

English Literature A Level

Overview:

Exam Board: AQA

Why Study?: You will read, enjoy, and analyse a range of fantastic texts. You will also explore and discuss the ways that literature helps us to understand what it is to be human, the ways that authors present these ideas, and gain an overview of how writing has evolved over time. You will develop excellent skills of written and verbal expression, as well as analytical skills, which will be crucial for any further study or future employment. English Literature is one of the 'facilitating subjects', the most highly-respected A levels, valued by top universities. Students studying English Literature go on to a wide range of courses, from Law, Journalism and English itself, to other Humanities subjects; English Literature is also often chosen to give balance to students studying other subjects, for example, students have gone on to study Medicine with English Literature as one of their A level choices.

Content:

In Year 12, you will study:

- The Great Gatsby by F Scott Fitzgerald
- 'Love Through the Ages' poetry anthology
- Othello by Shakespeare
- Unseen Poetry
- A Doll's House by Henrik Ibsen
- An overview of the development of English Literature

In Year 13, you will study:

- A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennessee Williams
- The Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood
- Feminine Gospels by Carol Ann Duffy
- Unseen Prose

These are absolutely fantastic works, which encourage analytical thinking, discussion and debate, and support you in your development as an academic writer.

Skills, knowledge and personal qualities developed include:

- Enthusiasm for independent reading
- An interest in other historical periods and other cultures
- Excellent written expression
- The ability to improve and listen to feedback
- Analytical skills
- Enjoyment of debate and discussion
- Empathy and insight into the human condition

Entry Requirements:

Grade 5 at GCSE in either English Literature or English Language

How Assessed:

Paper 1 (40%)

3 25-mark essay questions:

- Othello
- The Great Gatsby and Love Through the Ages Poetry Anthology (comparison)
- Unseen Poetry

Paper 2 (40%)

3 25-mark essay questions:

- Feminine Gospels
- A Streetcar Named Desire and The Handmaid's Tale (comparison)
- Unseen Prose

Progression:

Careers

Careers with a direct link from English Literature include law, journalism, broadcasting, teaching, copywriting, advertising, and many other areas of business. The skills you develop in English Literature will support you in any profession, as will the empathy and insight into the human condition you will acquire.

University Courses

Most universities, particularly Russell Group, run highly-respected English Literature courses. English Literature A level is excellent preparation for any essay-based subject, and would also lead into a wide range of courses, such as Law, Politics, Philosophy, Journalism, and many more. English Literature has also been chosen to provide balance and interest for students going down other paths, for example, Medicine.

Links with other subjects

English Literature is most closely linked, in terms of both skills and content, to English Language, History, Sociology, Psychology, Philosophy, and MFL. It also provides an excellent counterpoint to STEM subjects, for students who wish to maintain a balance in their studies.