



HSLDA ONLINE ACADEMY

English 4: British Literature & Writing 2018–19 Booklist

Title	Edition	Author/Editor	ISBN
The Weight of Glory	*	Lewis, C.S.	9780060653200
The Great Divorce	*	Lewis, C.S.	9780060652951
“Leaf by Niggle” (Short story—available in a print anthology or in audiobook format)	*	Tolkien, J.R.R.	9780547154114
Macbeth (Folger Shakespeare Library edition)	*	Shakespeare, William	9780743477109
Sense and Sensibility	*	Austen, Jane	9780141439662
A Christmas Carol	*	Dickens, Charles	9780486268651
Jane Eyre	*	Bronte, Charlotte	9780451530912
The Picture of Dorian Gray	*	Wilde, Oscar	9780486278070
Wind in the Willows	*	Grahame, Kenneth	9781853260179
Lord of the Flies	*	Golding, William	9780140283334
Remains of the Day	*	Ishiguro, Kazuo	9780679731726
The Elements of Eloquence	2014	Forsyth, Mark	9780425276181
The Elements of Style	*	Strunk, William & White, E.B.	9780205309023
Letters to a Diminished Church	*	Sayers, Dorothy	9780849945267
Collected Poetry of T.S. Eliot	*	Eliot, T.S.	9780151189786

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2. Books marked with * do not have required editions. Page numbers will differ between publishers.
3. Book synopses and potential disclaimers can be found on the following pages of this PDF.

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If you would like more information about English 4, please contact us at **540-338-8290** (*Monday–Friday; 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. EST*), or send an email to academy@hsllda.org.

The Weight of Glory by C.S. Lewis

Synopsis: Lewis argues that beautiful moments here on earth are a foretaste of heavenly glory and that truth should make humans love their neighbors more.

Reasons for Reading: This long essay reminds readers of the importance of faith. It's an excellent introduction to the lens through which all the texts in English 4 will be viewed.

The Great Divorce by C.S. Lewis

Synopsis: The narrator experiences the pains of becoming Christ-like in a fictional depiction of the after-life where he meets different souls in various states of virtue and vice.

Reasons for Reading: Intended to be read as a parable for life in our current world, this text shows the fallen world in a state of redemption.

Disclaimer: Traditional sins such as lust, anger (murder), avarice, and gluttony are depicted along with their consequences, which provides the groundwork for thinking about some of the ways humans fall short of the glory of God.

“Leaf by Niggle” by J.R.R. Tolkien

Synopsis: A painter attempts to paint a tree during his lifetime, but only manages to paint a leaf.

Reasons for Reading: This story shows the importance of small, diligent acts, even if they fall short of one’s desired vision.

Macbeth by William Shakespeare

Synopsis: Macbeth, encouraged by his wife, allows his ambition to lead him to make life-altering decisions that lead to tragedy.

Reasons for Reading: Shakespeare, widely considered the greatest playwright of all time, shows the consequences of unlawful ambition and explores natural versus unnatural ways of acting within relationships and communities.

Disclaimer: This play depicts themes of murder and supernatural evil within the context of just consequences.

Sense and Sensibility by Jane Austen

Synopsis: Witty, engaging, and enlightening of her culture, Austen writes a novel focusing on two sisters. The recently impoverished Dashwood women move to a small cottage, where the two oldest sisters react with opposite emotions to their similar romantic situations.

Reasons for Reading: An excellent study in a variety of human responses to relationships, the book shows character growth, balance, and a wide range of characters that are not so different from experiences today.

Disclaimer: Some sexual immorality is referenced in a non-graphic manner.

A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens

Synopsis: This story, set at Christmas time, follows the miserly Mr. Scrooge as several ghostly visitors teach him what he should value.

Reasons for Reading: This beloved tale introduces students to Dickens, an important Victorian author, via a classic story of redemption.

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte

Synopsis: This novel tells the compelling story of an orphan girl searching for love and belonging.

Reasons for Reading: Provides examples concerning what it means to live a good life. It demonstrates the rich beauty in romantic/Victorian texts, as well as highlighting themes important to the time period. *Jane Eyre* is widely considered one of the best British novels.

Disclaimer: Bronte addresses infidelity, but aptly shows the consequences. She also shows the reward that comes from doing what is right.

The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde

Synopsis: Dorian Gray's portrait is painted during the height of his youthful beauty. Looking at the picture, he wishes that the picture would grow old and bear the marks of sin, instead of himself. As the years pass, people marvel that Dorian never outwardly changes.

Reasons for Reading: Wilde explores themes of inward versus outward beauty and the sobering power of a friend's influence. He also explores themes of vice when life is lived for the pursuit of pleasure and there appear to be no consequences to one's actions.

Disclaimer: Dissolute lifestyles are discussed, as well as some violent themes.

Wind in the Willows by Kenneth Grahame

Synopsis: Mole, Toad, Badger, and Rat cavort, adventure, learn, and grow as anthropomorphized friends in a winsome tale of adventure, misadventure, and the joy of the ordinary within the English countryside.

Reasons for Reading: A novel written for children, this classic allows readers to take well-written children's literature seriously. Thematically, the book engages with themes of friendship and simplicity, which offer an anti-dystopian view of the world.

Lord of the Flies by William Golding

Synopsis: A group of young school boys are stranded on an island where they attempt to form their own society in the absence of legal or social constraints.

Reasons for Reading: This work is an example of fiction used to comment on the dark state of the human heart. Golding skillfully uses imagery and symbolism to portray the fundamental themes of goodness, evil, and fear. His novel represents the dystopian genre in a way that is age-appropriate for high school students.

Disclaimer: Some violent themes are portrayed.

Remains of the Day by Kazuo Ishiguro

Synopsis: A butler reflects on his life's work serving a British noble with Nazi sympathies.

Reasons for Reading: A contemporary novel and the 2017 winner of the Nobel Prize for literature, this complex narrative reveals themes of justice, memory, loneliness, nobility, and regret as old British values compete with modern sensibilities.

Disclaimer: Some non-explicit allusions are made to sexual activity.

The Elements of Eloquence by Mark Forsyth

Reasons for Reading: This book demonstrates figures of speech with wit and excellence and will be used for biweekly exercises to further students' appreciation for the beauty in a well-turned phrase.

Disclaimer: Some examples are not tasteful. Chapters containing these examples will be avoided.

Elements of Style by William Strunk & E.B. White

Reasons for Reading: This book is an excellent resource for writers, reviewing correct usage of the English language.

Letters to a Diminished Church by Dorothy Sayers

Synopsis: This book presents a collection of essays on theology, aesthetics, and issues facing twentieth-century Christians.

Reasons for Reading: Sayers was a contemporary of the Inklings. The essays we will read from this collection discuss work and art from a decidedly Christian, yet intellectually rigorous perspective. They are simultaneously accessible and challenging.

Collected Poetry of T.S. Eliot by T.S. Eliot

Synopsis: This book contains the major poetic works of T.S. Eliot.

Reasons for reading: A modern poet, Eliot converted to Christianity later in his life. His poetry demonstrates the values and style of the early twentieth century. His early poetry shows the hopelessness characteristic of many writers who lived through World War I, and his later poetry examines the difficult questions of the time through a Christian lens. We will read Eliot for his important contribution to poetry and his devotion to Christianity.

Six Centuries of Great Poetry by various British poets

Synopsis: This collection provides a comprehensive sampling of British poetry from Chaucer to the twentieth century.

Reasons for Reading: This text provides the majority of the poems we will use during our class. It also gives students access to a wide range of British poetry to explore on their own.