

# Year 9 Term 2: New Voices

Many of the authors you will study this term are people that, historically, may have been excluded from the literary world. This is because of their gender, race or class.

As the world recovered from two catastrophic wars (WW1 & WW2), new voices in literature began to emerge. These new writers wanted to use their own experiences of marginalisation or prejudice to produce texts which questioned the status quo and called out certain inequalities in society. Many readers of these pioneering writers were exposed to experiences and perspectives outside of the mainstream.

Why is it important that we have diverse voices in literature? First, so that we can learn about others' experiences of life that may be different to our own, and second – so that everyone can see their own experiences reflected in literature.

## Other New Voices in Literature

**Fences – August Wilson**  
Set in the 1950s, Fences explores the evolving African-American experience and examines race relations. The main character of Fences is Troy, a working-class patriarch. Key themes: social inequality, class, racial prejudice, masculinity, family and relationships

**Blood Brothers – Willy Russell**  
Set in the 1980s in Liverpool, the play explores the idea of nature vs. nurture and class inequalities in England. Two twins are separated at birth – one growing up rich and the other poor. Key themes: social inequality, class, family and relationships

**Noughts and Crosses – Malorie Blackman**  
Set in a parallel society where white people are discriminated against and oppressed. The two main characters, Sephy and Callum try to maintain their friendship in a divided world. Key themes: racial prejudice, social inequality, love

**A Taste of Honey - Shelagh Delaney**  
Set in the 50s in Salford – the play explores the life of Jo a 17 year old working class girl. The play comments on, and puts into question, class, race, gender and sexual orientation. Key themes: gender, social inequality, class, racial prejudice

## Prose/Play Key Terms

**Protagonist** – the main character or hero of the story.  
**Narrative Point of View** – the perspective the story is written in (1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, limited, omniscient).  
**Setting** – the place/time when the text is set.  
**Characterisation** – how a writer builds up an idea of a character through speech, dress, actions etc.  
**Bildungsroman** – a story in which a character grows up, goes on a journey and learns new things.  
**Act** – a 'chapter' in a play.  
**Scene** – small section of an act.  
**Stage directions** – instructions for director and actors.  
**Dialogue** – talk between two or more characters.  
**Monologue** – when one character in a play speaks at length.  
**Dramatic Irony** – when the audience knows something that the character on stage doesn't.

# To Kill A Mockingbird – Plot and Characters

- To Kill a Mockingbird is a novel by Harper Lee. Although it was **written in 1960 it is set in the mid-1930s in the small town of Maycomb, Alabama**. It is narrated by Scout Finch, a six-year-old tomboy who lives with her lawyer father Atticus and her ten-year-old brother Jem.
- Scout and her brother, Jem, learn the principles of racial justice and open-mindedness from their father, whose just and compassionate acts include an unpopular defense of a Black man falsely accused of a crime.**
- Scout Finch** - The protagonist of the story. Intelligent and, by the standards of her time and place, a tomboy.
- Atticus Finch** - Scout and Jem's father, a lawyer in Maycomb descended from an old local family. Atticus has instilled in his children his strong sense of morality and justice. He is one of the few residents of Maycomb committed to racial equality. Atticus functions as the novel's moral backbone.
- Jem Finch** - something of a typical American boy, refusing to back down from dares and fantasising about playing football.
- Charles Baker "Dill" Harris** - Jem and Scout's summer neighbour and friend. Dill is a diminutive, confident boy with an active imagination.
- Calpurnia** - Calpurnia is a stern disciplinarian and the children's bridge between the white world and her own black community.

## To Kill A Mockingbird – Context

- Legacy of slavery** - Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, people were kidnapped from the continent of Africa, forced into slavery in the American colonies and exploited to work in the production of crops such as tobacco and cotton. By the mid-19th century there was a great debate over slavery that would tear the nation apart in the bloody Civil War. Though the Northern victory freed the nation's four million enslaved people, the legacy of slavery in the South continued to influence American history.
- Great Depression** - October 29, 1929, the stock market crashed, triggering the Great Depression, the worst economic collapse in the history of the modern industrial world. With banks failing and businesses closing, more than 15 million Americans became unemployed which resulted in widespread poverty.
- Jim Crow Laws** - laws that enforced racial segregation in the South.
- Scottsboro Boys' Trial** - The Scottsboro Boys were nine black teenagers falsely accused of raping two white women aboard a train near Scottsboro, Alabama, in 1931.
- The Civil Rights Movement** – this movement was a struggle for social justice that took place mainly during the 1950s and 1960s. Its aims were for Black Americans to gain equal rights under the law in the United States.

## To Kill A Mockingbird – Themes

- Morality
- Social inequality
- Racism
- Justice
- Innocence
- Fear
- Women and femininity
- Family
- Compassion and forgiveness

## Grammar – Y7 and Y8 Review

### Noun types:

**Concrete** – A noun we can see, hear, touch, smell or taste

**Abstract** – A noun which we cannot experience with any of the 5 senses e.g. happiness, tension

**Proper** – A noun which is the name or title of something and is capitalised

**Collective** – A singular word used to group together a plural e.g. a group, a herd, a class

**Pronouns:** replaces a noun e.g. she, her, mine, that

**Subject:** Does the action in a sentence or clause

### Verb types:

**Dynamic** – A verb that we can see/hear being completed – a deliberate action

**Stative** – A verb that we cannot see being completed e.g. I think, I believe

**Imperative** – A commanding verb e.g. Do this work, sit down, let's go

**Modal** – A verb expressing possibility or probability e.g. will, should, could, can, must

**Past tense:** used to describe things that have already happened **Present tense:** used to describe things that are happening now

**Future tense:** describes things that have yet to happen

**Main clause** – A clause which makes sense on its own as a sentence

**Subordinate clause** – A clause which does not make sense on its own as a sentence – it needs another to make it make sense – it starts with a subordinating conjunction

**Coordinating conjunction** – A conjunction which joins 2 main clauses FANBOYS – for, and, nor, but, or, yet and so

**Subordinating conjunction** – A conjunction which joins a subordinate clause to a main one – e.g. while, as, because, since, if

**Simple sentence** – A sentence with only one verb and one main clause

**Compound sentence** – A sentence with more than one main clause, joined by a coordinating conjunction

**Complex sentence** – A sentence with at least one main clause and at least one subordinate clause which can't stand alone as a sentence, joined by a subordinating conjunction

## Grammar Y7 and Y8 Review

### Adjective types:

**Descriptive** – An adjective which describes factual characteristics e.g. big, green

**Evaluative** – An adjective expressing an opinion, can be disagreed with e.g. great, boring, amazing

**Emotive** – An adjective which makes the reader feel a strong emotion e.g. shocking, starving, dangerous

**Comparative** – An adjective ending in –er or with 'more' in front of it. e.g. bigger, faster, more exciting

**Superlative** – An adjective ending in –est or with 'most' in front of it. e.g. biggest, fastest, most exciting

### Adverb types:

**Manner:** tell us how something happens e.g. angrily, quickly

**Time:** tell us when something happens e.g. tomorrow, yesterday

**Place:** where something happens e.g. everywhere, nowhere

**Degree:** describe the intensity of an action or quality e.g. extremely, very, too

**Frequency:** used to describe how often something happens e.g. constantly, frequently

## Grammar Y9

### Prepositions

A preposition is a word that tells you where or when something is in relation to something else. Examples of prepositions include words like after, before, on, under, inside and outside.

### Passive and Active Voice

#### **Passive voice –**

A clause or sentence in which the subject undergoes the action of the verb (e.g. *they were killed* instead of *he killed them*).

#### **Active voice -**

A clause or sentence in which the subject does the action of the verb (e.g. *he killed them* instead of *they were killed*.)