

English Literature

SYLLABUS OVERVIEW 16-18 YEARS OLDS

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EDUCATION

About Immerse

Immerse Education is an award-winning academic summer school provider offering programmes for 16-18 year olds in centres of academic prestige.

The aim of these programmes is to provide participants with academically challenging content that develops their understanding of and passion for their chosen discipline. Through 40 hours of academic sessions, the programmes also offer young students unique and valuable insights into what it would be like to study their chosen subject at university.



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This Syllabus Overview provides a summary of the topics and subject areas that participants can encounter during their studies with Immerse. It has been carefully created by our expert tutors who are current members of world-leading universities, and who have experience in teaching undergraduate students.

Academic Sessions

The academic sessions at Immerse are arranged into modules to enable participants to explore a broad range of topics over the course of two weeks. The modules included in this syllabus overview are indicative but not prescriptive.

Tutors are encouraged to include their own specialisms and also focus on any particular areas of interest expressed by participants within the class. They may choose to provide further detail on a specific topic, or they may include new material and information that builds on the knowledge already developed during the programme.

Personal Project

Each programme includes an element of individual work, generally termed the 'Personal Project'. This can take many forms but is commonly an essay or presentation delivered on the final day of the programme. Participants will receive feedback on this work which may also be mentioned in the participant evaluation which is provided in writing by the tutor once the programmes have ended.



Preparatory work

Some tutors may ask participants to complete some preparatory work, such as reading or a series of exercises in advance of the programme. Participants are strongly encouraged to complete this work since it will be included in the opening sessions of the programme. Any preparatory tasks will be provided in advance of the programme directly to the participant.

Academic Difficulty

As all of our programmes are designed to provide a unique introduction to advanced material, the syllabus will be academically challenging at times.

This is something to be excited about and all of our tutors will encourage and support participants throughout the programme. Immerse Education aims to develop every participant regardless of ability, and our tutors will adapt their teaching to individual needs.



Aim of the English Literature Programme

The Immerse Education English Literature programme is designed to build upon the foundation of skills that participants have already gained in a traditional classroom environment and highlight how these can be used to inspire further study at university. Participants are encouraged to explore new material in-depth and to form independent and considered opinions and ideas based on sound research and analysis of the material. By the end of the programme, participants will have a good understanding, not only of university-level content, but also the variety of degree programmes available in subjects related to English literature. Beyond this, participants will also explore the career opportunities available to graduates in this field.

What is Literary Criticism?

It is undeniable that literature is valued by popular culture and by educationalists. It has been championed as a form of criticism of the status quo; as a mode of escape; as a tool capable of training empathy in readers; as a superior aesthetic object designed to entertain or elevate, rather than instruct. This session considers what the purpose of literature is, and hence, the role of literary criticism. It does so by examining how individuals have interpreted the function of literature from the days of Aristotle through to the present day, in order to see what critical approaches to literature suggest about the purpose of literature and literary criticism.

What is Close Reading?

This unit provides a crash-course in a dominant method of literary criticism known as 'practical criticism.' It will introduce students to the history of this practice. Students are invited to evaluate the benefits and critiques of this method. The module aims to improve students' personal abilities with close reading but at the same time invites students to consider the limitations and difficulties of the reading techniques on which this method depend. This is a skill that is required across multiple disciplines and in a variety of professional contexts – we will consider how close reading can be applied to different contexts and its relative value as such.





Writing Literary History

This topic invites students to think more carefully about the literary canon, and some of the historical and value-laden terms that have been used to categorise texts as ‘classics’ or ‘popular fiction.’ Divisions like these tend to structure literature courses in schools and universities. Students are encouraged to question the formation of these categories, and to consider how contemporary debates over the canon may be reshaping our ideas of what ‘literariness’ involves. Participants will be encouraged to offer their own ideas for works that should be included in certain canons.

Editing: What Difference Does It Make?

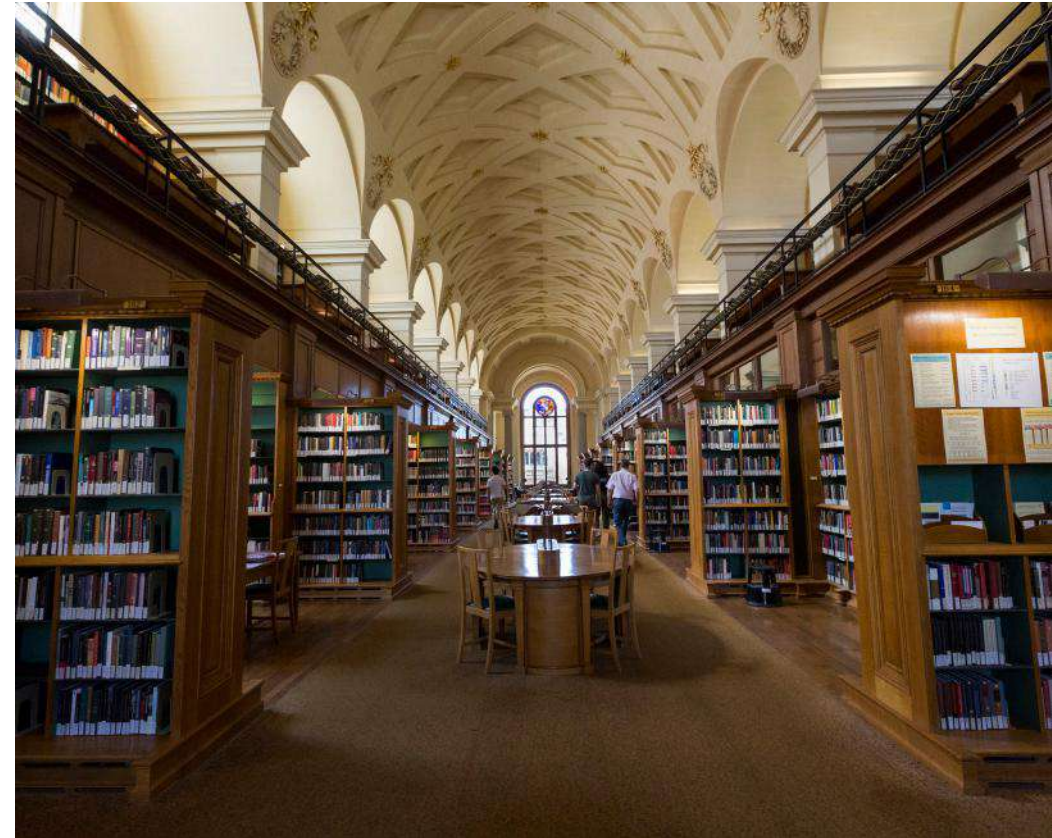
Editing is a crucial part of bringing texts and manuscripts to print, but its workings are often invisible or unappreciated. This unit invites students to evaluate the role that editing has upon the communication of ideas in texts. By considering the editorial history of Shakespeare’s *King Lear*, this unit encourages students to evaluate how the history of editorial practice informs us of how literature has been valued, studied, and published in different time periods. In this module students will complete an editing exercise and will need to consider solutions to standard questions asked of modern editors: whether or not to modernise spelling, how to deploy footnotes, and so on.

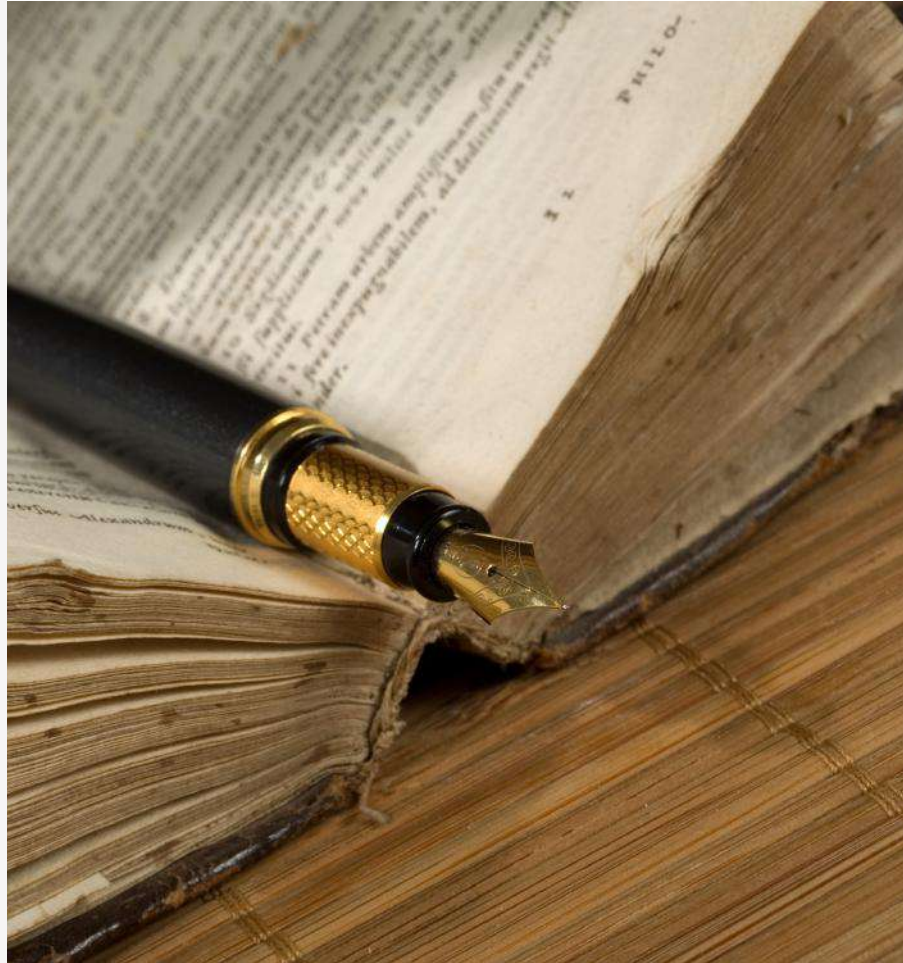
Poetry and The Bible

This unit invites students to analyse the complexities with which two key poets, John Milton and T. S. Eliot, have used poetry to engage with biblical stories and themes. Students will be encouraged to consider how Milton and Eliot's specific historical contexts influence their biblical invocations. By situating *Paradise Lost* in relation to the Interregnum, and 'The Waste Land' in a post-World War One context, respectively, students will be asked to evaluate how Milton and Eliot's poetic invocations of biblical stories and themes enabled provocative debates regarding contentious philosophical questions regarding heroism, government, and hope.

Colonialism and Post-colonial Literature

This topic introduces students to the concept of post-colonial literature as a category of texts and as a form of writing. It will raise questions of identity, literature as a mode of resistance, and notions of hybridity. As part of this unit, students will be asked to analyse a selection of texts from a specific post-colonial context – that of postcolonial Australia. They will be asked to consider how the politics of empire has shaped our current view of literature and literary studies, and to explore ways in which post-colonial texts and ideologies can generate new interpretations of the gaps and silences in 'canonical' British texts.





Translation and Transformation

This unit focuses on the question of literary adaptations as a mode of translation. By performing a case study of different adaptations of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, it will bring to the fore the role of textual media in shaping our attitudes and interpretations of events. By watching a range of adaptations, this unit invites students to critically consider what is lost and what is gained when a text is 'translated' for a different set of viewers in the form of an adaptation. Participants will also consider the process of translation and the factors that are brought into consideration or perhaps overlooked.

Poetics of Punctuation

This unit will examine the role of punctuation in aiding literary comprehension and providing different modes of interpretation. Drawing on our understanding of the importance of editing, this study will look at how different editions of Emily Dickinson's poetry affects the interpretation of the poems. It will consider how the use, and non-use, of punctuation can be used to create drama in both prose and poetic works. Participants will be encouraged to posit their own suggestions for works that can or have been given alternative significance due to the inclusion or omission of punctuation.

TOPICS LIST

Functions of Form

In this topic, we will consider how the structural and physical forms of a text influence the text's meanings. This topic will be based around a case study of three different textual forms: a sonnet; an excerpt from a young children's book from the 1780s; and selections from William Blake's *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*. Through a discussion of the ideas of literary structures, and physical formats of books and prints, we will assess the extent to which the visual and material presentation of a text influences the text's communication of ideas. We will also visit the Fitzwilliam Museum to examine a selection of Blake's prints in person.

Prosody and Metre

Tum-dee-dum. In literary study, prosody has to do with the patterns of linguistic features: stress, syllables, quantity, phrasing, etc. You might call it the grammar of rhythm; and in poetry, metre is the basic rhythmic structure of a poem's lines of verse. In this module we will explore four basic kinds of metre (accentual-alliterative, syllabic (Romantic), accentual-syllabic, quantitative), and we will learn about some curious Renaissance experiments with English poetry and Latin quantity. But we will also go into a variety of examples. Participants will learn not only how to scan a poem, but also how to feed that understanding of analysed rhythm back into their interpretation of that poem.



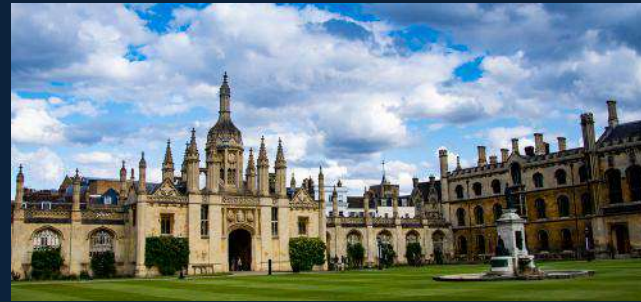


Personal Project

Throughout the fortnight, participants will be working on their own personal project. Having been provided with a brief, participants should research and prepare a presentation for their peers, or submit an essay to the tutor. This will build upon the theory that they have learnt over the course of the programme and is also an opportunity to showcase their ability to apply this to a specific literary theme or work. Presentations are followed by questions from the audience and wider class discussion of particular points of interest. The tutor may also include feedback about the essay or presentation in the written evaluation which is sent to participants after the programme has ended.

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OUR AWARDS AND ACCREDITATIONS

