

English Language & Literature A Level

Board: AQA, Specification 7707

English Literature A Level

Board: AQA, Specification 7712

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The course

This course combines the study of literary texts (poems, novels, drama) with the study of non-fiction and spoken language. Language choices create meanings in any text and so we can use the same methods to analyse any type of text.

This specification differs from A Level Literature by extending its coverage beyond literature to explore differences and similarities between literary texts and other types of texts. It also offers opportunities for you to develop your writing skills by creating texts yourself and critically reflecting on your own work.

There is a coursework component (NEA) worth 20% of the A Level.

Paper 1: 'Telling Stories'

This unit involves the study of three texts ('Paris' anthology, one prose set text, poetry anthology). You will explore how and why stories are told and how language choices help to shape the representations of different worlds and perspectives.

Paper 2: 'Exploring Conflict'

You will study two texts: one prose and one drama. The unit looks at how language choices help to construct ideas of conflict between people, and between people and their societies. The exam requires students to respond creatively to the prose text such as by recreating a scene from a different character's perspective.

NEA (coursework): 'Making Connections'

The coursework requires you to compare how language is used in two different types of text: a literary text and some non-fiction material. You will be able to choose your own investigation with guidance from the teacher. Assessment is by means of a 2500-3000 word essay.

The Course

This course includes the study of Shakespeare together with works of poetry, prose and drama. You will also be expected to read a wide range of texts on given topics. There is a coursework component worth 20% of the A Level.

The course encourages you to explore the relationships that exist between texts and the contexts in which they are written and received. We also encourage students to develop their own informed personal responses and to challenge the interpretations of other readers.

Paper 1: Love through the Ages (examination)

This unit involves the study of three texts (one prose, one poetry and one Shakespeare) from a range of periods, on the theme of love.

You will also be required to respond to two previously unseen poems in the examination.

Paper 2: Texts in Shared Context (examination)

The aim of this unit is to study a range of texts from one particular time period. You will study three texts (one prose, one poetry and one drama). You will also learn about the context of the period by watching films and conducting research. The examination will also include a previously unseen extract.

Assessment (non-exam): Independent Critical Study

This module is assessed by means of a coursework essay (2500 words) and bibliography. You will be required to write a comparative critical study of two texts, one of which must have been written pre-1900.

This part of the course allows you to work independently and to develop your own interests.



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English Language & Literature A Level

Why study English?

All life is here

Fall in love, face death on a battlefield, be taken as a hostage, escape from a hostile land, and find spiritual enlightenment. All this and more is waiting for you to discover. Reading and discussing texts can open new worlds to you, transport you across time and space and enrich your life and understanding of people.

The study of an English course at A Level involves reading, analysis, discussion and writing. The courses we offer aim to further your understanding of literature and language, your reading, analytical and creative communication skills; and critical thinking – all skills which are required to study at university level, whatever the subject you decide to take.

The English faculty believes that it is very important that you gain the widest possible experience of English and the arts. We regularly organise theatre trips and visits to lectures and conferences. A wide range of extra-curricular activities are organised through the faculty and every other year we hold an Arts Week.

So following either or both of the two courses that we offer, will enable you to develop personally, academically and culturally.

What next?

An A Level in either English literature or English language and literature is an excellent foundation for further study in a range of subjects, as well as being a good basis for entry to a wide range of careers.

Students who have an English degree progress to careers in journalism, publishing, teaching, public relations, accountancy, the law, the civil service, management, marketing and a host of other possibilities.

