

## Reading list: Poetry and Drama pre-1900 – English Literature A Level

The poetry of Christina Rossetti and An Ideal Husband by Oscar Wilde - wider reading for AO3 and AO5

### Christina Rossetti

#### Core text: Selected Poems of Rossetti (Wordsworth Poetry)

Prepare each poem before the lesson. Read, annotate and research critical responses to the poems:

1. From the Antique ('It's a weary life, it is, she said')
2. Goblin Market
3. Song: When I am dead, my dearest
4. Remember
5. Echo
6. Shut Out
7. In the Round Tower at Jhansi (Indian Mutiny)
8. A Birthday
9. Soeur Louise de la Miséricorde
10. Maude Clare
11. Up-Hill
12. No, Thank You, John
13. Good Friday (Am I a stone and not a sheep?)
14. Twice
15. Winter: My Secret

#### Rossetti wider reading: emag and British Library articles

1. Christina Rossetti's 'Winter: My Secret' Online Magazine Article - emag
2. Suzanne Williams asks whether 'Winter: My Secret' is the key to Rossetti's poetic vocation
3. In The Round Tower at Jhansi - a Postcolonial Reading
4. Aestheticism – A Rough Guide
5. Female voices in Christina Rossetti's narrative poems
6. Forbidden fruits - sex and religion in 'Goblin Market'
7. An important voice - reading Christina Rossetti
8. Desperate Romantics: modernising the classic mini-series (this is a fun read!)
9. Victorian poetry - a whistle stop tour: "If you're studying a well known Victorian poet, it's useful to pay attention to the other things that were going on in poetry at the time. John Sutherland gives an overview of the literary trends and tastes of the period.... "
10. Christina Rossetti - Proto feminist poet?
11. Christina Rossetti - Painting in Words (influence of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood)
12. <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/jun/25/poem-week-goblin-market-rossetti>
13. Christina Rossetti: Gender and Power by Simon Avery (British Library)
14. Christina Rossetti: Religious poetry by Simon Avery (British Library)
15. Elizabeth Barrett Browning and the Woman Question by Simon Avery (British Library)

## Suggested reading list for Gothic Literature:

### 1. Social and historical background to Gothic Literature:

- *Gothic Literature*- Sue Chaplin (texts, contexts, connections, York Notes)- an excellent starting point for an overview of Gothic Literature.

### Core:

- *Frankenstein*- Mary Shelley (1818v)
- *The Bloody Chamber*- Angela Carter

### Challenge:

- *Gothic*- Fred Botting ( The New Critical Idiom)- a more detailed and conceptual overview of Gothic Literature.
- William Beckford: *Vathek*
- Ann Radcliffe: *The Italian*
- Oscar Wilde: *The Picture of Dorian Gray*
- William Faulkner: *Light in August*
- Cormac McCarthy: *Outer Dark*
- Iain Banks: *The Wasp Factory*
- Toni Morrison: *Beloved*

### Or try some shorter gothic fiction:

- Edgar Allen Poe: *Short Stories* ( American Gothic short stories)
- Henry James -Short Stories.( Try *The Turn of the Screw*.)
- Jane Austen: *Northanger Abbey* ( a parody of Gothic)
- M.R James -*Short stories*
- Arthur Conan Doyle: *The Adventure of the Speckled Band*
- Charlotte Perkins Gilman: *The Yellow Wallpaper*
- H.P Lovecraft: *The Outsider*

### Films: Immerse yourself in gothic film:

- *Frankenstein* (1922 James Whale version)
- *Dracula* (Bella Lugosi version)

Read the article, watch video clips, make notes.

## Learner Resource 7

### Research – the intellectual and philosophical contexts of Gothic

The period in the history of western thought and culture that stretches roughly from the mid-seventeenth to the eighteenth century is known as the Enlightenment. This period is characterised by revolution in science, philosophy, society and politics; these revolutions replaced the medieval world-view based on religion and superstition with modern systems based on 'reason'.

### Research the Enlightenment

In what ways are 'Enlightenment' ways of thinking relevant to the texts you are studying?

1. Find out about Edmund Burke's *'Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful'* (1756). You should be able to find a summary of the ideas that Burke presents in this essay on the internet.

**In what ways is the idea of the sublime, and the responses it generates, related to the Gothic?**

2. The 20<sup>th</sup> century psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud developed the concept of the unconscious mind. Freud's research and writing revolutionised the ways in which we have come to regard human nature, dreams, anxiety and sexuality. Research Freud and make notes.

**How might Freud's ideas about hysteria and repression relate to the interpretation of Gothic texts?**

3. The Gothic has been adopted by feminists as a means of generating discussion about gender and the ways in which women are often represented in literature as creatures who are confined, imprisoned and trapped. Dramatisations of imprisonment pervade Gothic narratives. Research the Feminist Gothic.

**What insights does this school of criticism provide into the texts you are studying?**

4. The Gothic at its inception might have been thought of as a conservative genre in that, even though its narratives involved the demonisation of particular aristocratic