

AQA A Level English Literature (Spec A)

Why study English Literature?

An A level in English Literature is a great foundation for many careers: Law, Business, Administration, Politics, Journalism and beyond. It is a subject that provides good grounding for most academic degree courses and apprenticeships that require sophisticated knowledge, literacy and analytical skills. Universities enjoy seeing that students are able to think critically and have an opinion on different topics.

What are the entry requirements?

Grade 6 in both GCSE English Language and English Literature.

What will I study?

Over the two year course students will study texts related to the Modern Texts (1945-present) and Love Through the Ages (1500- present) that is literature associated with relationships, families and friendship. The English Literature Spec A Level encourages students to explore the relationships that exist between texts and the contexts within which they are written, received and understood.

The specification encourages the exploration of texts in a number of different ways:

- the study of a literary theme over time
- the study of literature through engaging with two of the main historicist perspectives, the diachronic (reading texts written across widely different time periods that explore the same theme) and synchronic (reading texts written within a narrower and clearly defined time period)
- the study of various texts, both singly and comparatively, chosen from a list of core set texts and a list of chosen comparative set texts
- writing about texts in a number of different ways.

During the course, you will learn how to construct an argument and analyse the structure and use of language and literary devices in a text. You will also learn about the social, historical and cultural contexts of the set texts.

You will enjoy this course if...

You love reading and immersing yourself in the world of a book. You enjoy learning about the wider social, cultural and philosophical ideas which emerge from texts. You relish the opportunity to put forward your point of view on a given text and listen to the critical viewpoints of others.

How will my work be assessed?

The qualification is linear. Students will sit their exams at the end of their A level course.

Paper 1:

Love through the Ages: Shakespeare play (Othello), one set prose text (The Great Gatsby) compared to Pre-1900 Love Poetry (AQA Anthology) and Unseen Love Poetry (a comparison of two poems).

Paper 2:

Modern Texts: Set drama text (A Streetcar Named Desire), unseen prose, set prose text (The Colour Purple) compared with modern poetry (Feminine Gospels).

Assessed: Written exam- 2 hours and 30 minutes (all open book)

Non-exam assessment: Independent Critical Study: Texts across Time. Comparative critical study of two texts, at least one of which must have been written pre-1900 (an extended essay of 2500 words including a bibliography)

Assessed: 2,500 word coursework- 20% of A-level- assessed by teachers- moderated by AQA.