

A Level English Literature



A Level English Literature is a course for those who have a love of reading and literature in general. It is held in high regard by universities because high grades in it demonstrate that candidates have good levels of cultural capital as well as being excellent communicators and interpreters of textual content.

The course has been designed to cover a wide range of texts and text types including poetry, prose, and drama.

At A Level, these texts are much more mature thematically and also branch out into American literature in addition to English literature. In Year 12, we focus on *Othello* by William Shakespeare, *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, and fourteen pre-1900 poems from the Tudor era through the end of the 1800s, as well as unseen poetry. In Year 13, we cover *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams, *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood, and *Feminine Gospels* by Carol Ann Duffy.

The course is also excellent for those interested in history, as one aspect of Literature is that an awareness of the social, political, cultural, and historical contexts of all texts studied is required in the exam. This means, over the course of the two years, we cover a vast expanse of British and American history right up until the present day.

Those who choose Literature for A Level often choose it with specific career ambitions in mind (careers such as journalism, publishing, content management, communications, teaching, public sector roles that require good communication) or choose it to supplement their other studies as Literature helps to prepare you for university life, with a strong focus on analytical essay writing.

Another aspect of the course that makes it a popular choice for some is the coursework element. This involves writing a 2,500 word essay comparing two texts chosen by the students (one has to be pre-1900) on a topic of their choice. This is developed throughout the course and helps them to practise the various skills required for essay development alongside their classroom studies.

Teaching & Learning

- Lessons are split between two A Level teachers who teach separate aspects of the course and regularly liaise with each other.
- These lessons involving reading, analysing, and interpreting texts. For the plays, we also watch the various adaptations as we read to aid our understanding of stagecraft.
- Some lessons serve as essay writing workshops for the Non-Exam Assessment element (coursework) or in preparation for mock exams.
- There is a greater degree of flipped learning where students read further chapters prior to lessons.



English Literature as a Whole



Teaching and Learning

A Level Assessment

Students will be assessed by...

- Fortnightly knowledge tests recapping learning covered in lessons, giving students regular repetition of required course knowledge and the ability to create a tracker that allows them to pinpoint key areas for revision as they go.
- Mock exams are held throughout the academic year, with at least two assessment points in Year 12, plus two more in Year 13. This starts off simple and builds to mimicking the full exams in preparation for the Summer of Year 13.



A-Level Assessment

Subject combinations

A Level English Literature can be studied with a wide range of other subjects including:

- Psychology
- History
- Art
- Photography
- Film Studies

Progression Routes

Publishing, journalism, teaching, public sector roles, communication, marketing, administrative roles, content creation and management, careers in film and media.



Progression Routes (Careers)

Entry and skill requirements

For A Level English Literature, students are expected to have achieved a 6 in either English Literature or English Language, though we are open to discussions with students who are keen should they fall below this and make our decisions on a case-by-case basis.

What do our students think?

“There’s a big jump between A Level to the GCSE but that’s the same with any A Level. You’re building upon skills at GCSE. The workload can seem quite daunting but with practice papers and. You get all the support you need. I really like the texts we’ve studied. They’re a lot more mature and interesting and I like how we cover more modern texts and cover more modern issues in society. I did Biology and Geography alongside English, so it was a nice break from learning facts and allowed me to be more creative. It’s all about articulating arguments and being analytical and perceptive. I hope you enjoy English!”



What Our Students Think

- Amelia

“The texts we’ve studied have been so interesting. It’s been great to look into the context of all these fascinating texts. There’s nothing we’ve done I haven’t enjoyed. The Thomas Wyatt stuff we’ve done is quite difficult because of the older language, but even back then they had similar themes to what we have today.”

- Karus

“English as a subject has helped me to be more critical and think of a range of different interpretations for even a short piece of writing. The teachers have also been very supportive and approachable, the fact that the subject is open to individual ideas and perspectives is also very encouraging. On the other hand, I feel like this is a subject that requires quite a lot of essay writing and frequent Period 10s which at first I found quite daunting, and managing the workload with my other subjects was quite difficult.

However, it has definitely been worth it as I believe I have managed to make significant progress in my writing! Poetry is my weaker side but given a lot of opportunities to interact with poems from different eras has made this side of the course more enjoyable. Nearing the end of year 12 I have definitely enjoyed English Literature and developed a greater interest for the subject!”

- Anisa

Contact us

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