

“It is not in the stars to hold our destiny but in ourselves.”
William Shakespeare



ENGLISH GCSE OVERVIEW

During your 2 years studying English you will engage with both English Language and English Literature. There are 4 exams in total: 2 for language and 2 for literature.

Exam Board-AQA

WHY STUDY ENGLISH LANGUAGE?

English Language allows you to consider the reliability of a text in relation to its topic, while also unpicking the techniques the writer uses to create a fully developed text. You will then be putting those techniques into practice with your own writing, developing the skills needed to communicate, describe and convince others effectively.

English Language will give you the experience and knowledge, along with the analytical tools, to evaluate, engage and critique texts confidently for whatever context you find yourselves in, now and in the future.

WHY STUDY ENGLISH LITERATURE?

English Literature will open your eyes to not only the development of the English language, but also wider society and the changing world that our writers, and ourselves, live in. English Literature will give you the opportunities, experiences, knowledge and analytical tools to evaluate, engage and critique confidently for whatever context you find yourselves in, now and in the future.

Literature is the gateway to achievement, intellectual curiosity, personal well-being and empathy.

HOW WILL ENGLISH LANGUAGE HELP ME? WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

The analytical skills you'll develop through this course will serve you, not only in further education, but also throughout your adult lives. It will allow you to read texts critically and consider why the writer has used a specific form or style of writing.

You will also be looking at the grammar of the English language and how to use it effectively, through word choice and sentence structures, to engage and convince a reader.

Your critical analysis of texts will also increase your knowledge of the wider world: from topics like social media and its impact to how the writer structures a text will allow you to see the world with an evaluative eye.

WHAT DOES THE COURSE INVOLVE? WHAT WILL I STUDY?

You will study a range of texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries which are linked in theme to the literary texts studied. As each text probes deeply into the social fabric of their particular time, it will be your job as students of English to reflect on how the writers have achieved this. Interestingly, the preoccupations of writers of both fiction and non-fiction throughout the last three centuries has never strayed too far from the concerns we have today: poverty, injustice, gender, and class to name but a few.

With such a rich stock of quality writing you will be encouraged to learn from the best in the production of your own writing practices.

HOW WILL I LEARN?

You will learn in a variety of styles. Often this will involve whole class teaching, where your teacher will guide you through your analysis of a text. At other times you will be asked to work independently so you can form your own opinion on a topic or a thematic concept. Additionally, sometimes you will be involved in group work where small groups or pairs will be given a task to complete.

Wider, independent reading and research around the subject is also essential.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

This is a linear course, assessed with two exams in Year 11, worth 100%. There is no coursework.

- ✓ Component 1: Explorations in creative reading and writing
Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes [80 marks] – 50% of qualification.
- ✓ Component 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives.
Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes [80 marks] – 50% of qualification.
- ✓ Component 3: Speaking and Listening
Assessment: an individual speech performed to an audience (unweighted).

CAREERS – WHAT COULD A QUALIFICATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE OR LITERATURE LEAD TO?

First and foremost, gaining a qualification in English Language will open the doors needed for you to access further education: Sixth Form or College. It is also needed to gain employment. Additionally, English Language is great preparation for History, Media, Sociology, Theatre Studies, Psychology and Law at A-level and beyond. Students who take English Language go on to do all sorts of interesting things such as Journalism, Science, Mathematics or Law. Some go on to write professionally, work in broadcasting or even teach!

Careers Summary (links to explore):

[National Council for Training Journalists](#)

[Publishing](#)

[Journalism](#)

[Why study English](#)

ENGLISH LITERATURE OVERVIEW

English Literature involves the study of both old and modern texts written in the English language with an emphasis on close and analytical reading of texts and the contexts in which they were written.

You will study a range of texts, from the 16th Century to modern day, with a variety of forms, from a play, to a 19th Century novel to modern poetry and academic critique. Students who study English Literature gain the skills to engage with the wider world confidently and accurately.

HOW WILL ENGLISH LITERATURE HELP ME? WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

You will study a wide range of texts, formulating personal and evaluative ideas about a range of characters and themes. You will learn how to analyse and critique texts while considering the contexts in which they were written allowing you consider any contextual factors which may affect both writer and reader as values change over time. You will be encouraged to make your own critical judgements about texts and to evaluate the judgements of others. You'll importantly study how the writer has shaped your response as you explore the horrors of regicide, an Inspector solving a crime, an old miser learning how to be good and the impact of war and much more!

HOW WILL I LEARN?

As for English Language you will learn in a variety of styles. Often this will involve whole class teaching, where your teacher will guide you through your analysis of a text, which in the case of literature texts involves sharing the read of it. At other times you will be asked to work independently so you can form your own opinion on a topic or a thematic concept. Additionally, sometimes you will be involved in group work where small groups or pairs will be given a task to complete. Wider, independent reading and research around the subject is also essential.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

This is a linear course, assessed with two exams in Year 11, worth 100%. There is no coursework.

- ✓ Component 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-Century Novel
Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes [64 marks] – 40% of GCSE
- ✓ Component 2: Modern Texts and Poetry
Written examination: 2 hour 15 minutes [96 marks] – 60% of GCSE

CAREERS – WHAT COULD A QUALIFICATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE OR LITERATURE LEAD TO?

Reading and analysis of character, theme, language and context in the following

A Shakespeare text (Macbeth).

Post-1914 Prose/Drama (An Inspector Calls).

Poetry from the 18th Century to the present day– your teacher will give you an anthology of 15 poems from the exam board: we study the Power and Conflict Cluster from AQA

19th Century Prose (A Christmas Carol).

Unseen Poetry from the 20th/21st Century.

Today a reader, tomorrow a leader