

English Literature

Enter Prince
HAMLET
To be, or not to be
Whether 'tis nobler
The slings and arrows
Or to take arms
And, by opposing,

AQA
A-Level

Overview

English Literature builds upon the skills developed at GCSE. Students will learn to critically explore and analyse a range of texts using theoretical approaches and will learn to consider the impact of contextual factors on the potential meanings of each text.

Aims

- ▶ To analyse a range of literary texts (poetry, plays and novels) using appropriate terminology and concepts and coherent written expression.
- ▶ To develop an understanding of how writers use language, structure and form to shape meaning.

Grade Requirement

Students must achieve 5 A*-C grades at GCSE, including Mathematics and English Language, although a range of 'B' grades is preferable. Although we do not insist on a GCSE in English Literature, students will invariably struggle if they have not achieved a 'B' grade.

Complementary Subjects

Literature has a strong analytical element which complements English Language and Media. Those studying History and Theology will also find areas of political and philosophical overlap while scientists will benefit from the different critical perspectives offered.

AS-Level

Unit 1: Aspects of Narrative

Unit 2: Dramatic Genres

A2-Level

Unit 3: Texts and Genres

Unit 4: Further and Independent Reading

In depth study of two prose texts, one of which must have been written after 1990; analysis of poetry 1800-1845; two coursework assignments on a Shakespearean tragedy and one other play; a study of at least two texts relating to The Gothic or The Pastoral; a coursework portfolio covering at least 4 texts, one of which is contained within a pre-released anthology of critical writing.

A-Level English Literature is a popular subject and is best suited to students who are avid readers of novels, poetry and plays. Those students who enjoy reading extensively at home should achieve well in this subject, as will students who enjoy the process of constructing a reading of a text that draws upon a range of different sources and interpretations. It will also appeal to students who enjoy discussing their ideas with others and exploring topics such as history, politics, psychology and gender.

A-Level English Literature offers an insight into the way writers use language, structure and form to shape meaning and explore the issues and ideas that reflect upon our lives. It affords the opportunity for discussion of themes and characters and further allows for the exploration of dramatic technique. It builds on the work you are familiar with from GCSE English Literature but develops your skills of analysis and your ability to approach texts from many critical perspectives such as feminism, Marxism, psychoanalysis and reader response. You will look at a range of different texts from different genres and narrative forms, from Shakespeare to contemporary novels, and consider how historical, political and socio-cultural contexts impact on the meanings that are both implicit and explicit within the text.

English Literature is a long-established and well-respected subject. As such, it has become one of the most popular choices at degree level for those progressing to university. It also has strong links with professions such as Law and Journalism. For those wishing to pursue a work-based career path, this A-Level is well-regarded by employers as it demonstrates students' ability to communicate clearly and effectively in both written and spoken English. It also encourages students to consider texts from a range of critical and contextual perspectives and to consider the validity of these readings.

