



# Getting Ready for...

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## **KS4 (GCSE) English**

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# Activities

## 1. Poetry

Each week read one poem, either from the internet or a collection of poetry you might have at home. Keep a poetry journal, making notes on what you have read and explaining your thoughts about each poem. Try to read poems from different time periods and on different subjects.

## 2. 19th Century Fiction

Read a 19th century novel (because these are out of copyright they will be freely available on the internet). Write a review of the novel you have read, including a comment on whether or not you think other young people would enjoy reading it.

Some novels you might like to try are:

- *The Time Machine* – HG Wells
- *Treasure Island* – Robert Louis Stevenson
- *Jane Eyre* – Charlotte Brontë
- *Silas Marner* – George Eliot
- *The Moonstone* – Wilkie Collins

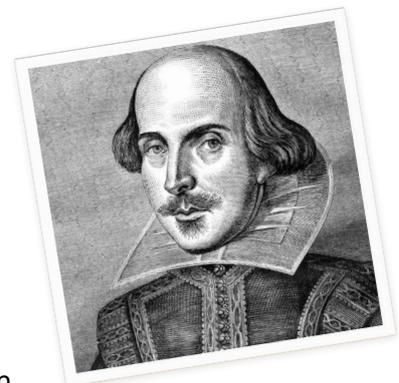


## 3. Shakespeare

Research Shakespeare's life and times and produce a context booklet for GCSE students.

You might like to cover:

- What England was like in Shakespeare's time
- What London was like
- Religion
- Superstition
- Ideas about kings and queens
- The exploration of the rest of the world
- The position of women
- The position of ethnic minorities and attitudes towards them
- Shakespeare's theatre and his acting company





## 4. Writing to Persuade

Practise your writing. Revise or research what techniques you can use to effectively express a point of view and persuade your readers.

Now write a letter to the government expressing the point of view that the voting age should be lowered to 16 years old.

## 5. Correcting Mistakes

Go back through your Key Stage 3 English work and identify the technical errors you repeatedly make (these could be spellings, grammar and/or punctuation). Write these out and spend time understanding what error you are making and how to put it right. Every other day revise and test yourself, ticking off the error only when you are confident you really know it and understand it. Keep checking back to ensure your new knowledge has stuck.

## 6. Writing to Argue

Read 8-10 newspaper articles. Identify their key features and make a list of what these are.

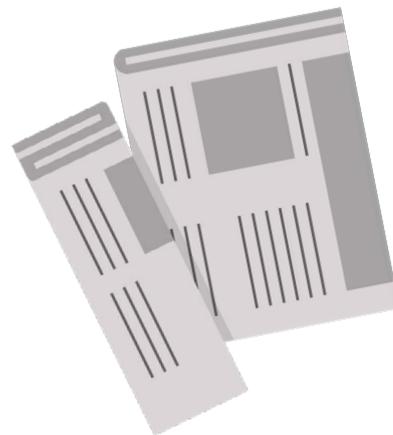
Now write an article in which you argue that exams are not a good way to judge a student's abilities. Include key features associated with articles and a range of language devices.

## 7. 19th Century England

Research what life was like for ordinary people living in cities in 19th century England. Produce some illustrated notes that could be given to students to explain to them what the social situation was like at the time.

## 8. Newspaper Articles

Twice a week read an extended article from a 'quality' newspaper or journal – such as the Guardian, The Independent, or a feature from the BBC News website). Look up words you do not understand and keep a reading diary of what you have read, what it was about and your thoughts on the subject.





## 9. Speeches

Either read or listen to some famous powerful speeches – search for examples online. Identify the techniques used by the speakers to make their speeches powerful.

Now write a speech to be delivered in a school assembly in which you try to persuade the students to act in a way that is more environmentally friendly. Make sure you make a powerful appeal on behalf of the planet!

## 10. Creative Writing

Using techniques from the reading that you have been doing write either a description of a disastrous situation or a short story which begins or ends with the words:

*How could it all go so terribly wrong? ...*

