



# AS English Literature

## Preparation for Sixth Form Summer Study Pack

### ***Rationale of this study pack***

In preparation for starting AS English Literature in September you are asked to complete the tasks outlined in this booklet. The work which you do in completing this booklet will inform some of the topics you will take at AS and also test your commitment to the course.

### ***Why Study English Literature?***

- *Opportunity to study a range of inspiring and thought-provoking texts from different time periods.*
- *Develop the ability to read and analyse texts independently and engage in key theories and ideas from a unique perspective.*
- *A Level English Literature is a highly respected and recognised qualification that will benefit future applications to University and future career prospects.*

**Bring this completed booklet to your first AS English Literature lesson in September and hand to your teacher.**







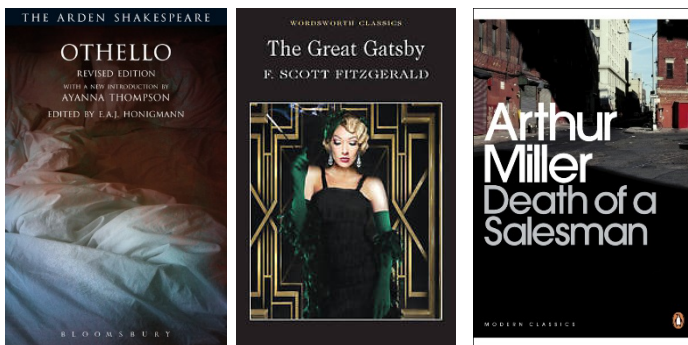
# Texts on the course

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It will be beneficial to purchase your own copies of the text that we will use in class for your exams. You will not be able to make notes in any texts provided for you by the school as that will be your 'clean copy' that will be used in the exam.

Good Literature students enjoy annotating their own texts and using them for revision. Please make that be you!

## Your Set Texts



'Othello'- William Shakespeare (ISBN: 978-1-903436-45-5) Arden Shakespeare

'Death of a Salesman'- Arthur Miller (ISBN: 978-0141182742) Penguin Classics

'The Great Gatsby'- F Scott Fitzgerald (ISBN: 978-1-85326-041-4) Wordsworth Classics

Your English teacher will also give you a copy of the AQA Poetry Anthology featuring the selected John Keats poems that you will study.

# Contextual Research

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As expected, studying English Literature lends itself to a wide range of reading which inevitably extends beyond the reading of primary set texts.

It is highly suggested that you read all of your set texts at least once to ensure you have a strong starting point to help you engage with the texts in a more critical sense in September.

To help prepare you for the course, you will need to undertake some research about the writers we will be studying. For each writer, please research the following:

- **Their lifestyle**
- **Other works**
- **Influences from historical context**



# Analysing language

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## Extract from *Othello* (William Shakespeare)

**Context: Iago is explaining to the audience his plan to trick Othello into thinking his wife is unfaithful to him.**

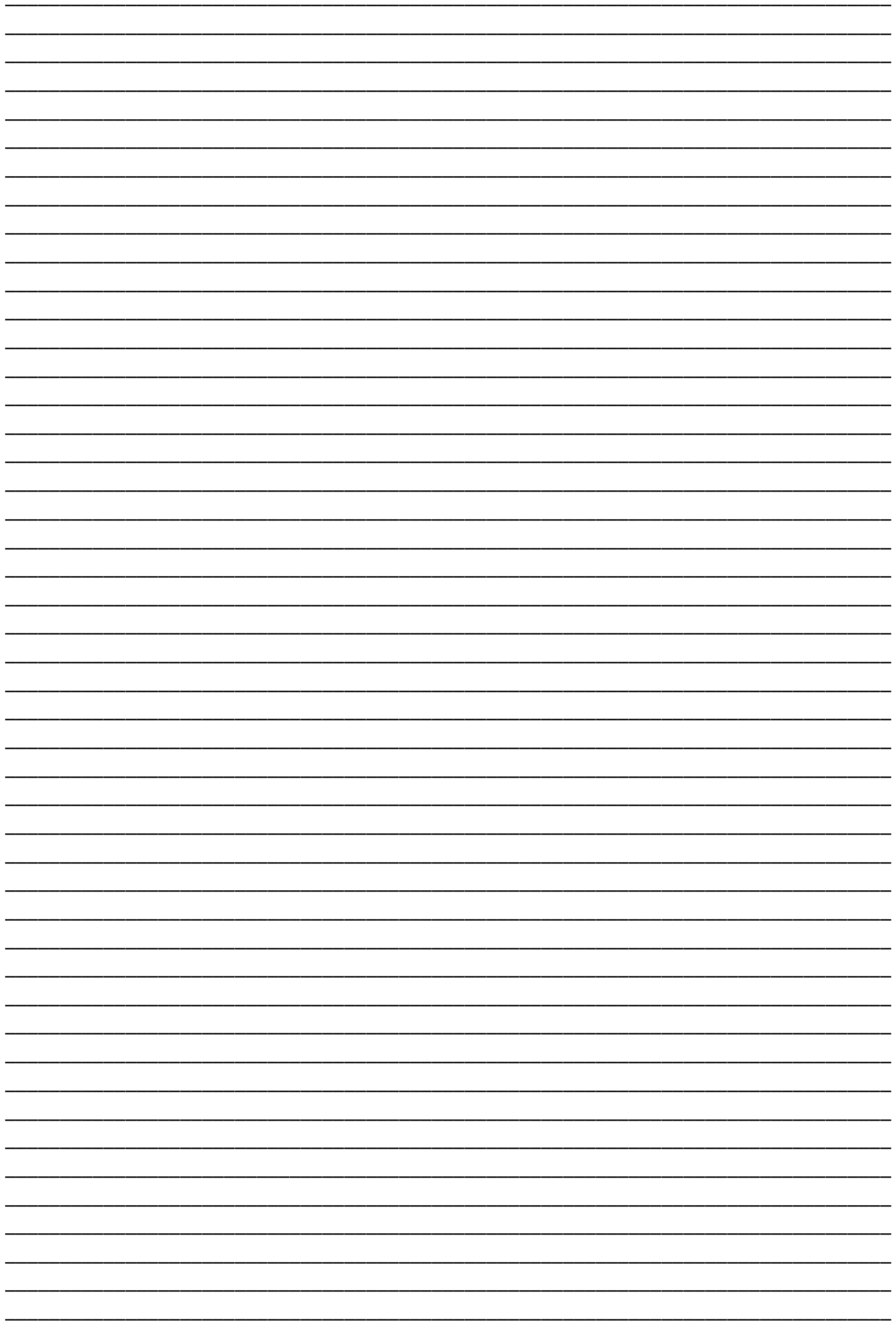
### IAGO

Thus do I ever make my fool my purse:  
For I mine own gain'd knowledge should profane,  
If I would time expend with such a snipe.  
But for my sport and profit. I hate the Moor:  
And it is thought abroad, that 'twixt my sheets  
He has done my office: I know not if't be true;  
But I, for mere suspicion in that kind,  
Will do as if for surety. He holds me well;  
The better shall my purpose work on him.  
Cassio's a proper man: let me see now:  
To get his place and to plume up my will  
In double knavery—How, how? Let's see:—  
After some time, to abuse Othello's ear  
That he is too familiar with his wife.  
He hath a person and a smooth dispose  
To be suspected, framed to make women false.  
The Moor is of a free and open nature,  
That thinks men honest that but seem to be so,  
And will as tenderly be led by the nose As asses are.  
I have't. It is engender'd. Hell and night  
Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light.

### Tasks:

1. Read through the extract and highlight language that shows the audience that Iago is cunning and deceitful.
2. Analyse two of your choices and explain how they show/teach you something about Iago's character.

Please complete your language analysis on the following page:



# Analysing tragedy in Drama

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## Extract from 'Death of a Salesman' (Arthur Miller)

**Context:** Extract from the opening scene to the play

LINDA (*hearing Willy outside the bedroom, calls with some trepidation*): Willy!

WILLY: It's all right. I came back.

LINDA: Why? What happened? (*Slight pause.*) Did something happen, Willy?

WILLY: No, nothing happened.

LINDA: You didn't smash the car, did you?

WILLY (*with casual irritation*): I said nothing happened. Didn't you hear me?

LINDA: Don't you feel well?

WILLY: I'm tired to the death. (*The flute has faded away. He sits on the bed beside her, a little numb.*) I couldn't make it. I just couldn't make it, Linda.

LINDA (*very carefully, delicately*): Where were you all day? You look terrible.

WILLY: I got as far as a little above Yonkers. I stopped for a cup of coffee. Maybe it was the coffee.

LINDA: What?

WILLY (*after a pause*): I suddenly couldn't drive any more. The car kept going off onto the shoulder, y'know?

LINDA (*helpfully*): Oh. Maybe it was the steering again. I don't think Angelo knows the Studebaker.

WILLY: No, it's me, it's me. Suddenly I realize I'm goin' sixty miles an hour and I don't remember the last five minutes. I'm — I can't seem to — keep my mind to it.

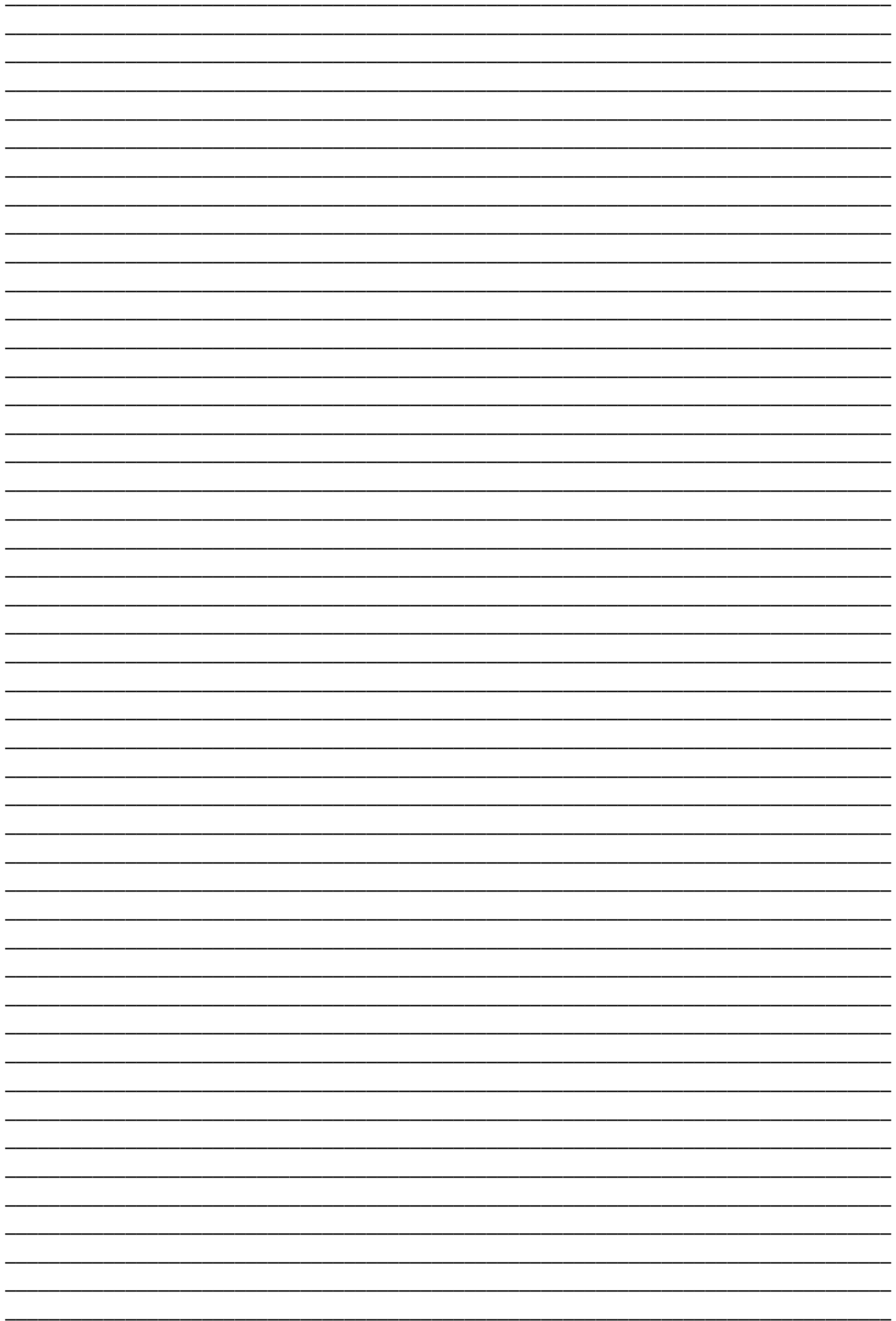
LINDA: Maybe it's your glasses. You never went for your new glasses.

### **Task:**

1. How does the dialogue between the two characters show that Willy is a troubled character?

Please complete your language analysis on the following page:





# Interpretations in Poetry

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## John Keats Poetry Collection

### La Belle Dame sans Merci: A Ballad

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,  
Alone and palely loitering?  
The sedge has withered from the lake,  
And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,  
So haggard and so woe-begone?  
The squirrel's granary is full,  
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow,  
With anguish moist and fever-dew,  
And on thy cheeks a fading rose  
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads,  
Full beautiful—a faery's child,  
Her hair was long, her foot was light,  
And her eyes were wild.

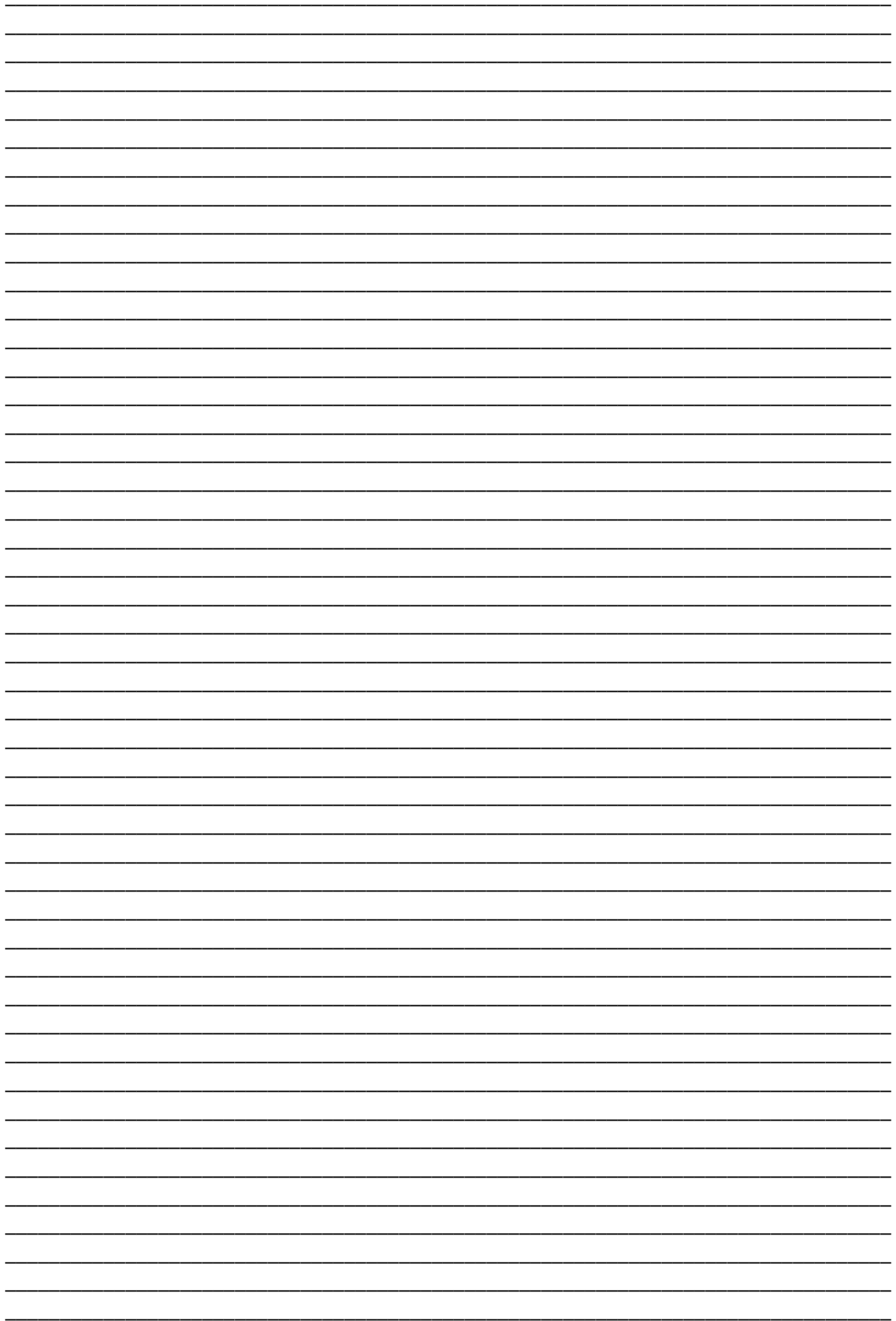
I made a garland for her head,  
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;  
She looked at me as she did love,  
And made sweet moan

I set her on my pacing steed,  
And nothing else saw all day long,  
For sidelong would she bend, and sing  
A faery's song.

### **Task:**

1. How is gender represented in the opening stanzas to the poem?

**Please complete your analysis on the following page:**



# Importance of context in literature

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## Extract from 'The Great Gatsby' by F. Scott Fitzgerald

**Context: This is from chapter 3 before we meet Gatsby, his neighbour describes the preparation for a party.**

There was music from my neighbour's house through the summer nights. In his blue gardens men and girls came and went like moths among the whisperings and the champagne and the stars. At high tide in the afternoon I watched his guests diving from the tower of his raft, or taking the sun on the hot sand of his beach while his two motor-boats slit the waters of the Sound, drawing aquaplanes over cataracts of foam. On weekends his Rolls-Royce became an omnibus, bearing parties to and from the city between nine in the morning and long past midnight, while his station wagon scampered like a brisk yellow bug to meet all trains. And on Mondays eight servants, including an extra gardener, toiled all day with mops and scrubbing-brushes and hammers and garden-shears, repairing the ravages of the night before.

Every Friday five crates of oranges and lemons arrived from a fruiterer in New York – every Monday these same oranges and lemons left his back door in a pyramid of pulpless halves. There was a machine in the kitchen which could extract the juice of two hundred oranges in half an hour if a little button was pressed two hundred times by a butler's thumb.

At least once a fortnight a corps of caterers came down with several hundred feet of canvas and enough coloured lights to make a Christmas tree of Gatsby's enormous garden. On buffet tables, garnished with glistening hors-d'oeuvre, spiced baked hams crowded against salads of harlequin designs and pastry pigs and turkeys bewitched to a dark gold. (...)

By seven o'clock the orchestra has arrived, no thin five-piece affair, but a whole pitful of oboes and trombones and saxophones and viols and cornets and piccolos, and low and high drums. The last swimmers have come in from the beach now and are dressing upstairs; the cars from New York are parked five deep in the drive, and already the halls and salons and verandas are gaudy with primary colours, and hair bobbed in strange new ways, and shawls beyond the dreams of Castile. The bar is in full swing, and floating rounds of cocktails permeate the garden outside, until the air is alive with chatter and laughter, and casual innuendo and introductions forgotten on the spot, and enthusiastic meetings between women who never knew each other's names.

### **Task:**

- 1. How is Gatsby's party described and what does it tell you about 1920s America?**

**Please complete your analysis on the following page:**

