th century, the 21 st century saw dystopian fiction grow in popularity. Books have been widely available for all for over 100 years now and readers are keen to explore wider fictional worlds.

