

## A Level English literature

### Year 11 to Year 12 Transition Tasks – Summer Tasks

#### TASK A: *Frankenstein*

DUE: Paper copy (i.e. printed or handwritten handed in), and book purchased for first lesson in September.

##### 1) Purchase a copy of *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley.

ISBN: 978-0198840824

weblink- [https://www.amazon.co.uk/Frankenstein-Modern-Prometheus-Oxford-Classics/dp/0198840829/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?dchild=1&keywords=frankenstein+oxford&qid=1624284556&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Frankenstein-Modern-Prometheus-Oxford-Classics/dp/0198840829/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=frankenstein+oxford&qid=1624284556&sr=8-1)

##### 2) Historical and literary context pre-reading research tasks

Knowledge of the themes and history that affected *Frankenstein* will make it significantly easier to understand and enjoy the novel – so make sure you complete these tasks before reading *Frankenstein*. Your understanding of these subjects will be tested when you return to school.

Watch the following videos and make notes on these subjects

- The Gothic <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gNohDegnaOQ>
- Romanticism <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OiRWBI0JTYQ>
- Paradise Lost <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rqgUsVoLbI4>
- Prometheus [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U\\_u91SjrEOE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U_u91SjrEOE)

##### 3) Reading *Frankenstein* and end of Reading Questions

*These questions should be attempted after reading. It's a good idea to refer to events in the novel, but there is no need to provide textual examples. Personal engagement is key to these tasks – there are plenty of "correct" answers if they are supported with strong arguments. It would also be impressive if you're able to provide modern day examples to show how the novel can help shape your own understanding of the world. You will be expected to provide written evidence of these tasks when you return to school, an example has been provided but feel free to disagree and create your own! (Advance warning of some spoilers...)*

A) What does *Frankenstein* teach us about the consequences we face when we don't take responsibility for our actions?

E.G. *Frankenstein* fails to take responsibility for the creature despite being solely responsible for bringing it into the world. He is in turn punished for this, as he loses everyone he loves, and dies a lonely unfulfilling death. *Frankenstein* blames the monster and threatens revenge, rather than take the more difficult action of actually nurturing and helping the creature. There are plenty of examples of powerful people refusing responsibility, instead aggressively attacking their obligations (such as 21<sup>st</sup> Century politicians...) Whether the modern world

facilitates them actually being made to face the consequences of their actions, as suggested by Shelley, seems far more debatable.

- B) Who has the most power and authority in the novel, Victor or his creature? How do they show this power?
- C) How can scientific advancement and exploration be both good and bad?
- D) Victor achieves his dream of creating life, why doesn't this make him happy?
- E) What is the relationship between nature and nurture? Which is more important?
- F) Women are restricted to domestic roles throughout the novel and most decisions are made for them by men. How does the lack of power given to women affect the novel?
- G) How does Frankenstein fit the ideals of Romanticism & the Gothic?
- H) Who in the story is the "real" monster – Victor or his creature?
- I) Who would you consider the loneliest? Victor, who loses everyone he loves, or the creature who is never loved by anyone?
- J) Who is the villain in the story? Why should their behaviour be condemned?
- K) How would the story and its meaning differ if we never got the creature's side of the story?
- L) How do Hollywood, pop culture, and Frankenstein's many incarnations play a role in your previous perceptions of the novel? What wasn't in the story that you thought would be because of your preconceptions? What is the novel that surprised you? How are the characters different in modern adaptations, both physically and personality-wise?

## **TASK B: Poetry of The Decade**

**DUE: Purchased by first lesson in September.**

ISBN: 978-0571325405

Weblink [https://www.amazon.co.uk/Poems-Decade-Anthology-Forward-Poetry/dp/0571325408/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?dchild=1&keywords=poetry+of+the+decade&qid=1624284667&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Poems-Decade-Anthology-Forward-Poetry/dp/0571325408/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=poetry+of+the+decade&qid=1624284667&sr=8-1)

## **TASK C: Reading for pleasure presentation**

**DUE: Be ready to present – with any accompanying resources you wish to use – in the first lesson in September.**

***If you need resources printing, email Mr Gowen: [m.gowen@bristolfreeschool.org.uk](mailto:m.gowen@bristolfreeschool.org.uk)***

Ensure you are selecting texts from the BFS recommended list to ensure that you are reading at the level required of the course.

### **Reading List**

These works are not part of the A-Level course (unless you decide to focus on them for coursework at the end of year) but immersing yourself in a wide range of literature is essential for being a successful A-Level student (and being an interesting, intelligent, and articulate individual). No need to limit yourself to these texts, but the BFS A-Level team recommend them because they are of significant academic and cultural value.

The books here are grouped by form. It is not essential to read every one but you should be working through different texts to add to your knowledge and appreciation of literature. This will also help with application to top Universities, as evidence of your reading habits is often a topic in interview questions.

Choose at least one of the texts to read between now and September. You will be expected to produce a brief presentation on the book when you return to school. A PowerPoint presentation or written speech will be required to show this. You could focus on:

- A brief synopsis of what happens in the book
- How you found reading the book
- Characters and events that may have inspired you
- Any moral, social, or political lessons the book teaches – consider how this might link to events currently taking place
- How the book might have been different to anything you've read before

### **Novels**

**Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie** (2013), a young Nigerian woman, Ifemelu, moves to the United States for school, leaving behind her boyfriend, Obinze, and her family. It's a story of relocation, far-flung love and life as an alien, spread across three continents. It's also about the lonely but privileged perspective a stranger gains by entering a new culture.

**The White Tiger by Aravind Adiga** (2009) follows a darkly comic Bangalore driver through the poverty and corruption of modern India's caste society. Balram Halwai, a poor Indian villager whose great ambition leads him to the zenith of Indian business culture. On the occasion of the president of China's impending trip to Bangalore, Balram writes a letter to him describing his transformation and his experience as driver and servant to a wealthy Indian family, which he thinks exemplifies the contradictions and complications of Indian society.

**Hagseed by Margret Atwood** (2016) A modern retelling of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*; it centres on theatre director Felix who loses his job with Makeshiweg Theatre, and is exiled from his position in society, following his betrayal by a trusted colleague. Having suffered in isolation, Felix is granted the position of teaching in a prison literacy program in the Fletcher County Correctional Institute. Thus begins his plot of revenge against those who wronged him.

**The Silence of the Girls by Pat Barker** (2018) A retelling of Homer's 'The Iliad' told through the story of Briseis, Achilles' concubine. The novel focuses on the cost of war for women during and after the ransacking of Troy. Wrestling the epic drama of the Trojan War away from its usual male-centric gaze, *The Silence of the Girls* seeks out the other story, the women's story, charting the journey of a sometime-queen across the chaos of history, seeking freedom and the right to be author of her own story.

**The Tortilla Curtain by TC Boyle** (1995). When Delaney Mossbacher knocks down a Mexican pedestrian, he neither reports the accident nor takes his victim to hospital. Instead the man accepts \$20 and limps back to poverty and his pregnant 17-year-old wife, leaving Delaney to return to his privileged life in California. But these two men are fated against each other, as Delaney attempts to clear the land of the illegal immigrants who he thinks are turning his state park into a ghetto, and a boiling pot of racism and prejudice threatens to spill over.

**The Terrible by Yrsa Daley-Ward** (2018) is the autobiographical story of Yrsa Daley-Ward, and all the things that happened - 'even the Terrible Things (and God, there were Terrible Things)'. It's about her childhood in the north-west of England with her beautiful, careworn mother and her little brother who sees things written in the stars. It's also about growing up and discovering the power and fear of sexuality, about pitch grey days of pills and powder: going under, losing yourself, and finding your voice.

**Mr Gowen's Top Choice: Girl, Woman, Other by Bernardine Evaristo** (2019) has no overarching story. Instead, each chapter of the book follows the life of one of the 12 characters (mostly black women) as they negotiate the world. Although each character has their own chapter set across a particular time, their lives intertwine in numerous ways – from friends and relatives to chance acquaintances. Some of the themes explored in the characters lives are feminism, politics, patriarchy, success, relationships and sexuality.

**The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald** (1925) Opulent, dark tale of the excesses of the jazz age and the problems of identity as the narrator goes in search of 'The Great Gatsby'. The story of the mysteriously wealthy Jay Gatsby and his love for the beautiful Daisy Buchanan, of lavish parties on Long Island at a time when *The New York Times* noted "gin was the national drink and sex the national obsession," it is an exquisitely crafted tale of America in the 1920s.

**A Million Little Pieces by James Frey** (2003). At the age of 23, James Frey woke up on a plane to find his front teeth knocked out and his nose broken. He had no idea where the plane was headed nor any recollection of the past two weeks. An alcoholic for ten years and a crack addict for three, he checked into a treatment facility shortly after landing. There he was told he could either stop using or die before he reached age 24. This is Frey's acclaimed account of his six weeks in rehab.

**The Promise by Damon Galgut** (2021). There is nothing unusual or remarkable about the Swart family, oh no, they resemble the family from the next farm and the one beyond that, just an ordinary bunch of white South Africans. The many voices of *The Promise* tell a story in four snapshots, each one centered on a family funeral, each one happening in a different decade. Over large jumps in time, people get older, faces and laws and lives all change, while a brother and sister circle around a promise made long ago, and never kept ...

**Homegoing by Yaa Gyasi (2016).** Two half-sisters, Effia and Esi, are born into different villages in eighteenth-century Ghana. Effia is married off to an Englishman and lives in comfort in the palatial rooms of Cape Coast Castle. Unbeknownst to Effia, her sister, Esi, is imprisoned beneath her in the castle's dungeons, sold with thousands of others into the Gold Coast's booming slave trade, and shipped off to America, where her children and grandchildren will be raised in slavery. One thread of Homegoing follows Effia's descendants through centuries of warfare in Ghana, as the Fante and Asante nations wrestle with the slave trade and British colonization. The other thread follows Esi and her children into America.

**Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine by Gail Honeyman (2017)** Eleanor Oliphant, the novel's protagonist and narrator, is academically intelligent, with a degree in Classics and high standards of literacy. She is socially awkward and leads a solitary lifestyle. She has no friends or social contacts, and every weekend consumes two bottles of vodka. The novel tackles her traumatic past as she becomes enamoured with a singer, whom she believes she is destined to be with. It deals with themes of isolation and loneliness.

**Ms Marsh's Top Choice: Klara and The Sun by Kazuo Ishiguro (2021)** Ishiguro's latest novel is set in an unspecified future time and explores themes such as love, friendship and humanity. The narrative follows Josie, an ill child, who chooses Klara to be her Artificial Friend. Stark inequalities exist between those who are in favour of being genetically 'lifted' and those who are opposed to such scientific advancements. Told from Klara's perspective, this dystopian novel explores the role technology plays in our lives and to what extent human connection can be replaced with artificial intelligence.

**The Unbearable Lightness of Being by Milan Kundera (1984)** A serious, funny novel about the deeper questions of life – and meaning – set in a totalitarian state, though it is the characters' comi-tragic domestic disharmonies that steal the show. A young woman is in love with a successful surgeon - a man torn between his love for her and his incorrigible womanising. His mistress, a free-spirited artist, lives her life as a series of betrayals - while her other lover stands to lose everything because of his noble qualities.

**Sarah by JT Leroy (2001)** Enamoured by skimpy leather skirts and make-up, twelve-year-old Cherry Vanilla wants to be the world's most famous "lot lizard" and prove to his mother, Sarah, and the rest of the world, that he is more woman than most. Journeying to West Virginia, he encounters evil pimps, mystical Jack-a-lobes, superstitious prostitutes, and a wealth of other unforgettable characters.

**If This Is a Man by Primo Levi (1947)** is a memoir describing his arrest as a member of the Italian anti-fascist resistance during the Second World War, and his incarceration in the Auschwitz concentration camp from February 1944 until the camp was liberated on 27 January 1945. The calm sobriety of Levi's prose style is all the more striking given the horrific nature of the events he describes.

**Mr Treen's Top Choice: Blood Meridian by Cormac McCarthy (1985)** Focusing on the warlike and violent nature of mankind, this is a compelling read from the author of 'The Road' and 'No Country for Old Men'. The epic novel explores the violence and depravity that attended America's westward expansion, brilliantly subverting the conventions of the Western novel and the mythology of the Wild West. Based on historical events that took place on the Texas-Mexico border in the 1850s, it traces the fortunes of the Kid, a fourteen-year-old Tennessean who stumbles into a nightmarish world where Indians are being murdered and the market for their scalps is thriving.

**Atonement by Ian McEwan (2001)** On the hottest day of the summer of 1934, thirteen-year-old Briony Tallis sees her sister Cecilia strip off her clothes and plunge into the fountain in the garden of their country house. Watching her is Robbie Turner, her childhood friend who, like Cecilia, has recently come down from Cambridge. By the end of that day, the lives of all three will have been changed for ever. Robbie and Cecilia will have crossed a boundary they had not even imagined at its start, and will have become victims of the younger girl's imagination. Briony will have witnessed mysteries, and committed a crime for which she will spend the rest of her life trying to atone.

**Little Fires Everywhere by Celeste Ng (2017)** Everyone in Shaker Heights was talking about it that summer: how Isabelle, the last of the Richardson children, had finally gone around the bend and burned the house down. In Shaker Heights, a placid, progressive suburb of Cleveland, everything is meticulously planned - from the layout of the winding roads, to the colours of the houses, to the successful lives its residents will go on to lead. And no one embodies this spirit more than Elena Richardson, whose guiding principal is playing by the rules. When the

Richardsons' friends attempt to adopt a Chinese-American baby, a custody battle erupts that dramatically divides the town.

**Lolita by Vladimir Nabokov (1955)** Unsettling, deeply lyrical tale told by one of the most famous unreliable narrators in literature: Humbert Humbert who becomes obsessed by twelve-year-old Lolita and seeks to possess her, first carnally and then artistically, out of love, 'to fix once for all the perilous magic of nymphets'. Is he in love or insane? A silver-tongued poet or a pervert? A tortured soul or a monster? Or is he all of these? Humbert Humbert's seduction is one of many dimensions in Nabokov's dizzying masterpiece, which is suffused with a savage humour and rich, elaborate verbal textures.

**Accordion Crimes by Annie Proulx (1996)** is a masterpiece of story-telling that spans a century and a continent. It opens in 1890 in Sicily, when an accordion-maker and his son, carrying little more than his finest button accordion, begin their voyage to the teeming, violent port of New Orleans. Within a year, the accordion-maker is murdered by an anti-Italian lynch mob, but his instrument carries the novel into another community of immigrants: German-Americans founding a new town in South Dakota. Through the music of the accordion they express their fantasies, sorrows and exuberance.

**Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo by Taylor Jenkins Reid (2021)** Aging and reclusive Hollywood movie icon Evelyn Hugo is finally ready to tell the truth about her glamorous and scandalous life. But when she chooses unknown magazine reporter Monique Grant for the job, no one is more astounded than Monique herself. Why her? Why now? Summoned to Evelyn's luxurious apartment, Monique listens in fascination as the actress tells her story. From making her way to Los Angeles in the 1950s to her decision to leave show business in the '80s, and, of course, the seven husbands along the way, Evelyn unspools a tale of ruthless ambition, unexpected friendship, and a great forbidden love.

**Normal People by Sally Rooney (2018)** At school Connell and Marianne pretend not to know each other. He's popular and well-adjusted, star of the school soccer team while she is lonely, proud, and intensely private. But when Connell comes to pick his mother up from her housekeeping job at Marianne's house, a strange and indelible connection grows between the two teenagers - one they are determined to conceal. Sally Rooney brings her brilliant psychological acuity and perfectly spare prose to a story that explores the subtleties of class, the electricity of first love, and the complex entanglements of family and friendship.

**The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy (1997)** is the story of Rahel and Estha, twins growing up among the banana vats and peppercorns of their blind grandmother's factory, and amid scenes of political turbulence in Kerala. Armed only with the innocence of youth, they fashion a childhood in the shade of the wreck that is their family: their lonely, lovely mother, their beloved Uncle Chacko (pickle baron, radical Marxist, bottom-pincher) and their sworn enemy, Baby Kochamma (ex-nun, incumbent grand-aunt).

**Home Fire by Kamila Shamsie (2017)** Isma is free. After years of watching out for her younger siblings in the wake of their mother's death, she's accepted an invitation from a mentor in America that allows her to resume a dream long deferred. But she can't stop worrying about Aneeka, her beautiful, headstrong sister back in London, or their brother, Parvaiz, who's disappeared in pursuit of his own dream, to prove himself to the dark legacy of the jihadist father he never knew. When he resurfaces half a globe away, Isma's worst fears are confirmed.

**Autumn by Ali Smith (2016)** Daniel is a century old. Elisabeth, born in 1984, has her eye on the future. The United Kingdom is in pieces, divided by a historic once-in-a-generation summer. Love is won, love is lost. Hope is hand in hand with hopelessness. Set just after the EU referendum, the first post-Brexit novel is a poignant and subtle exploration of the way we experience time and division. Despite all these changes, the seasons roll round, as ever...

**Shuggie Bain by Douglas Stuart (2020)** A heartbreaking story of addiction, sexuality, and love, Shuggie Bain is an epic portrayal of a working-class family that is rarely seen in fiction. Hugh "Shuggie" Bain, a sweet and lonely boy who spends his 1980s childhood in run-down public housing in Glasgow, Scotland. Thatcher's policies have put husbands and sons out of work, and the city's notorious drugs epidemic is waiting in the wings. Shuggie's mother Agnes walks a wayward path: she keeps her pride by looking good--her beehive, make-up, and pearly-white false teeth offer a glamorous image of a Glaswegian Elizabeth Taylor. But under the surface, Agnes finds increasing solace in drink,

and she drains away the lion's share of each week's benefits--all the family has to live on--on cans of extra-strong lager hidden in handbags and poured into tea mugs.

**Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas by Hunter S. Thompson (1971)** Hunter S. Thompson is roaring down the desert highway to Las Vegas with his attorney, the Samoan, to find the dark side of the American Dream. Armed with a drug arsenal of stupendous proportions, the duo engage in a surreal succession of chemically enhanced confrontations with casino operators, police officers and assorted Middle Americans.

**Oranges are Not the Only Fruit by Jeanette Winterson (1985)** Magic realist novel in which a working-class girl struggles to find her identity against her deeply religious adoptive mother. This is the story of Jeanette, adopted and brought up by her mother as one of God's elect. Zealous and passionate, she seems destined for life as a missionary, but then she falls for one of her converts. At sixteen, Jeanette decides to leave the church, her home and her family, for the young woman she loves. Innovative, punchy and tender, *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* is a journey into the bizarre outposts of religious excess and human obsession.

**To the Lighthouse by Virginia Woolf (1927)** The serene and maternal Mrs. Ramsay, the tragic yet absurd Mr. Ramsay, and their children and assorted guests are on holiday on the Isle of Skye. From the seemingly trivial postponement of a visit to a nearby lighthouse, Woolf constructs a remarkable, moving examination of the complex tensions and allegiances of family life and the conflict between men and women. As time winds its way through their lives, the Ramsay's face, alone and simultaneously, the greatest of human challenges and its greatest triumph—the human capacity for change.

**A Little Life by Hanya Yanagihara (2015)** When four graduates from a small Massachusetts college move to New York to make their way, they're broke, adrift, and buoyed only by their friendship and ambition. There is kind, handsome Willem, an aspiring actor; JB, a quick-witted, sometimes cruel Brooklyn-born painter seeking entry to the art world; Malcolm, a frustrated architect at a prominent firm; and withdrawn, brilliant, enigmatic Jude, who serves as their centre of gravity. Over the decades, their relationships deepen and darken, tinged by addiction, success, and pride. Yet their greatest challenge, each comes to realize, is Jude himself, by midlife a terrifyingly talented litigator yet an increasingly broken man, his mind and body scarred by an unspeakable childhood, and haunted by what he fears is a degree of trauma that he'll not only be unable to overcome - but that will define his life forever.

**Miss Sayer's Top Choice: The Underground Railroad by Colston Whitehead (2016)** Cora is a slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia, an existence made even more hellish by her status as an outcast among her fellow Africans. And she is approaching womanhood, where greater pain and danger awaits. So when Caesar, a slave recently arrived from Virginia, tells her about the Underground Railroad, Cora takes the momentous decision to accompany him on his escape to the North.

### Graphic Novels

**Epileptic by David B (2006)** David B.'s story is of his brother's battle with epilepsy - but it turns into a penetrating and sometimes lacerating self-examination on the author's part, as he delves into his own complex emotions and his family's troubled history, as well as his own youthful fantasy life. Particularly pointed is his description of the family journey from one attempted cure to another, including acupuncture, spiritualism and macrobiotics.

**Fun Home by Alison Bechdel (2006)** is a darkly funny family tale, pitch-perfectly illustrated with Alison Bechdel's sweetly gothic drawings. Meet Alison's father, a historic preservation expert and obsessive restorer of the family's Victorian home, a third-generation funeral home director, a high-school English teacher, an icily distant parent, and a closeted homosexual who, as it turns out, is involved with his male students and the family babysitter. Through narrative that is alternately heartbreaking and fiercely funny, we are drawn into a daughter's complex yearning for her father.

**From Hell by Alan Moore (1989)**. A graphic novel set in the squalid, enigmatic world of Jack the Ripper and the Whitechapel murders of 1888, Moore presents an ingenious take on the slaughter. His Ripper's brutal activities are the epicentre of a conspiracy involving the very heart of the British Establishment, including the Freemasons and The Royal Family. A popular claim, which is transformed through Moore's exquisite and thoroughly gripping vision, of the

Ripper crimes being the womb from which the 20th century, so enmeshed in the celebrity culture of violence, received its shocking, visceral birth.

**Dragonslayers: This is what an Abusive Relationship Looks Like by Rosalind B. Penfold (2005)** A successful young businesswoman with loving family and friends, Rosalind Penfold couldn't believe her luck when she met and quickly fell for a charming widower and father of four who seemed absolutely devoted to her. Only a few months into the relationship, however, the first worrying signs began to emerge that the man she eventually married was not quite as he seemed. A pattern of small lies and petty cruelties began to emerge, which, over the course of their ten-year relationship, would come to encompass a litany of physical, mental and sexual abuse truly shocking in its scope and malevolence.

**Persepolis by Marjane Satrapi (2000)** The intelligent and outspoken child of radical Marxists, and the great-granddaughter of Iran's last emperor, Satrapi bears witness to a childhood uniquely entwined with the history of her country. Persepolis paints an unforgettable portrait of daily life in Iran and of the bewildering contradictions between home life and public life. This is a beautiful and intimate story full of tragedy and humour - raw, honest and incredibly illuminating.

**Maus by Art Spiegelman (1991)** tells the story of Vladek Spiegelman, a Jewish survivor of Hitler's Europe, and his son, a cartoonist coming to terms with his father's story. Maus approaches the unspeakable through the diminutive. Its form, the cartoon (the Nazis are cats, the Jews mice), shocks us out of any lingering sense of familiarity and succeeds in drawing us closer to the bleak heart of the Holocaust.

**Habibi by Craig Thompson (2011)** is a profound love story, but it also functions as a parable about the environment and the state of the world. Set in the place where Christianity and Islam began, it explores the fundamental connection between these religions, and also the relationship between the first and the third world and the increasingly important battle for the earth's resources.

### Short Story Collections

**The Library of Babel by Jorge Luis Borges (1941)** A mind-boggling idea unfolded with beautiful simplicity, as Borges asks: where do we find meaning? In this story, Borges' narrator describes the universe as a vast and virtually infinite library, comprising a great number of hexagonal rooms, with various floating staircases and long galleries, containing a huge number of books. These books comprise every possible permutation or combination of 25 symbols: 22 letters, the comma and full stop, and the space. All the books are exactly 410 pages long, and every single one is different from all the rest.

**The Bloody Chamber by Angela Carter (1979)** is a darkly erotic reworking of Bluebeard's Castle, a bawdy Puss in Boots and a sado-masochistic version of Little Red Riding Hood - Angela Carter's subversive take on traditional fairy stories in The Bloody Chamber creates and reimagines gothic tales, cruel tales, tales of wonder, and tales of terror - with fabulous narratives that deal directly with the imagery of the unconscious.

**The Penguin Book of the Contemporary British Short Story edited by Phillip Hensher (2019)** We are living in a particularly rich period for British short stories. Despite the relative lack of places in which they can be published, the challenge the medium represents has attracted a host of remarkable, subversive, entertaining and innovative writers. Philip Hensher, following the success of his definitive Penguin Book of British Short Stories, has scoured a vast trove of material and chosen thirty great stories for this new volume of works written between 1997 and the present day.

**The Wind's Twelve Quarters, by Ursula K Le Guin (1975)** some of the finest short fiction from a master of short story writing. This stunning collection explores human values, relationships, and survival, and showcases the myriad talents of one of the most provocative writers of our time.

**The Oxford Book of English Short Stories, edited by A.S Byatt (2009)** From Anthony Trollope, Charles Dickens, and Thomas Hardy, through Rudyard Kipling, H.G. Wells, D.H. Lawrence, and Virginia Woolf, right up to Graham Greene, J.G. Ballard, Angela Carter, Ian McEwan, and many others, The Oxford Book of English Short Stories encompasses comedy and tragedy, farce and delicacy, elegance and the grotesque. Edited by noted novelist A. S. Byatt, the thirty-



seven stories gathered here range from social realism to surreal fantasy, from rural poverty to war-blitzed London, from tales of the supernatural to precise delineations of the mundane, all unified by Byatts demanding criteria that the works be both startling and satisfying, and if possible make the hairs on the neck prickle with excitement, aesthetic or narrative.

**The Lottery and Other Stories, by Shirley Jackson (1948)** This is the definitive collection of Shirley Jackson's short stories, including 'The Lottery' - one of the most terrifying and iconic stories of the twentieth century, and an influence on writers such as Neil Gaiman and Stephen King.

**The Turning, by Tim Winton (2004)** Beautifully crafted, and as tender as they are confronting, these elegiac stories examine the darkness and frailty of ordinary people and celebrate the moments when the light shines through.