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Congratulations on being offered a place at Queen's! I organise the teaching of English at Queen's, as well as teaching the literature courses at the modern end of the syllabus. Although you will be taught by a variety of tutors with different specialisms during your time at Oxford, I'll be advising you and organising your English tutorials for you throughout the course.

You'll be studying four papers in English in the first year: Introduction to English Language and Literature, Early Medieval Literature, 650-1350 (Paper 2), Literature in English, 1830-1910 ('Victorian') (Paper 3), and Literature in English, 1910 to the present day ('Modern') (Paper 4). You will study the Victorian paper in Michaelmas (autumn) term, and the Modern paper in Hilary (spring). Classes for Paper 1 will run throughout the year, with the Language teaching taking place in Michaelmas, and teaching on the literary section of the paper following in Hilary. The Early Medieval paper will also be studied throughout the year. Reading lists are attached. Given the pressure of work in term, it is vital that you read the texts before you arrive in Oxford: you will not have time to read the 'primary texts' (the novels, plays and poetry) for the first time, as well as the 'secondary texts' (criticism on the primary material) that you'll be researching too. Prioritise the texts for the first term (Victorian rather than Modern), ensuring the novels are all read (*Bleak House*, *Middlemarch* and *Aurora Leigh* will take most time, so start with them). It would be a very good idea to make a start on some of the reading for spring too if you possibly can.

You'll find that many of these works are much more enjoyable and easier to follow if you devote extended periods of quality reading time to them. Remember to take good notes. I recommend taking notes on a separate piece of paper, or in the front or back of the book (remember to list page numbers!), rather than simply underlining passages as you read, which makes it difficult to revisit your ideas. Note anything you find interesting and want to talk about: it might be parts that you find difficult or confusing, sudden changes of style, or moments where the author seems to be stating a political position or a stylistic programme. When you finish reading a text, make sure you take some time (even if only half an hour) to brainstorm some immediate reactions and think about which ideas you might want to pursue further. This will make it much easier to return to the texts during the term. If there are authors or texts that don't appear on the reading lists for the relevant period that you would like to work on next year, do mention them in the first week meetings. Although I will expect you to have read all the works on the reading lists, as core texts of the periods, it is often possible to accommodate particular interests as well. Indeed, the aim of the Oxford course is to develop your individual interests, while giving you a strong framework in which to interrogate them.

You need your own copies of all the primary texts listed, but you don't need to buy new editions if you already have copies, and it's fine to buy second-hand: searching Amazon and Abe Books on-line is the easiest way to find second-hand copies of particular texts and editions, but second-hand bookshops will also have many of the texts. If you are buying copies, try to buy editions with good introductions and notes: Oxford World's Classics, Penguin Classics or Norton Critical editions (unless other editions are stated). Keep your receipts: you can apply for a book grant when you arrive.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to write to me at [rebecca.beasley@queens.ox.ac.uk](mailto:rebecca.beasley@queens.ox.ac.uk). I hope you enjoy your summer's reading: I'm very much looking forward to seeing you again in October.

Dr Rebecca Beasley  
Fellow in English

## Paper 1: Introduction to English Language and Literature

This paper is intended to introduce you to English language and literature as a discipline, and to a variety of approaches to reading texts. It will introduce you to formal study of the English language, with particular reference to its historical development, its use as a literary medium, and the role of cultural and social factors on its development and use. The paper will also acquaint you with a wide range of theoretical issues and reading skills, but in doing so seeks to encourage you to think for yourself and to exercise critical scrutiny.

The English Faculty Library's Guide to Prelims 1 (<http://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/english-prelims-paper-1>) contains direct links to an invaluable range of online and bibliographic resources. Many of these are essential for work on the language section of the paper.

### Approaches to Language (Michaelmas)

#### Core reading

Peter Trudgill, *Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and Society*, 4th edn (London: Penguin, 2000)

David Crystal, *The English Language*, 2nd edn (London: Penguin, 2002)

I recommend that you buy both of these and read them over the summer if at all possible: they are widely available in paperback, are not overly long or technical, and will serve you well in introducing many of the topics dealt with in this part of paper 1. As you read these turn-of-the-century books you should consider whether any of the things they have to say already seem outdated, and why that is.

#### Further Reading (optional)

A third popular book, likewise scholarly although written for a general audience, is:

Steven Pinker, *The Stuff of Thought: Language as a Window into Human Nature* (London: Penguin, 2008)

If you are at all interested in the relationship between language and thought, this is an entertaining read and well worth getting hold of: chapters 1 and 5-9 are likely to be most rewarding, as they are the least technical and least concerned with adjudicating between rival linguistic theories. Topics discussed include how metaphors work, why the popularity of different baby names varies over time, and why some words are taboo.

The remaining books on this list are more specialized, but by no means tough going. A clear, wide-ranging overview of the topics involved in the study of the English language is this textbook:

Christian Mair, *English Linguistics: An Introduction*, 2nd edn (Tübingen: Narr, 2012)

For a more detailed history of English than is provided by Crystal or Mair, I suggest:

Charles Barber, Joan Beal and Philip Shaw, *The English Language: A Historical Introduction*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012)

Finally, if you are interested in the study of language more broadly, the one book on general linguistics that I would suggest looking into before or during your course is:

Victoria Fromkin, Robert Rodman and Nina Hyams, *An Introduction to Language* ((Boston, MA: Thomson, 2003)

This is an excellent introduction to the questions linguists are concerned with and how they go about

investigating them. It has been republished and updated several times in recent years and the very latest version is hard to get hold of cheaply, but any edition from the 2000s comes recommended, and various editions can be found, e.g. on Amazon (as well as in Oxford libraries).

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## **Approaches to Literature (Hilary)**

This half of the paper is intended to introduce you to English literature as a discipline, and to a variety of approaches to reading literary texts and literary criticism. It will acquaint you with a range of theoretical issues and reading skills but in doing so, seeks to encourage you to think for yourself and to subject them to critical scrutiny. So we'll be talking about some of the big issues that are raised by the study of English literature. What counts as literature? Who decides? What do we do when we read a text? Is it possible to agree on what we think about a text? Does it matter if we can't agree on what's good and what's bad? What's the role of the literary critic? The classic book that outlines some of the approaches critics have historically taken to answering these questions is Terry Eagleton's *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, rev. edn (Blackwell, 2008), which is very readable, and interestingly opinionated. I'd recommend reading at least the introduction and first chapter—more if you're enjoying it. A more recent work is Andrew Bennett's and Nicholas Royle's *An Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn (Longman, 2009). It's also an informative and approachable book, with a somewhat different approach from Eagleton's. Although these books are most relevant to the Hilary term part of this course, they will be useful for all the work you do while you're at Oxford, and I'd suggest that you buy the Bennett and Royle, at least, and start dipping into it before coming up. Also, buy and read John Lennard's excellent *The Poetry Handbook: a Guide to Reading Poetry for Pleasure and Practical Criticism*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). Finally, you might want to read now, or over the course of the year, a history of English literature, which will help you place your reading in context. There are two currently in print that you could choose from: Andrew Saunders's *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Oxford University Press, 2004), and Michael Alexander's *A History of English Literature*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (London: Palgrave, 2013). All such histories are subjective, partial, and open to question, so when reading them, bear in mind the questions Eagleton, Bennett and Royle remind you to ask.

## Paper 2: Early Medieval Literature (c. 650-1350): Michaelmas and Hilary

This paper introduces students to the literature, language, and cultural history of medieval England. The paper covers the period stretching from the conversion of the migrant Anglo-Saxons in the sixth and seventh centuries through to the turbulent reign of Edward III. The focus is on literature in Old English, the language of the Anglo-Saxons, and Early Middle English, the phase of the language that developed after the Norman Conquest of 1066 brought Old English into contact with Anglo-Norman. The paper will be taught in the first and second terms through classes and tutorials, supported by Faculty lectures, with revision in the third term.

There is an incredibly rich body of literature in Old English, including texts in a wide variety of genres such as epic, lament, chronicle, riddle, dream vision, hagiography, and homily, while Early Middle English sees the flourishing of debate poetry, lyric, and romance. The paper is assessed by a three-hour examination in which you will write a commentary and two essays. In the commentary you will be asked to demonstrate knowledge of *either* Old English *or* Early Middle English by discussing the language and style of an extract. In the essay component of the examination, comparisons between Old English and Early Middle English are invited, but not obligatory.

At Queen's the focus will be on Old English for the commentary, but we will look at both pre- and post-Conquest material for the essay section. The Old English texts we will translate and study in preparation for the commentary section of the exam are:

- *The Dream of the Rood*
- *The Wanderer*
- An extract from *Beowulf* ('Beowulf's fight with Grendel')
- *The Battle of Maldon*

All four are contained in this edition, and you must obtain your own copy:

- Bruce Mitchell and Fred C. Robinson, *A Guide to Old English*, 8<sup>th</sup> edn (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011)

In preparation for language classes at the start of Michaelmas term, you should begin to familiarise yourself with Old English by reading through a guide to the language and trying out your skills on a few practice sentences. Mitchell and Robinson's *Guide to Old English* contains a comprehensive reference guide to the language, grammar, pronunciation and syntax, but you will find any of the following much more approachable:

- Mark Atherton, *Complete Old English: Teach Yourself* (London: Hachette, 2012)
- Peter Baker, *Introduction to Old English*, 3rd ed. (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012)
- Carole Hough and John Corbett, *Beginning Old English* (London: Macmillan, 2007)

You should read a wide selection of Old English texts in translation before you come to Oxford for Michaelmas Term. The following translations are recommended. You will find it beneficial to own the first volume, and either the Liuzza or the Dumbarton Oaks *Beowulf*:

- Elaine Treharne, ed. *Old and Middle English c.890-c.1400: An Anthology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Oxford: Blackwell 2010) —facing page translations and glossed versions of a number of Old and Middle English texts.
- Roy Liuzza, *Beowulf: A New Translation* (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview, 2000) — a good verse translation, with useful introduction and supporting materials. The second edition is recommended as it has the Old English with the translation on the facing page.
- S. A. J. Bradley, *Anglo-Saxon Poetry: An Anthology of Old English Poems in Prose*

*Translation* (London: Dent, 1991) — useful for getting a sense of the corpus, but lacks the Old English text, so not ideal for essay work.

- Michael Swanton, ed. *Anglo-Saxon Prose* (London: Everyman, 1993). As above.

The Anglo-Saxon poetry volumes in the Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library series (Cambridge, MA: Harvard U.P.) present Old English texts with facing-page translations (very useful for essay work). Recommended volumes are:

- Daniel Anlezark, ed. and trans., *Old Testament Narratives* (2011)
- Robert E. Bjork, ed. and trans., *Old English Shorter Poems 2: Wisdom and Lyric* (2014).
- Robert E. Bjork, ed. and trans., *The Old English Poems of Cynewulf* (2013)
- Mary Clayton, ed. and trans., *Old English Poems of Christ and his Saints* (2013)
- R. D. Fulk, ed. and trans., *The Beowulf Manuscript* (2010).
- Christopher A. Jones, ed. and trans., *Old English Shorter Poems 1: Religious and Didactic* (2012).

Second-hand copies of many of the texts on this list can be obtained at a reasonable price from abebooks or similar.

It is vital to have some familiarity with the cultural and historical background to the texts, so you should read the following:

- John Blair, *The Anglo-Saxon Age: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)
- Hugh Magennis, *The Cambridge Introduction to Anglo-Saxon Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011)

More detailed information about the course, including a sample exam paper, reading lists, and other useful resources, can be found on the English Faculty's webpage:

<http://www.english.ox.ac.uk/node/544>

If you have any questions about the course, please get in touch. I look forward to meeting you in October.

Dr Helen Appleton  
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### **Paper 3: Literature in English, 1830-1910 ('Victorian'): Michaelmas Term**

Think about similarities and differences between the texts listed in each week's reading list. What might be interesting ways to relate them to each other? I've deliberately not specified individual poems to look at, because I'd like you to get a sense of whole collections of verse, making your own decisions about which poems you want to spend more time on. You won't have time now to 'close read' every single poem in the collections (working out metres, thinking about imagery and references): you should read through all the collections specified, and then look at a few poems by each poet in detail to get under the skin of the style.

You'll be writing an essay on each of the topics listed below, apart from the final two: you can choose whether you want to write on Pre-Raphaelite poetry or Aestheticism. Ideally, you'll still read the works listed for both over the summer—the point of the course is to give you a broad knowledge, not just material for essays—but if you run out of time, you can focus on just one of these areas.

#### **Introductory reading**

If possible, read one of these books as background to the first term's work. You don't have to buy these secondary texts (apart from the Williams, they are expensive), but if your local library doesn't have them, and you don't yet have reference access to your nearest university library (they may not give you access until you have your Oxford student card), you may need to wait until you get to Oxford to read one. If you see cheap second-hand copies, snap them up.

Isobel Armstrong, *Victorian Poetry: Poetry, Poetics and Politics* (London: Routledge, 1993)

Philip Davis, *The Victorians, 1830-1880* (volume 8 in the Oxford English Literary History) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)

Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society 1780–1950* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1958).

#### **'Modern' Victorian poetry**

Alfred Lord Tennyson, the selections from *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical* (1830) and *Poems* (1832), in *Tennyson: A Selected Edition*, ed. by Christopher Ricks (Harlow: Longman, 2006) (see appendix II for a list of which poems appeared in these volumes), and also (at least) 'Ulysses', 'St Simeon Stylites', 'Tithonus', 'Morte d'Arthur', 'In Memoriam A.H.H.', 'Maud', 'The Princess', 'Break, break, break', in *Tennyson: A Selected Edition*, ed. by Christopher Ricks (Harlow: Longman, 2006).

#### **The dramatic monologue**

Robert Browning, the selections from *Dramatic Lyrics* (1842), *Dramatic Romances and Lyrics* (1845), and *Men and Women* (1855), in *The Major Works*, ed. by Daniel Karlin and Adam Roberts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

#### **The rise of the novel and the 'Condition of England'**

Charlotte Brontë *Shirley* (1849)

Charles Dickens, *Bleak House* (1853), *Hard Times* (1854)

Elizabeth Gaskell, *North and South* (1854-5)

#### **'The Woman Question'**

George Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), *Middlemarch* (1872)

Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh* (1856)

#### **'New Realism'**

Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), *Jude the Obscure* (1895)

George Gissing, *The Nether World* (1889)

#### **Pre-Raphaelite poetry**

Christina Rossetti, read broadly, but make sure to include 'Goblin Market', 'A Birthday', 'Uphill',

'After Death', 'Echo', 'An Apple Gathering', 'The Lowest Place', 'Consider the Lilies of the Field', 'Lord Jesus, who would think that I am Thine?', 'A Better Resurrection', 'Remember', 'L.E.L.'. There are complete and selected collections of poetry published by Penguin, and an Oxford World's Classics edition (ed. Humphries), which has the benefit of also containing some of her prose.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Selected Poems and Translations*, ed. by Clive Wilmer (Manchester: Carcanet/ Fyfield, 1991), now out of print, but still available from Amazon/ Abe. Read through, but make sure you look in particular at 'The Blessed Damozel', 'My Sister's Sleep', 'Jenny', 'The Portrait', 'The Woodspurge', 'The House of Life', 'Aspecta Medusa', 'Sudden Light'.

William Morris, *The Defence of Guenevere and Other Poems* (1858), and *The Earthly Paradise* (1868-70), in *Selected Poems*, ed. by Peter Faulkner (Manchester: Fyfield/ Carcanet, 2002), now out of print, but still available from Amazon/ Abe. You might want to look at Morris's utopian novel *News from Nowhere*, in *News from Nowhere and Other Writings*, ed. by Clive Wilmer (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2004).

Algernon Charles Swinburne, *Poems and Ballads I*, in *Algernon Charles Swinburne*, ed. by Catherine Maxwell (London: Everyman, 1997)

### **Aestheticism**

Henry James, *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881), and *The Turn of the Screw and Other Stories*, ed. by T.J. Lustig (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Vernon Lee, *Hauntings, and Other Fantastic Tales*, ed. by Catherine Maxwell and Patricia Pulham (Peterborough, ON: Broadview, 2006)

Dr Rebecca Beasley

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## **Paper 4: Literature in English, 1910 to the present day ('Modern'): Hilary Term**

Think about similarities and differences between the texts listed in each week's reading list. What might be interesting ways to relate them to each other? I've deliberately not specified individual poems to look at, because I'd like you to get a sense of whole collections of verse, making your own decisions about which poems you want to spend more time on. You won't have time now to 'close read' every single poem in the collections (working out metres, thinking about imagery and references): you should read through all the collections specified, and then look at a few poems by each poet in detail to get under the skin of the style.

You'll be writing an essay on each of the topics listed below, apart from the final two: you can choose whether you want to write on postmodernist fiction or postcolonial poetry. Ideally, you'll still read the works listed for both—the point of the course is to give you a broad knowledge, not just material for essays—but if you run out of time, you can focus on just one of these areas.

### **Introductory reading**

If possible, read one of these books as background to the term's work. You don't have to buy these secondary texts (they are more expensive than the primary texts), but if your local library doesn't have them, and you don't yet have access to your nearest university library (they are unlikely to give you access until you have your Oxford student card), you may need to wait until you get to Oxford to read one. If you see cheap second-hand copies, snap them up.

Tim Armstrong, *Modernism: A Cultural History* (Polity, 2005)

Michael Levenson, *A Genealogy of Modernism: A Study of English Literary Doctrine, 1908-1922* (Cambridge University Press, 1984)

---, *Modernism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011)

Peter Nicholls, *Modernisms: A Literary Guide*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Macmillan, 2008)

Jeff Wallace, *Beginning Modernism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011)

### **Realism, impressionism, modernism: the modernist novel**

Ford Madox Ford, *The Good Soldier: A Tale of Passion* (1915)

James Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist* (1916)

Virginia Woolf, *Jacob's Room* (1922)

---, *Mrs Dalloway* (1925)

---, *To the Lighthouse* (1927)

### **Everyday life and mass culture**

James Joyce, *Ulysses* (1922). If you are buying this new, I recommend *Ulysses: The 1922 Text*, ed. by Jeri Johnson (Oxford World's Classics), which has an excellent introduction and very good notes. If you have a copy without notes and synopses of chapters, you might want to buy or get from the library Harry Blamires, *The New Bloomsday Book: A Guide Through Ulysses* (Routledge, 1996). Don't worry too much about understanding everything: even the experts don't! Read through fairly swiftly, taking general notes and noting connections across the text.

### **Symbolism, imagism, modernism: early modernist poetry**

T.S. Eliot, *Prufrock* (1917) (i.e. the poems under this collection title, not just the collection's title poem 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock'), *Poems* (1920), in *Collected Poems, 1909-62*, new edn (Faber) or *Complete Poems and Plays* (Faber)

Peter Jones, ed., *Imagist Poetry*, new edn (Penguin). Please read the poems by Aldington, Hulme, H.D., and Lowell. You should find the introduction and the extra material at the back of the book helpful.

Ezra Pound, the selections from *Personae, Ripostes, Lustra*, in *Selected Poems, 1908-69*, rev. edn (Faber)

W.B. Yeats, the selections from *The Wind Among the Reeds* (1899), *The Green Helmet and Other*

*Poems* (1910), *Responsibilities* (1914), in *The Major Works*, ed. Edward Larrissy (Oxford World's Classics)

### **History, tradition, myth: the modernist long poem**

T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land* (1922), *Four Quartets* (1936-42), in *Collected Poems, 1909-62*, new edn (Faber) or *Complete Poems and Plays* (Faber)

Ezra Pound, *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* (1920), the selections from *The Cantos*, in *Selected Poems, 1908-69*, rev. edn (Faber)

Don't worry about understanding every reference in *The Waste Land*, *Mauberley* and *The Cantos*: think instead about what this poetry seems to be trying to do, and what seems innovative about it to you (especially in relation to the previous week's reading). There are line-by-line guides available. For Eliot: B.C. Southam, *A Student's Guide to the Selected Poems of T.S. Eliot* (Faber, 1994), in print, and Harry Blamires, *Word Unheard: A Guide Through Eliot's Four Quartets* (Methuen, 1969), out of print, but sometimes turns up in second-hand bookshops, and will be in libraries. For Pound: Peter Brooker, *A Student's Guide to the Selected Poems of Ezra Pound* (Faber, 1979) and Christine Froula, *A Guide to Ezra Pound's Selected Poems* (New Directions, 1983), both out of print, but available on Amazon second-hand and in libraries. These guides are by no means required reading at this stage, but they are very useful when delving further into the poetry—and using them is not cheating.

### **Late modernism and drama**

Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot* (1953), *Endgame* (1957), *Krapp's Last Tape* (1958), *Happy Days* (1961), *Not I* (1972), in *The Complete Dramatic Works* (Faber).

Gertrude Stein, *Tender Buttons* (1914) and *Four Saints in Three Acts*, in *Selected Writings* (1934) (Vintage)

### **The emergence of postmodernism**

John Barth, *Lost in the Funhouse* (1968) (Anchor)

Vladimir Nabokov, *Pale Fire* (1962) (Penguin)

Thomas Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49* (1969) (Vintage)

### **The black Atlantic: Postcolonial poetry**

E.K. Brathwaite, *The Arrivants: A New World Trilogy* (1967-1969) (Oxford)

Grace Nichols, *i is a long memoried woman* (1983) (Karnak)

Derek Walcott, *Omeros* (1990) (Faber)

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