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Welcome to English Literature! You will be studying the Edexcel A Level English Literature GCE course (9ET0). This is a linear course and you will be sitting a public examination at the end of the course. There is a criteria on the last page of this booklet which outlines how this project will be assessed. We expect you to have read the texts taught in year 12 before beginning the course.

You are advised to download a copy of the specification for yourself at http://www.edexcel.com. It is also worthwhile browsing through other documents on this site, to help you understand how the A level is assessed.

***Component One: Drama***

Students study:

* One Shakespeare play and one other play;
* Critical essays related to the Shakespeare play.

This component is worth 30% of the marks for the whole qualification and is assessed through an examination lasting 2 hours and 15 minutes. You are allowed to take clean copies of the texts that you study into the examination.

You will study *King Lear* and *A Streetcar Named Desire.*

***Component Two: Prose***

Students study:

* Two novels from a theme – at least one of the novels has to have been written before 1900.

This component is worth 20% of the marks for the whole qualification and is assessed through an examination lasting 1 hour 15 minutes. You are allowed to take clean copies of the texts into the examination.

We will teach *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Beloved.*

***Component Three: Poetry***

Students study:

* Two specific poetry texts;
* A range of poems that cover a wide variety of forms and themes.

This component is worth 30% of the marks for the qualification and is assessed through an examination lasting 2 hours and 15 minutes. You are allowed to take the texts into the examination and you will tackle both taught and unseen poems

One of the texts will be an anthology of modern (twenty-first century) poetry. We usually choose to study Geoffrey Chaucer (*The Wife of Bath’s Prologue and Tale)*.

***Component Four: Coursework***

Students (in negotiation with their teachers) have a free choice of two texts to study. The texts must be different to those studied for the examinations and must be complete texts. They can be prose, poetry or drama. Students write an extended comparative essay of 2500 – 3000 words.

We will probably choose one text to teach in class and then ask students to choose individual second texts.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AO1 | Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression. |
| AO2 | Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts |
| AO3 | Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received. |
| AO4 | Explore connections across literary texts. |
| AO5 | Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations. |



**We would recommend that you purchase your own copies of the texts so you can make your own notes in them. Free versions of the text can be found online through the links below.**

1) Read ‘A Streetcar Named Desire’ – Full text found here: <http://www.metropolitancollege.com/Streetcar.pdf>

2) Read *Beloved* Toni Morrison – Full text found here: <https://www.matermiddlehigh.org/ourpages/auto/2012/11/16/50246772/Beloved.pdf>

3) Read *The Picture of Dorian* Gray Oscar Wilde – Full text found here: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/174/174-h/174-h.htm>

5) Read *The Great Gatsby* – Full text found here: <https://www.planetebook.com/free-ebooks/the-great-gatsby.pdf>

4) Read/watch ‘King Lear’- Full text found here: <http://shakespeare.mit.edu/lear/full.html>

The Royal Shakespeare company has a fantastic version of the play.

REAL BRUSH

REAL BRUSH

When you see this image of the pen, we expect you to write **1 ½ - 2** pages!

**Me as an English Student (700-800 words)**

Write an autobiographical piece about yourself as an English student, up to the point where you explain why you have chosen English as an A-Level subject. It’s up to you how you write it.

**Things you could include:**

 Your early experiences as a reader – or even of the stories told to you before you could read

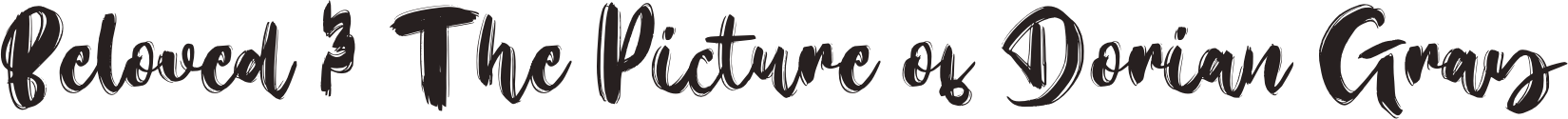
 What you have enjoyed about English over the years; from early years through to your GCSEs

 What, in your opinion, are the benefits of studying English?

 Why have you chosen it?

 What are you looking forward to about doing it at A-Level?

 Discuss the books you have been reading most recently



**These tasks require you to have read both “The Picture of Dorian Gray” and “Beloved”**

**“Many people use the expression ‘the past will come back to haunt you.”**

REAL BRUSH**What does this expression mean? What examples can you give of history repeating itself?**

Research the Civil War and Reconstruction periods and mind map your ideas. Using the statement above, produce an essay arguing how this is applicable to ‘Beloved’. What was Morrison’s intention for writing the text? What does the ghost of Beloved represent? How is the concept of the past written into the novel? (AO1, AO2, AO3)

**You should include:**

Details about slavery, the Civil War, and the Reconstruction era. In your research, you should seek to answer the following questions based on facts or inferences:

–What is Morrison’s view of slavery?

-How does the novel depict family, women and motherhood?  
–What was Sethe’s life like prior to the Civil War?   
–How did the Civil War change events and perspectives about the world around these characters?  
–How did the end of the Civil War and the Reconstruction period affect the characters?   
**Further Development Questions:**  
–When was the Civil War, and why was it fought?   
–How does “Beloved” portray some of the underlying issues of the ‘Middle Passage’?   
–How did Southerners justify slavery in the Civil War period? How did Northerners criticise slavery?   
–What is the 14th Amendment, and how did it affect those who were slaves during the Civil War? How does it affect us now?   
–In “Beloved,” the narrator describes Sethe in the following way: **“But her brain was not interested in the future. Loaded with the past and hungry for more, it left her no room to imagine, let alone plan for, the next day. . . Other people went crazy, why couldn’t she?”**

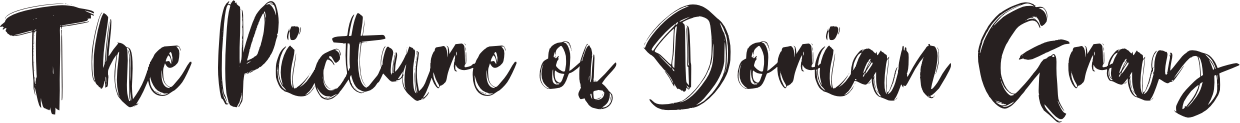
Based on your knowledge of the plot and characters in “Beloved”, what might this quotation mean? How does it apply to the situations and characters in the novel?

**Vocabulary:**  
pivotal, apparition, adaptation, herald, spectre, conjured, obliqueness, harrowing, literal, occult, tumultuous, enticing, daunting, foresight, intuitive, conspicuous, tenacity, epicentre, upheaval, vitality, benevolent, clarion, cinematography, deprivation, credo

Write 5 intent statements giving your views on why Morrison wrote the novel.

Upon your return to school in year 12, you will be asked to complete an assessment on the theme of the supernatural. Track the development of the supernatural across the text.

**Extension Activities for “Beloved”:** 1. Students can read other books by Toni Morrison (“The Bluest Eye,” “Sula,” “Song of Solomon,” “Tar Baby,” “Jazz,” and “Paradise”) and compare the issues discussed in these books to those presented in “Beloved.”

REAL BRUSHPick a section from “The Picture of Dorian Gray” that you find interesting and do a close analysis of that passage (AO2). Pay close attention to Wilde’s use of language and imagery. Is there any reason why Wilde may have incorporated these ideas into the text considering the context of the novel?

**Challenge**: Can you identify any themes, symbols or ideas that are similar to those presented in ‘Beloved’?

Track the development of the supernatural across the text and chart similarities/differences to Beloved.

Themes and Symbols:

**2. Art / The relationship between art and reality**

The distinction between reality and art is blurred in the novel. Actresses live as though they are constantly on stage, and a painter values his friendship because the relationship improves his ability to paint and make art. Dorian himself bases his life and actions on a work of art: the book given to him by Lord Henry. Throughout the novel, Dorian is obsessed with making his life into art, and it ultimately leads to his downfall as he tries to escape the morality within this decision.

Acting seems to be truer than real life in the novel. Lord Henry says ‘but I love acting’ it’s so much more than real life’, Dorian loves Sibyl for her acting, and Sibyl calls Dorian her ‘Prince Charming’ making him into a character of her own. Dorian’s story and the mixing of reality and art it creates makes a division between ethics and aesthetics in the novel. Wilde wanted to explore the link between an artist, his or her subject, and the resulting image on the canvas.

**REAL BRUSHRead this extract and answer the following questions:**

**How does art and reality blur here? How does Lord Henry manipulate and influence Dorian’s choice – consider the context of the novel. What do we learn about Dorian’s character?**

“Who are you in love with?” asked Lord Henry after a pause.

“With an actress,” said Dorian Gray, blushing.

Lord Henry shrugged his shoulders. “That is a rather commonplace *début*.”

“You would not say so if you saw her, Harry.”

“Who is she?”

“Her name is Sibyl Vane.”

“Never heard of her.”

“No one has. People will some day, however. She is a genius.”

“My dear boy, no woman is a genius. Women are a decorative sex. They never have anything to say, but they say it charmingly. Women represent the triumph of matter over mind, just as men represent the triumph of mind over morals.”

“Harry, how can you?”

“My dear Dorian, it is quite true. I am analysing women at present, so I ought to know. The subject is not so abstruse as I thought it was. I find that, ultimately, there are only two kinds of women, the plain and the coloured. The plain women are very useful. If you want to gain a reputation for respectability, you have merely to take them down to supper. The other women are very charming. They commit one mistake, however. They paint in order to try and look young. Our grandmothers painted in order to try and talk brilliantly. *Rouge* and *esprit* used to go together. That is all over now. As long as a woman can look ten years younger than her own daughter, she is perfectly satisfied. As for conversation, there are only five women in London worth talking to, and two of these can’t be admitted into decent society. However, tell me about your genius. How long have you known her?”

“Ah! Harry, your views terrify me.”

“Never mind that. How long have you known her?”

“About three weeks.”

“And where did you come across her?”

“I will tell you, Harry, but you mustn’t be unsympathetic about it. After all, it never would have happened if I had not met you. You filled me with a wild desire to know everything about life. For days after I met you, something seemed to throb in my veins. As I lounged in the park, or strolled down Piccadilly, I used to look at every one who passed me and wonder, with a mad curiosity, what sort of lives they led. Some of them fascinated me. Others filled me with terror. There was an exquisite poison in the air. I had a passion for sensations.... Well, one evening about seven o’clock, I determined to go out in search of some adventure. I felt that this grey monstrous London of ours, with its myriads of people, its sordid sinners, and its splendid sins, as you once phrased it, must have something in store for me. I fancied a thousand things. The mere danger gave me a sense of delight. I remembered what you had said to me on that wonderful evening when we first dined together, about the search for beauty being the real secret of life. I don’t know what I expected, but I went out and wandered eastward, soon losing my way in a labyrinth of grimy streets and black grassless squares. About half-past eight I passed by an absurd little theatre, with great flaring gas-jets and gaudy play-bills. A hideous Jew, in the most amazing waistcoat I ever beheld in my life, was standing at the entrance, smoking a vile cigar. He had greasy ringlets, and an enormous diamond blazed in the centre of a soiled shirt. ‘Have a box, my Lord?’ he said, when he saw me, and he took off his hat with an air of gorgeous servility. There was something about him, Harry, that amused me. He was such a monster. You will laugh at me, I know, but I really went in and paid a whole guinea for the stage-box. To the present day I can’t make out why I did so; and yet if I hadn’t—my dear Harry, if I hadn’t—I should have missed the greatest romance of my life. I see you are laughing. It is horrid of you!”

“I am not laughing, Dorian; at least I am not laughing at you. But you should not say the greatest romance of your life. You should say the first romance of your life. You will always be loved, and you will always be in love with love. A *grande passion* is the privilege of people who have nothing to do. That is the one use of the idle classes of a country. Don’t be afraid. There are exquisite things in store for you. This is merely the beginning.”

“Do you think my nature so shallow?” cried Dorian Gray angrily.

“No; I think your nature so deep.”



Why do you think we have asked you to compare these two texts? What similarities and differences can you see between these texts? List your ideas.

**Research context for both:** How are they connected by the authors’ views of society?

Research Toni Morrison and Oscar Wilde and produce your own biographies for the authors. These should contain the main experiences and events which you believe have shaped their writing.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The Picture of Dorian Gray - Preface | Beloved - Preface |
| The artist is the creator of beautiful things.  To reveal art and conceal the artist is art's aim.  The critic is he who can translate into another manner or a new material his impression of beautiful things.  The highest, as the lowest, form of criticism is a mode of autobiography.  Those who find ugly meanings in beautiful things are corrupt without being charming. This is a  fault.  Those who find beautiful meanings in beautiful things are the cultivated. For these there is  hope. They are the elect to whom beautiful things mean only Beauty.  There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written, or badly written. That is all.  The nineteenth-century dislike of Realism is the rage of Caliban seeing his own face in a glass. The nineteenth-century dislike of Romanticism is the rage of Caliban not seeing his own face in a glass.  The moral life of man forms part of the subject matter of the artist, but the morality of art consists in the perfect use of an imperfect medium.  No artist desires to prove anything. Even things that are true can be be proved.  No artist has ethical sympathies. An ethical sympathy in an artist is an unpardonable mannerism of style.  No artist is ever morbid. The artist can express everything.  Thought and language are to the artist instruments of an art.  Vice and virtue are to the artist materials for an art.  From the point of view of form, the type of all the arts is the art of the musician. From the point of view of feeling, the actor's craft is the type.  All art is at once surface and symbol.  Those who go beneath the surface do so at their peril.  Those who read the symbol do so at their peril.  It is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors.  Diversity of opinion about a work of art shows that the work is new, complex, and vital.  When critics disagree the artist is in accord with himself.  We can forgive a man for making a useful thing as long as he does not admire it. The only excuse for making a useless thing is that one admires it intensely.  All art is quite useless.  Oscar Wilde.  Fountain Pen Sketch Images, Stock Photos & Vectors | Shutterstock Read the prefaces. Usually, a preface is a writer’s chance to speak directly to the reader about why they wrote the book, what it's about, and why it's important. Based on the prefaces, why did the writers produce these texts?  Can you draw comparisons between the authors’ motivations? What are the differences and why, based on the authors’ experiences, do they have these differing views? **Annotate the Prefaces above.** | I will call them my people,  which were not my people;  and her beloved,  which was not beloved. |

REAL BRUSH

REAL BRUSH

**After reading ‘A Streetcar Named Desire’, Complete detailed answers in response to the follow-up questions.**

**Question 1**

Develop a statement summing up your perception of how each of the following special effects contributes to the building of the narrative, theme, reinforcement of characterisation, and/or dramatic intensity of *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Higher level: Research **plastic theatre** and how these elements of staging contribute to our understanding of the characters’ mental conditions.

* the Blue Piano
* the polka music
* the “Varsouviana”
* Blanche’s long baths
* the naked light bulb
* the Chinese paper lantern
* the locomotive
* the poker game
* various aspects of Blanche’s wardrobe (flowered dresses, crumpled white satin gown, etc.)
* the lurid shapes on the wall and the “inhuman voices like cries in the jungle”

**Question 2**

One particularly compelling aspect of the play is Williams’s encasement of the narrative and dialogue so firmly within the “raffish charm” of the section of New Orleans in which the action takes place. The “lyricism,” graceful “atmosphere of decay,” and “warm and easy” feeling of the surroundings somehow sustain even when the action and dialogue are harsh.

Identify specific devices that Williams uses to surround the movement of the play in the atmosphere of this section of New Orleans. (Some possible student responses: the upstairs noises; the inside-outside set design; the insistent piano music; the vendor; the references to bowling and the hot tamale man; the poker game; the prostitute/drunkard incident; the Mexican flower vendor.) How are these used to advance the tension?

**Question 3**

Reach a conclusion about the implication of the following images and quotes as each relates to the development of some aspect of the play:

* “There is something about her uncertain manner, as well as her white clothes, that suggests a moth”
* “all the burden descended on my shoulders”
* “Poker shouldn’t be played in a house with women.”
* “I am not in anything I want to get out of.”
* “Don’t-don’t hang back with the brutes!”
* “I have always depended on the kindness of strangers.”
* “This game is seven-card stud” (particularly its significance as the last line of the play)

**Question 4**

Construct a statement of what you consider to be the primary theme of the play.



*"Mostly, we authors repeat ourselves - that's the truth. We have two or three great and moving experiences in our lives - experiences so great and so moving that it doesn't seem at the time that anyone else has been so caught up and pounded and dazzled and astonished and beaten and broken and rescued and illuminated and rewarded and humbled in just that way ever before. Then we learn our trade, well or less well, and we tell our two or three stories - each time in a new disguise - maybe ten times, maybe a hundred, as long as people will listen."*

--F.S. Fitzgerald, from "One Hundred False Starts," Saturday Evening Post (4 March 1933)

REAL BRUSH

Reflect on Fitzgerald's main message. What are your initial ideas?

What is the significance of the title of the article, "One Hundred False Starts"?

The second sentence contains 57 words. Why does Fitzgerald string together so many descriptive verbs?

What does Fitzgerald mean when he writes "...and we tell our two or three stories - each time in a new disguise"?

REAL BRUSH **The big ideas behind the novel:**

Fitzgerald wrote, "You don't write because you want to say something, you write because you have something to say." - What did he have to say in Gatsby?

2. Fitzgerald scholar Matthew J. Bruccoli claims: "The Great Gatsby does not proclaim the nobility of the human spirit; it is not politically correct; it does not reveal how to solve the problems of life; it delivers no fashionable or comforting messages. It is just a masterpiece." Do you agree?

3. What makes The Great Gatsby a classic novel? Why has it maintained its place in American literature?

REAL BRUSH

Complete the sheets: Read the extract on the next page. *Y-chart* (p10) and the *Analysis of Critical Ideas* (p11). Using the evidence collated, create a theme statement based on the descriptive details Fitzgerald uses to contrast the society of Nick and Gatsby in West Egg to that of the Buchanans in East Egg. Write a one-page objective summation of the motivations and goals of the residents of each area (see the criteria for the theme statements on page 12). You should write roughly 2 sides of A4

Mind map the key themes in the novel and track the progression of 2 of your favourite themes.

**Chapter 1 excerpt from The Great Gatsby**

It was a matter of chance that I should have rented a house in one of the strangest communities in North America. It was on that slender riotous island which extends itself due east of New York — and where there are, among other natural curiosities, two unusual formations of land. Twenty miles from the city a pair of enormous eggs, identical in contour and separated only by a courtesy bay, jut out into the most domesticated body of salt water in the Western hemisphere, the great wet barnyard of Long Island Sound. They are not perfect ovals — like the egg in the Columbus story, they are both crushed flat at the contact end — but their physical resemblance must be a source of perpetual confusion to the gulls that fly overhead. To the wingless a more arresting phenomenon is their dissimilarity in every particular except shape and size.

I lived at West Egg, the — well, the less fashionable of the two, though this is a most superficial tag to express the bizarre and not a little sinister contrast between them. My house was at the very tip of the egg, only fifty yards from the Sound, and squeezed between two huge places that rented for twelve or fifteen thousand a season. The one on my right was a colossal affair by any standard — it was a factual imitation of some Hotel de Ville in Normandy, with a tower on one side, spanking new under a thin beard of raw ivy, and a marble swimming pool, and more than forty acres of lawn and garden. It was Gatsby’s mansion. Or, rather, as I didn’t know Mr. Gatsby, it was a mansion inhabited by a gentleman of that name. My own house was an eyesore, but it was a small eyesore, and it had been overlooked, so I had a view of the water, a partial view of my neighbor’s lawn, and the consoling proximity of millionaires 15 — all for eighty dollars a month.

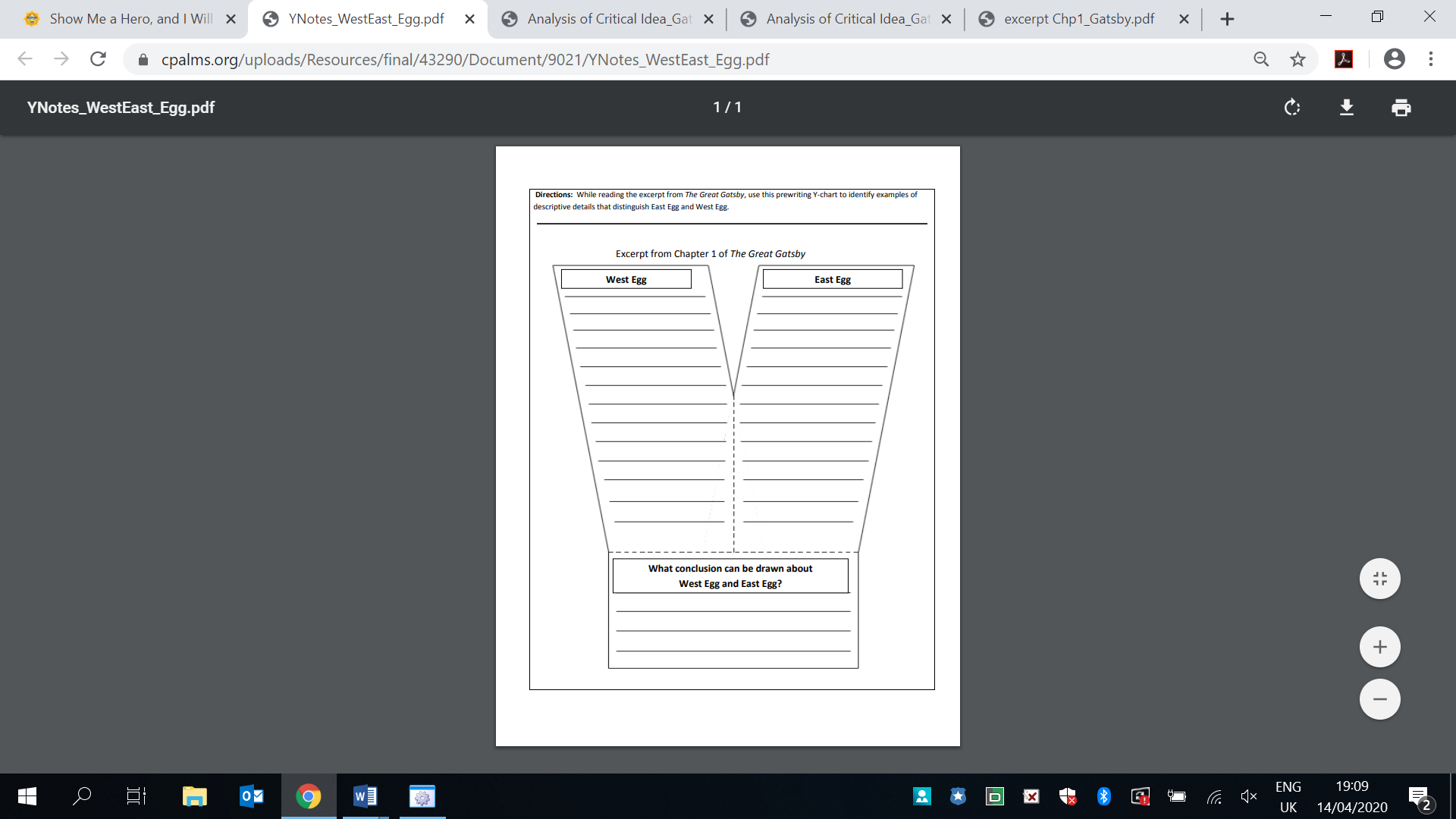
Across the courtesy bay the white palaces of fashionable East Egg glittered along the water, and the history of the summer really begins on the evening I drove over there to have dinner with the Tom Buchanans. Daisy was my second cousin once removed, and I’d known Tom in college. And just after the war I spent two days with them in Chicago.

Her husband, among various physical accomplishments, had been one of the most powerful ends that ever played football at New Haven — a national figure in a way, one of those men who reach such an acute limited excellence at twenty-one that everything afterward savors of anti-climax. His family were enormously wealthy — even in college his freedom with money was a matter for reproach — but now he’d left Chicago and come East in a fashion that rather took your breath away: for instance, he’d brought down a string of polo ponies from Lake Forest. It was hard to realize that a man in my own generation was wealthy enough to do that.

Why they came East I don’t know. They had spent a year in France for no particular reason, and then drifted here and there unrestfully wherever people played polo and were rich together. This was a permanent move, said Daisy over the telephone, but I didn’t believe it — I had no sight into Daisy’s heart, but I felt that Tom would drift on forever seeking, a little wistfully, for the dramatic turbulence of some irrecoverable football game.

And so it happened that on a warm windy evening I drove over to East Egg to see two old friends whom I scarcely knew at all. Their house was even more elaborate than I expected, a cheerful red-and-white Georgian Colonial mansion, overlooking the bay. The lawn started at the beach and ran toward the front door for a quarter of a mile, jumping over sun-dials and brick walks and burning gardens — finally when it reached the house drifting up the side in bright vines as though from the momentum of its run. The front was broken by a line of French windows, glowing now with reflected gold and wide open to the warm windy afternoon, and Tom Buchanan in riding clothes was standing with his legs apart on the front porch.

He had changed since his New Haven years. Now he was a sturdy straw-haired man of thirty with a rather hard mouth and a supercilious manner. Two shining arrogant eyes had established dominance over his face and gave him the appearance of always leaning aggressively forward. Not even the effeminate swank of his riding clothes could hide the enormous power of that body — he seemed to fill those glistening boots until he strained the top lacing, and you could see a great pack of muscle shifting when his shoulder moved under his thin coat. It was a body capable of enormous leverage — a cruel body.



Y Chart

**KEY Analysis of Critical Ideas** – excerpt from The Great Gatsby

Directions: After reading the excerpt from The Great Gatsby and completing the Y-chart, use this worksheet to structure your table discussions as you craft your own text-dependent questions to create an emerging theme statement.

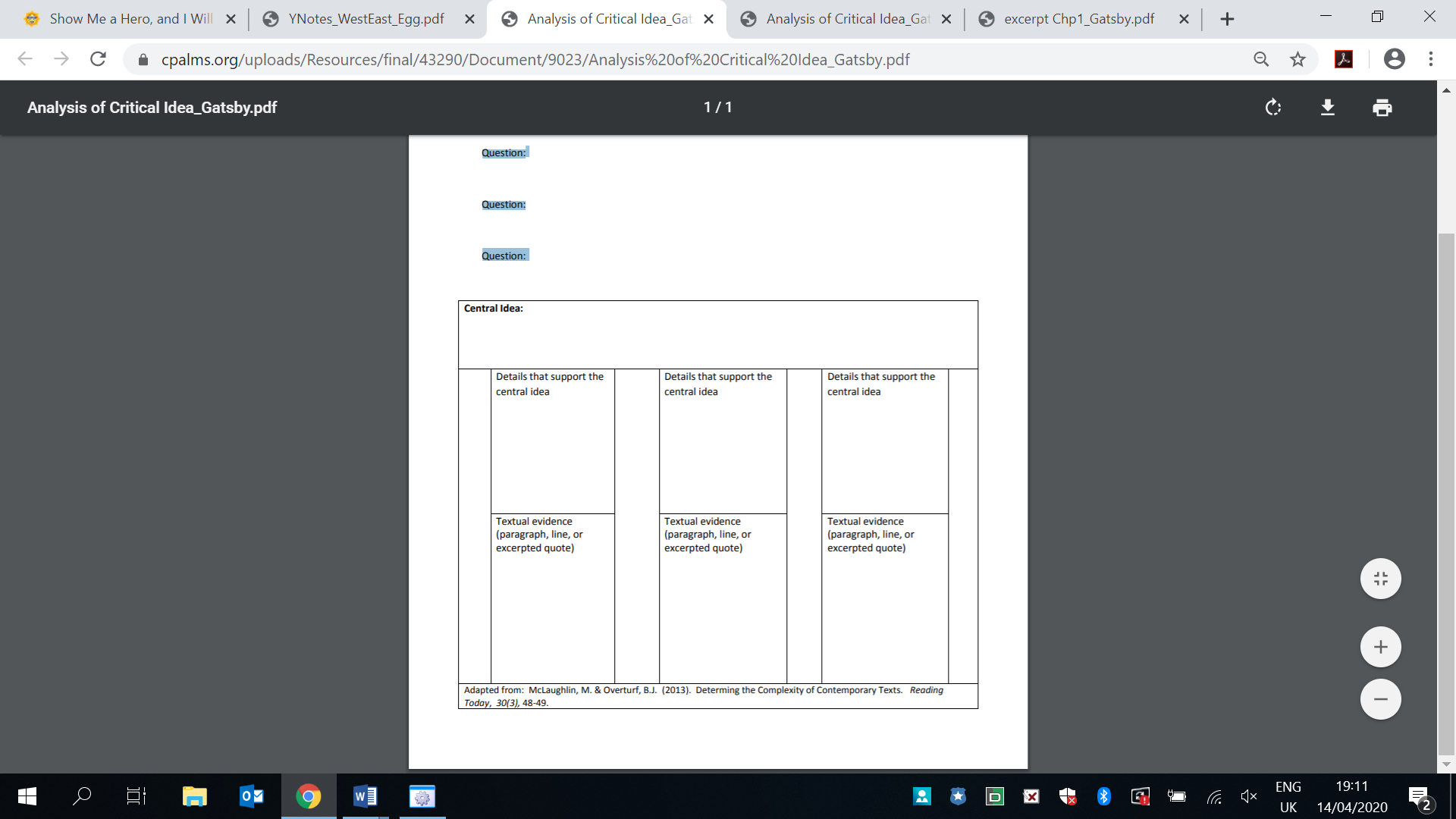
SAMPLE: What is the topic? Some examples are listed below:

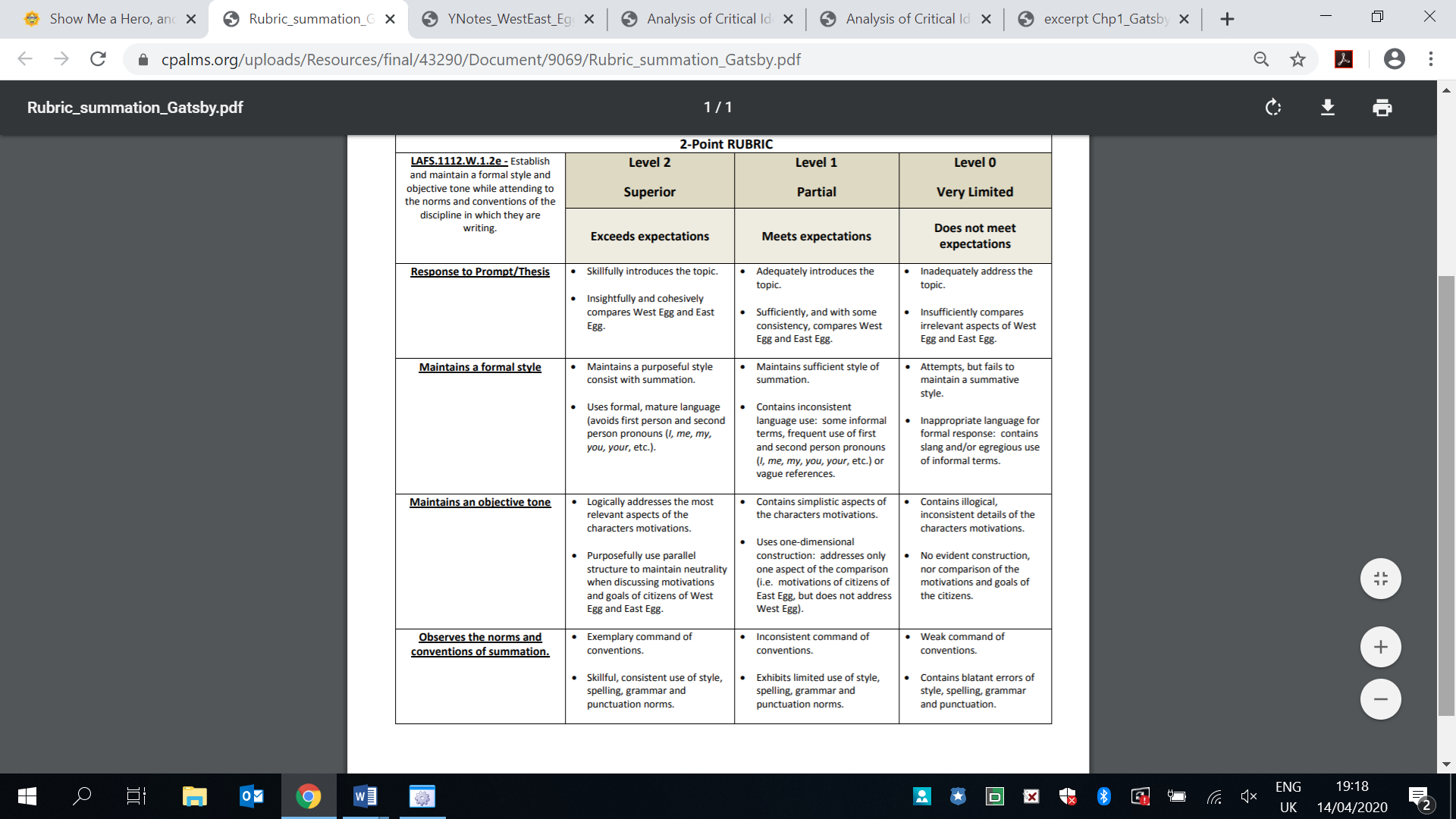
* **Implied THEME**: Social status returns each to his or her own place.
* **Implied THEME**: Inherited wealth gives you unlimited power.
* **Implied THEME**: A self-made man is deserving of respect.
* **Implied THEME**: Power and selfishness determine social status.
* **Implied THEME**: Selflessness and adversity make you a victim of the rich.

What textual evidence supports the emerging theme or central idea?

Question:

Question:

Question:



Criteria for Theme statement



You will receive a level for each task set out in the booklet.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Descriptors** | | |
|  | **Exceeding** | **Secure** | **Unsatisfactory – Requires Intervention** |
| **Content** | Includes in-depth rationale for choice of subject matter.  Questions responded to in a perceptive, critical and reflective way.  Excellent level of knowledge shown on the text. | Includes rationale for choice of subject.  Relevant and detailed responses to questions  Good level of engagement with the texts | includes limited or unclear rationale for choice of subject  It is clear that texts have not been read/understood properly  Poor level of effort demonstrated |
| Presents ideas with style and elaborates on a subject relevant to the text | Presents ideas in a developed way with sustained relevance to the text | Presents ideas/subject in a straightforward way with limited or no relevance to the text |
| Explains how new information enhances understanding of the text | Partially explains how new information enhances understanding of the text | Does not explain how new information enhances understanding of the text |
| Sustained, sophisticated writing – 1 ½ - 2 pages for essay style questions (marked with pen image) | Accurate register writing roughly 1 page for writing tasks (marked with pen image) | Underdeveloped and brief responses for tasks. Instructions ignored. |
| **Evidence** | Paraphrases and integrates information effectively from the texts | Paraphrases and integrates information from the texts | Does not uses specific references to the text |
| Demonstrates excellent knowledge by using well-chosen references  Uses a range of subject terminology to support response | Selects obvious references to the text  Uses straightforward terminology | Does not demonstrate knowledge of a thorough reading |
| **Language** | Writes coherently with correct use of language structures | Writes with correct use of basic language structures | Does not write clearly, with incorrect use of basic language structures |