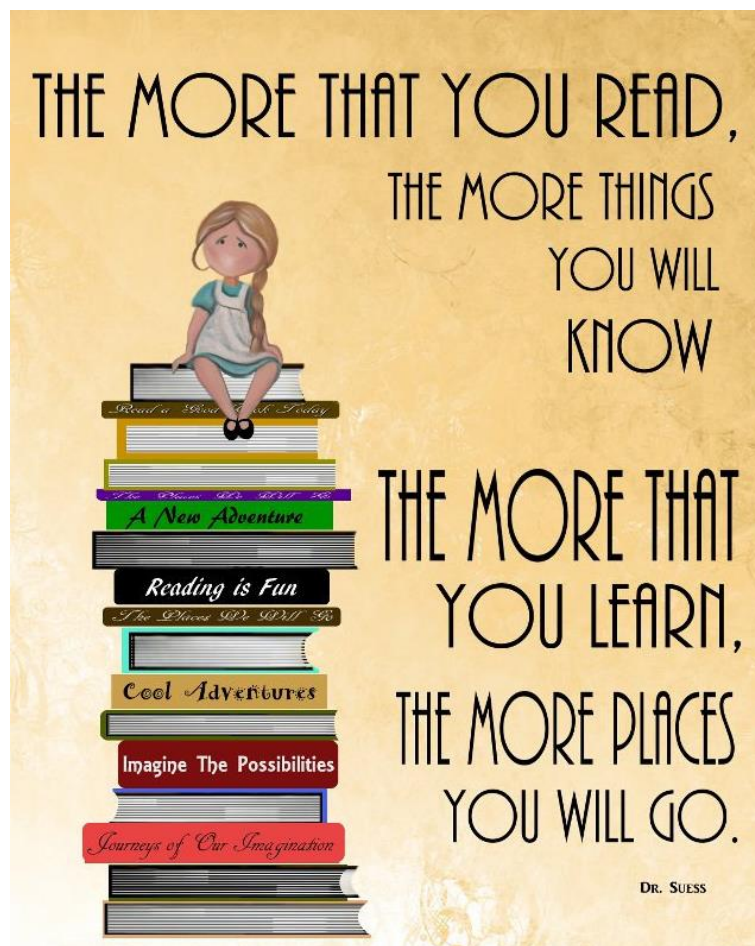

Beckfoot Oakbank

English Literature

Transition from Year 11 to Year 12

Name



Outstanding Progress and Achievement for all

www.oakbank.org.uk

Oakworth Road Keighley West Yorkshire BD22 7DU

Telephone: 01535 210111 Fax: 01535 210555 email: office@oakbank.org.uk

TASK ONE

Explore the genre of World War I literature.

Read at least one (if not more) of the following:

Sebastian Faulks *BIRDSONG*

This intensely romantic yet stunningly realistic novel spans three generations and the unimaginable gulf between the First World War and the present. As the young Englishman Stephen Wraysford passes through a tempestuous love affair with Isabelle Azaire in France and enters the dark, surreal world beneath the trenches of No Man's Land.

Joseph Heller *CATCH 22*

Set in Italy during World War II, this is the story of the incomparable, malingering bombardier, Yossarian, a hero who is furious because thousands of people he has never met are trying to kill him. But his real problem is not the enemy—it is his own army, which keeps increasing the number of missions the men must fly to complete their service. Yet if Yossarian makes any attempt to excuse himself from the perilous missions he's assigned, he'll be in violation of Catch-22, a hilariously sinister bureaucratic rule: a man is considered insane if he willingly continues to fly dangerous combat missions, but if he makes a formal request to be removed from duty, he is proven sane and therefore ineligible to be relieved.

Pat Barker *REGENERATION*

Regeneration, one in Pat Barker's series of novels confronting the psychological effects of World War I, focuses on treatment methods during the war and the story of a decorated English officer sent to a military hospital after publicly declaring he will no longer fight. Yet the novel is much more. Written in sparse prose that is shockingly clear—the descriptions of electronic treatments are particularly harrowing—it combines real-life characters and events with fictional ones in a work that examines the insanity of war like no other.

Erich Remarque *ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT*

In 1914 a room full of German schoolboys, fresh-faced and idealistic, are goaded by their schoolmaster to troop off to the 'glorious war'. With the fire and patriotism of youth they sign up. What follows is the moving story of a young 'unknown soldier' experiencing the horror and disillusionment of life in the trenches.

TASK TWO

Whilst reading, or after, show your understanding of the genre of World War I literature through either: creating a mind map; making notes; researching keywords; or making an illustrated infographic.

You should bring this work to your first English Literature lesson in September.

TASK THREE

You can type or write this answer. Please send your typed answer to Miss Finlay at nf@beckfootoakbank.org if you are unable to print it.

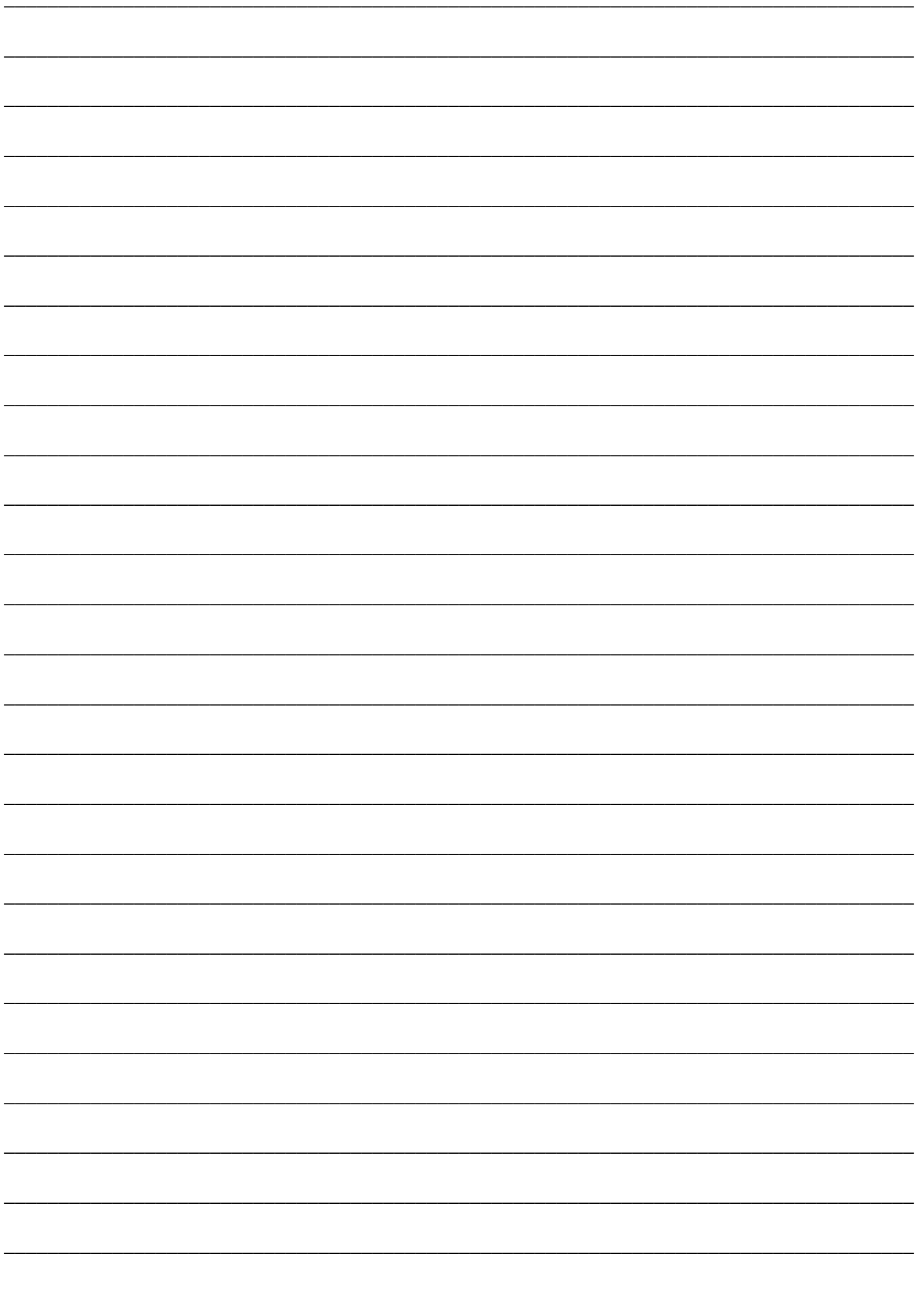
The extract is taken from *Mr Britling Sees it Through*, a novel by H.G. Wells (1866–1946) published in 1916.

The extract begins with Mr Britling receiving a telegram telling him that his son Hugh has been killed in action.

1. Explore the significance of **personal loss** in this extract.

Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed analysis of the ways that Wells shapes meanings.

[illegible]



And then as if it were something that every one in the Dower House had been waiting for, came the message that Hugh had been killed.

The telegram was brought up by a girl in a pinafore instead of the boy of the old dispensation, for boys now were doing the work of youths, and youths the work of the men who had gone to the war.

Mr. Britling was standing at the front door; he had been surveying the late October foliage, touched by the warm light of the afternoon, when the messenger appeared. He opened the telegram, hoping as he had hoped when he opened any telegram since Hugh had gone to the front that it would not contain the exact words he read; that it would say wounded, that at the worst it would say "missing," that perhaps it might even tell of some pleasant surprise, a brief return to home such as the last letter had foreshadowed. He read the final, unqualified statement, the terse regrets. He stood quite still for a moment or so, staring at the words....

It was a mile and a quarter from the post-office to the Dower House, and it was always his custom to give telegraph messengers who came to his house twopence, and he wanted very much to get rid of the telegraph girl, who stood expectantly before him holding her red bicycle. He felt now very sick and strained; he had a conviction that if he did not by an effort maintain his bearing cool and dry he would howl aloud. He felt in his pocket for money; there were some coppers and a shilling. He pulled it all out together and stared at it.

He had an absurd conviction that this ought to be a sixpenny telegram. The thing worried him. He wanted to give the brat sixpence, and he had only threepence and a shilling, and he didn't know what to do and his brain couldn't think. It would be a shocking thing to give her a shilling, and he couldn't somehow give just coppers for so important a thing as Hugh's death. Then all this problem vanished and he handed the child the shilling. She stared at him, inquiring, incredulous. "Is there a reply, sir, please?"

"No," he said, "that's for you. All of it.... This is a peculiar sort of telegram.... It's news of importance...."

As he said this he met her eyes, and had a sudden persuasion that she knew exactly what it was the telegram had told him, and that she was shocked at this gala-like treatment of such terrible news. He hesitated, feeling that he had to say something else, that he was socially inadequate, and then he decided that at any cost he must get his face away from her staring eyes. She made no movement to turn away. She seemed to be taking him in, recording him, for repetition, greedily, with every fibre of her being.

He stepped past her into the garden, and instantly forgot about her existence....

He had been thinking of this possibility for the last few weeks almost continuously, and yet now that it had come to him he felt that he had never thought about it before, that he must go off alone by himself to envisage this monstrous and terrible fact, without distraction or interruption.

He saw his wife coming down the alley between the roses.

He was wrenched by emotions as odd and unaccountable as the emotions of adolescence. He had exactly the same feeling now that he had had when in his boyhood some unpleasant admission had to be made to his parents. He felt he could not go through a scene with her yet, that he could not endure the task of telling her, of being observed. He turned abruptly to his left. He walked away as if he had not seen her, across his lawn towards the little summer-house upon a knoll that commanded the high road. She called to him, but he did not answer....

He would not look towards her, but for a time all his senses were alert to hear whether she followed him. Safe in the summer-house he could glance back.

It was all right. She was going into the house.

He drew the telegram from his pocket again furtively, almost guiltily, and reread it. He turned it over and read it again....

Killed.

Then his own voice, hoarse and strange to his ears, spoke his thought.

"My God! how unutterably silly.... Why did I let him go? Why did I let him go?"