

The Warriner School Subject Curriculum Map



Subject: English	Year Group: 13	Unit: The Handmaid's Tale
Unit objectives: (NC Statements) The students will study the text <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> considering the lens of PSPW, and how this is relevant to the context of Atwood's writing. The students will complete an unseen extract question (Section A), and a Section C task that requires students to discuss two texts.		

Context for study:

Students complete studies of whole novels throughout KS3 which allows them to work on selective evidence, interpreting the evidence, and considering authorial intention and message. In Year 9, this is elaborated further with more focus on context and how it ties in with a novel. This leads up to their GCSEs, where they study two full novels (*Lord of the Flies* and *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*) and work on expressing in more academic terms how characters change over the course of the novel, interlink with context and theme, and how writers use characters as greater symbols for problems or ideas within the wider world. In Year 12, students have a split focus on two thematic approaches to literature, tragedy and political and social protest writing. Students approach novels through these lenses, and learn to apply critical perspectives and texts from elsewhere in their studies in order to discuss and elaborate their points on novels. *The Handmaid's Tale* is the final text in their political protest unit, and students will encounter previous parts of their study within the teaching of this novel: feminism from their NEA research; political and social protest terminology and application to literature; unconventional narrators and times within novels. This unit also emphasises independent study as the students enter the final year of their education and builds on the foundations set in Year 12 regarding their approach to their own study, to set them in the best position for their destinations.

Sequence of learning: Knowledge content - list of statements of what students should know by progressing through this unit (identify key tier 2/3 vocabulary in **bold**)

- Know about **Dystopian genre**, be able to link books outside of the course to the conventions of dystopian literature, and understand and begin to apply the conventions of the dystopian genre.
- Know how Atwood interprets the dystopian genre and understand how her context impacts the book; understand that Atwood considers the book as a form of **Speculative Fiction**.
- Understand the relevance of Atwood's **epigrams** and dedication and analyse their importance; understand the context of **Puritanism** to both the book and a wider American context.
- Know the significance of the opening of the novel and understand the authorial methods used in constructing the opening.
- Understand broadly the waves of feminism and more specifically the **second wave feminism** movement that influenced the novel; know Atwood's use of symbolism in Chapter 2 and 3 and apply feminist and religious contexts to the writing.
- Know and link research about **The Male Gaze** to the novel; understand how violence as a **motif** functions within the novel and specifically in Chapters 4-5 and how Atwood reflects the nature of her own society through her use of the book as **Speculative Fiction**.
- Know how memories and stories of the past are used in the text and specifically in Chapters 6-7; know how structure in the novel can be written about through modelling; understand how other texts such as Fahrenheit 451 link to the novel.
- Understand and track the role of Aunt Lydia; understand and link back in the novel how Offred begins to resist the **Gilead** regime within Chapters 8-9.
- Know some of Atwood's other texts like *The Female Body*; apply this knowledge to Chapters 10-11 of THT.

The Warriner School Subject Curriculum Map

- Understand how to make appropriate choices in the Section C part of their PSPW exam.
- Understand how Chapter 10 functions as a flashback and relates to the role of women in the 1970s.
- Understand Atwood's intentions in presenting the religious ceremony throughout Chapters 14-17, be able to argue about whether dystopian literature presents religion as a driving force within the novel.
- Understand and know the different structural choices that Atwood makes during Chapter 18, and know how Luke and Offred escape in the novel; understand how death is presented in the novel.
- Understand how the birthing process is presented in Chapters 19-23 and know what inspired Atwood's depiction of it through an understanding of the religious influences present in the novel and their links to social protest.
- Know and apply **second wave feminism** to the Chapters 25-29, and understand how Atwood uses imagery and textual references, knowing Tennyson's *Maud* and Seamus Heaney's *Digging* in order to best explore Atwood's **allusions**.
- Know how the change in setting to the Jezebels place disorients the reader, understand the commander's intentions in the novel and evaluate him as a character, understand the connotations of the Jezebels to the Biblical source.
- Understand love affairs as a convention within novels and apply this knowledge to Chapter 40.
- Understand how Descartes ***Cogito Ergo Sum*** links to the novel and how to apply it within one's essay writing, know and begin to evaluate the reliability of Offred as a narrator.
- Understand the concept of **mob mentality** and apply it to the Salvaging within the novel.
- Understand that the end of the novel creates **satire** and **pun**, question and consider the reliability of Offred's narration, evaluate Atwood's message, understand the **denouement** of the novel and considering the **incongruity** of Atwood's message.
- Understand and evaluate the function of the Historical Notes within the novel, understand how Atwood breaks and follows convention, evaluate Atwood's use of structure.

Possible Misconceptions and adaptive responses to these: *identified through formative assessment/retrieval practice/diagnostic questioning.*

The protagonist's name is June – this is not certain within the novel and comes from the television show: tell students it's an alternative interpretation.

Dystopian literature is always about the end of the world – opening lesson addresses this.

THT is a 'written' text by the protagonist – it's spoken into Dictaphones in the novel.

Literacy and Oracy development opportunities:

Details of high-quality texts, explicit vocabulary teaching, modelled writing, structured talk.

Reading of articles and discussing key ideas

Doing independent research and presenting it in an organised fashion to the class.

Past essays which achieved high marks given out.

Research tasks on Dystopian literature and Puritanism to teach vocabulary.

Research on religious contexts and political contexts using a wide array of reputable news sources.

The Warriner School Subject Curriculum Map

Assessment/Final outcomes: *How will students apply their deep learning in a meaningful way that respects the subject's discipline?*

Students will be able to write essays which cover both theme and character and wider ideals of PSPW for their A-Level examination.

Students will be able to evaluate different points of view and synthesise other approaches into one that they argue.

Students will go on to either further education or work or out from school with the ability to debate, question, critically approach, and independently work.

Three assessments:

Unseen extract assessment: How are elements of political and social protest presented here?

Section C: PSPW writing focuses on the force used by those in power towards those they oppress.

OR

Explore the significance of authority figures in two texts that you have studied.

Literary journal essays set as reading along with other texts set optionally from the Dystopian genre.

Seminar style discussions following research tasks or analysis work.

Modelled presentations from TED talks.