

ENGLISH LITERATURE (AQA: A-Level 7712)

Why should I study English Literature?

If you've ever been inspired by a poem, a play or a story, you're interested in creative writing, and you're curious about ideas and people, A-Level English Literature will appeal to you. It's a challenging subject, but a rewarding one. It's also a subject highly regarded by universities, because it develops your ability to think critically and to argue persuasively, which is relevant to a wide range of disciplines, from Marketing to Law.

By studying English Literature at A-Level, you won't just grow intellectually, you'll grow as a person. Inevitably, the topics we consider will have relevance to your own life and experiences, and you'll bring your own unique perspectives to the table. You'll also learn from your fellow students, as well as your teachers and the critics you read; exchanging ideas is a key part of the process.

You'll progress in your writing skills, learning to communicate fluently using sophisticated vocabulary. You'll prepare to build an argument, using details from the text to support your case. You'll become confident in discussing the ways literary texts are a product of their social and cultural context. Most importantly, you'll develop the ability to analyse writers' methods, and appreciate how they shape meaning, and convey powerful messages across time.

We begin the course with two iconic works of literature, *Othello*, and *The Great Gatsby*, each of which you'll study with a different teacher. During Year 12, you'll also be introduced to a range of love poetry, and you'll go on to study the dystopian novel *The Handmaid's Tale*, the classic drama *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and Carol Ann Duffy's collection of poetry *Feminine Gospels*. You'll read extracts from novels such as *The God of Small Things* and *The Color Purple*, and you'll be encouraged to discover your own literary interests. 20% of the A-Level is coursework, which means you choose your own texts and tasks.

The A-Level comprises three components:

Paper 1: Love through the ages

Study of three texts: *The Great Gatsby*, *Othello*, and Love Poetry before 1900. Examination will include two unseen poems.

- Written exam: 3 hours
- Open book in Section C only
- 75 marks
- 40% of A-level

Paper 2: Texts in shared contexts

Option 2B: Modern times: literature from 1945 to the present day. Study of three texts: *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Feminine Gospels*, and *The Handmaid's Tale*. Examination will include an unseen prose extract..

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- Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes
- Open book
- 75 marks
- 40% of A-level

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. One extended essay (2500 words) and a bibliography.

- 50 marks
- 20% of A-level
- assessed by teachers
- moderated by AQA



WHERE NEXT?

Tash Rajan

Film and Television Production at the University of York

Studied English Literature, Drama and Theatre Studies, Religious Studies and Government & Politics