

## Year 8 Pre 20<sup>th</sup> Century Novel Unit

### Independent Study Tasks

1. Rewrite a key chapter of your class reader for a stage production. Your objective is to engage your audience with a high level of tension and excitement, as achieved by the writer in the original written text. If time permits, perform it to the rest of the class.
2. Conduct a study of the environment that your text is set within, comparing today's location with the time in which the writer originally set events. You may adopt a geographical or sociological focus – or a combination of the two.
3. In a group of 5 or 6, you will write your own periodical story. Each of you will write a chapter that follows on appropriately from the previous one. As a group, briefly discuss what will happen in the story, who the main characters are and where it will be set, before writing Chapter One together. Then, decide the order of who will write which chapter. You must then set clear deadlines for each person to complete their chapter, and distribute to other group members. As well as being a creative and fun activity, this will teach you the importance of meeting deadlines when under pressure from others.
4. Numerous 19<sup>th</sup> Century writers, such as Dickens and Gaskell were writing for periodical publications (*Household Words*). In short, they had to submit a piece of writing that engaged their readership, encouraging them to buy the following month's publication. Research this type of writing – investigating its origins in the 1800s up to the present day.

## Year 8 Chaucer Unit

### Independent Study Tasks

1. Remind your self of what defines a 'pilgrim'. There are numerous other pilgrimages that have been made throughout history and are made in the present day. Research one that interests you and then prepare a 3 minute presentation that communicates this to the rest of the class. You are encouraged to make use of ICT to communicate your ideas and findings.
2. Chaucer's pilgrims are clearly an eclectic and varied collection of characters. Select one character that particularly interests you and research their background and purpose in society. You might consider:
  - occupation,
  - attitudes
  - clothing

With the latter, can you create a costume that would befit their character? (Consider the information given in the text and make use of appropriate materials.)

3. Chaucer's Tales have been made use of in numerous TV productions. Select one of the Tales, and communicate it in to a script that conveys a modern adaptation of the story. If you wish, you might like to film a key scene that best represents your adaptation (using mobile phones or cameras). This could be viewed by the rest of the class.
4. If you have a particular interest in digital animation or anim e, recreate one of the principle scenes in a Tale of your choosing. You might like to work in a small group for best results.

## Independent Learning

Year 8

### Media

1. Exploring different ways of communicating to an audience. Select one of the following mediums:  
Paper (Magazine, Newspaper, Journal)  
Web (Consider: blogs, online magazines, podcasts)  
Audio-visual (TV/Radio broadcast)

Using one of these mediums, create a publication for an 11-14 audience. This task should be undertaken in groups of between 3 and 5.

You will present your publication to the rest of the class at a date given to you by your teacher.

2. Select a periodical, journal, newspaper or magazine. Prepare a three minute presentation on this publication. You will need to focus your research and delivery on its:
  - Target audience
  - Origins
  - Perceptions by an audience
  - Preferred stylistic traits
  - Preferred subjects

It is expected that you will be making use of a series of editions, collating and presenting your information in a number of different ways (such as in bar graphs, scattergrams, pie charts and questionnaires).

### Ballads

1. Select a ballad that you have written, and compose music that it could be set to. Within this task you will need to consider the journey that you will take your audience – be aware of tone, pace and how the words will be communicated amidst your audio creation.

You may create this using instruments (both improvised and conventional) or computer software. Expect to present your piece to the rest of the class.

2. From reading a ballad that has captured your interest, conduct a study of one of the significant characters featured (whether they are of mythical or historical existence).

Consider:

- Who they are/were
- What drew them to you.
- How they were received at the time
- How opinions and perceptions have changed or been reinforced

## **Year 8 Independent Work Tasks**

**In each section, you should do at least two of the tasks**

### **Shakespeare Unit (A Midsummer Night's Dream/The Tempest)**

- Prepare a poem that tells the story of the play. Practise so that it is a performance rather than a reading. You could work with a friend and use different voices. You could even use some props!
- Shakespeare plays sometimes needed to communicate extreme weather. Research how this might be communicated in the Elizabethan theatre. If possible, prepare to make a/some noise, but get it all ready for a presentation to your class – your teacher will only allow a few presentations on this one, so you might need to get in early. You should also produce an A4 sheet – how to make the weather in Elizabethan theatre.
- Work in a pair and design a costume for a character in your play. You need to give an explanation why you have designed it the way you have. (This is in addition to the Caliban costume for groups doing Tempest).
- Watch the 1999 DVD of A Midsummer Night's Dream with Kevin Kline and Michelle Pfeiffer. Write a short comparison (150 – 200 words) of the play with the modern DVD.
- The mechanicals in A Midsummer Night's Dream are taking part in a drama festival for tradesmen/craftsmen. What famous festivals of plays were held by these groups of people? What sort of plays did they produce?
- Cross-curricular project – produce an information leaflet about a society that has recently been affected by terrible storms.

### **War Novel Unit (The Machine Gunners/Private Peaceful)**

- Research in the local library/historical society and find real copies of letters written from the front. Were there any rules for writing letters home? What do you notice about what they are writing?
- Watch the video/DVD of The Empire of the Sun. What were Jamie's experiences of occupation? Write a review of the film. P.S. This stars a young Christian Bale as Jamie!
- Get a parent's permission before trying this one: they are wartime recipes.

### **Woolton Pie**

Ingredients:

1lb diced potatoes

1lb cauliflower

1lb diced carrots

1lb diced swede

3 spring onions

1 teaspoon vegetable extract

1 tablespoon oatmeal

A little chopped parsley

**Method:**

Cook everything together for 10 mins with just enough water to cover, stirring often to prevent it sticking to the pan. Let the mixture cool. Spoon into a pie dish, sprinkle with chopped parsley. Cover with a crust of potatoes or wholemeal pastry. Bake in a moderate oven until golden brown. Serve hot with gravy.

### **EGGLESS SPONGE**

**Ingredients:**

6 oz self-raising flour with one level teaspoon of baking powder, or 6 oz plain flour with three level teaspoons of baking powder

2.5 oz margarine

2 oz sugar

1 level tablespoon golden syrup

A quarter of a pint of milk, or milk and water

Jam for filling

**Method:**

Sift the flour and baking powder. Cream the margarine, sugar and golden syrup until soft and light, add a little flour, then a little liquid.

Continue like this until it is a smooth mixture. Grease and flour two 7in sandwich tins and divide the mixture between the two. Bake for approximately 20 minutes or until firm to touch, just above the centre of a moderately hot oven.

Turn out and sandwich with jam.

*Let us know how it went!*

- Make a model of a shelter – either an Anderson shelter, or the Machine Gunners' hide out. You could go to town and make a proper hideout, but we will need to see pictures.
- Learn all the words to 'It's a long way to Tipperary'. Be brave and get a friend or too to join in with a WWI song.

