

WHY SHOULD I CHOOSE LITERATURE?

English Literature is a new and exciting course which draws and expands on what you will have studied at GCSE. It draws on all genres of literature, with a particular focus on wider reading and interpretation of key themes in texts. You will study Shakespeare, poetry and prose over a range of time periods, comparing structure, themes and ideas throughout. You will be expected to place texts in the given contexts they were written.

WHAT IS THE COURSE STRUCTURE LIKE?

The course is a two-year course. It consists of two exams and a language investigation piece of coursework. The exams are worth 40% each, and the coursework will be 20%. All exams will be taken at the end of your second year.

Paper 1 Literary Genres. Aspects of Tragedy (2 hours 30 mins – 75 marks)
The paper consists of three sections.

Section A: Shakespeare (25 marks)

In this, students will study Othello. The question will then invite them to analyse a key aspect of the play from a given extract. The students will then have to draw upon the whole play to explore how the given theme is presented throughout.

Section B Shakespeare. (25 marks)

The students will be given a question based on the full reading of Othello. Students will be asked to examine language, attitudes, structure and theme, as well as setting them in their historical context. This leads students into the debating aspect of university style questions and will always use language such as “to what extent” to encourage debate and critical interpretation.

Section C Comparing Texts. (25 marks)

In this section, the students will answer a question on an aspect of tragedy and its presentation in a chosen drama text, and a selection of poems. Either the text, or the poems will be pre 1900. A finalised list of set texts is available on the board's website (www.aqa.org.uk). Your teacher will advise you of which ones you will study. For us, the texts will be Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller and the poetry of John Keats.

Paper 2 Texts and Genres. Elements of Political and Social writing.

Section A. (25 marks). Students will be given an unseen extract in which they must link what they have learned to an analysis of key ideas of political or social ideologies.

A LEVEL ENGLISH LITERATURE

Section B (25 marks). Over section B and C, students must write about three texts, covering drama, prose and poetry. One must be post 2000. In this section, students will be covering Songs of Innocence and Experience by William Blake and The Kite Runner. The questions will give a view or a critique of the poetry and express an attitude towards the given theme. Students then debate to what extent they agree or disagree with this notion.

Section C (25 marks)

This section assesses the two texts not used for section B and will be a wider ranging question on an aspect of social and political writing. It encourages students to form a sense of debate, and link to key critical theories and aspects of context which may have helped to form these ideologies.

A list of core and choice texts will be given by the board.

Non-Exam Assessment (20% - 2500 words) Critical Study – Theory and Independence.

In this “coursework” element, students must choose two texts of their own. One must be poetry and the other a prose. They will then use ideas from an anthology of critical thinking to analyse key aspects or themes within these. Critiques such as Marxism, Feminism, Narrative and Eco-Critical theory may be applied and adapted to highlight how meaning and interpretation is added to a novel or collection of poetic works.

WHAT ARE THE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS?

A grade 6 at English Language would be preferable to suit the academic rigour of the course.

WHAT DOES IT GO WELL WITH?

Law, History, Sociology, Psychology, English Language, RE, Art.

WHAT CAREERS COULD IT LEAD TO?

English Literature is excellent for teaching (both primary and secondary), Journalism, Law, Civil Service and anything which may require organisation and astute academic reasoning.

Current ALPS scores. A2 ALPS 2 – Outstanding