



The Sixth Form at George Abbot

'Academic excellence within a vibrant community.'

Subject: English Literature

Head of Department: Mrs Short: eshort@georgeabbot.surrey.sch.uk

Pre Sixth Form Tasks

Task 1 - A response to the poem *The Long Queen* by Carol Ann Duffy (the poem is on the next page)

Taking into account AO1 for English Literature-

"Informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts"

Choose what you think are some of the most striking images from this poem (there is no right answer) and be prepared to give your opinions on this piece in class.

Task 2 – Write a review of your favourite piece of literature

(approximately 500 words)

This review should include:

- brief outline of the plot
- the main characters in the text and why they are interesting
- the key themes and how they are explored in the novel
- the key messages and ideas the writer is trying to get across to their audience
- the context and setting of the texts (e.g. World War 1 novel, dystopian future etc.)
- why it is your favourite piece of Literature

Please bring these to your first lesson. Any questions or queries, please email Mrs Short (EShort@georgeabbot.surrey.sch.uk)

Enjoy the summer, and see you in September!

Link to Subject Specification

This must be downloaded and printed if not provided by department in another format.

Suggested Reading List and Subject Resource

All tasks completed	Yes	No
Subject Teacher Signature		

The Long Queen

Carol Ann Duffy

The Long Queen couldn't die.
Young when she bowed her head
for the cold weight of the crown, she'd looked
at the second son of the earl, the foreign prince,
the heir to the duke, the lord, the baronet, the count,
then taken Time for a husband. Long live the Queen.

What was she queen of? Women, girls,
spinsters and hags, matrons, wet nurses,
witches, widows, wives, mothers of all these.
Her word of law was in their bones, in the graft
of their hands, in the wild kicks of their dancing.
No girl born who wasn't the Long Queen's always child.

Unseen, she ruled and reigned; some said
in a castle, some said in the tower in the dark heart
of a wood, some said out and about in rags, disguised,
sorting the bad from the good. She sent her explorers away
in their creaking ships and was queen of more, of all the dead
when they lived if they did so female. All hail to the Queen.

What were the laws? Childhood: whether a girl
awoke from the bad dream of the worst, or another
swooned into memory, bereaved, bereft, or a third one
wrote it all down like a charge-sheet, or the fourth never left,
scouring the markets and shops for her old books and toys -
no girl growing who wasn't the apple of the Long Queen's eye.

Blood: proof, in the Long Queen's colour,
royal red, of intent; the pain when a girl
fist bled to be insignificant, no cause for complaint,
and this to be monthly, linked to the moon, till middle age
when the law would change. Tears: salt pearls, bright jewels for the Long Queen's fingers to weigh as she
counted their sorrow.

Childbirth: most to lie on the birthing beds,
push till the room screamed scarlet and children
bawled and slithered into their arms, sore flowers;
some to be godmother, aunt, teacher, teller of tall tales,
but all who were there to swear that the pain was worth it.
No mother bore daughter not named to honour the Queen.

And her pleasures were stories, true or false,
that came in the evening, drifting up on the air
to the high window she watched from, confession
or gossip, scandal or anecdote, secrets, her ear tuned
to the light music of girls, the drums of women, the faint strings
of the old. Long Queen. All her possessions for a moment of time.