

Sixth Form Courses

English Literature

Why take this subject?

Did you enjoy exploring plays, poetry and novels at GCSE? Do you have an analytical mind and a vivid imagination? Do you like to curl up with a good book and escape into a world of fiction and fantasy?

Choosing to study English Literature at A Level will give you the opportunity to develop English skills that you have learnt at GCSE with a focus on the study of Literature: plays, poetry and prose (novels and short stories). The course will enable you to study texts at a higher level, with a more analytical and holistic approach, allowing you to explore texts through the lens of genre and critical theory.

This course will appeal to students who:

- Enjoy reading and have an interest in reading a variety of fiction texts
- Are interested in cultural, social and historical influences on texts and readers
- Want to keep their options open for further study – English Literature is a popular qualification for entry to a wide range of courses in Higher Education and for future careers, as it shows that you have a critical mind and an ability to read a range of challenging texts

What do I need to have studied at GCSE?

In order to take A Level English Literature, you must have five 6-9s, including 6 or above in both English Literature and English Language GCSE.

What will we study?

A Level English Literature (AQA B):

Unit 1 – Aspects of Comedy (40% of total A-level): in this unit, you will explore how ideas about comedy have developed over time, from Ancient Greece to modern comedic texts. You will study a range of texts, including plays (Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*) and novels or poetry spanning the 18th to 21st centuries. You will explore the ways in which these texts are comedic and how they fit in with traditional ideas about comedy.

Unit 2 – Texts and Genres (40% of total A Level): in this unit you will develop your ideas on the significance of genre through the study of texts that contain elements of "Social or Political Protest Writing": *The Kite Runner*, *A Doll's House*, a selection of poems by Tony Harrison, to name a few options. You will explore the ways in which power and control are presented in these texts and how these are challenged, either by the characters in the text or the writer's presentation of them.

Unit 3 – Further and Independent Reading (20% of Total A Level): in this unit you will choose two texts (one poetry and one prose), which you will explore using an understanding of a range of critical theories: narrative, feminist, Marxist, eco-critical, post-colonial and literary value and the canon. This will allow you to explore a genre that you enjoy or want to improve your knowledge of, as well as allowing you to consider the range of ways in which texts can be read.

How will I be examined?

Unit 1 – one exam, 2 hours 30 minutes

Unit 2 – one exam, 3 hours

Unit 3 – This unit will be assessed through two pieces of written coursework, one of which may be a piece of creative writing.

What super curricular opportunities will be available to me?

Students will have the opportunity to attend appropriate student conferences and participate in visits that will support their learning, including theatre trips.

What can this subject lead to?

English Literature develops an understanding and appreciation of the historical, social and cultural context of the world in which we live. This subject is particularly useful for those interested in publishing, the Creative Arts, Law and History, although it will benefit students in whichever career they choose.