

English Literature A' Level Bridging Task

'A Streetcar Named Desire' by Tennessee Williams

Task 1 - Please read the extract provided from 'A Streetcar Named Desire'.

Task 2 - Research contextual information relating to the text (see below).

Task 3 - Produce an essay, using the plan provided to help you structure a response. This should be a full essay and can be written or typed.

Task 2 – Contextual research

Topics, tips and guidance:

Remember to summarise your research into short bullet points

Add pictures if that helps illuminate your research

The Jazz age:

Where and when did the Jazz age originate?

What were some of the key features of the age? Consider activities, attitudes, fashions.

What famous figures are associated with the Jazz age?

How were men and women perceived?

Great Depression:

When and why did the great depression begin?

What was the impact on day-to-day American life? Try to find some facts and figures.

Which social groups or geographical areas were particularly affected? Why?

Are there any modern parallels to the Great Depression that might help us better understand it? Think about 'austerity Britain'...

New Orleans:

What can you discover about the city in terms of physical and social geography? Try to find some facts and figures.

How was the city changing in the early 20th century?

What made the city distinct from the rest of the USA?

What can you find about the elements mentioned in the play e.g. the streetcars, the multicultural neighbourhoods?

The plantations of the Deep South:

Where were they and why did they exist?

What were their characteristics in their heyday?

What famous plantations can you discover something about?

What was the relationship between different classes and races like in these environments?

US Immigration and the American Dream:

What statistics can you find on the numbers/nationalities of immigrants entering the USA in the early 20th century?

What can you find about the status and lifestyle of immigrants in New Orleans in particular?

How were immigrants treated? Consider both the 'official' line of the authorities and public perceptions.

What constituted the American Dream?