

## The Course

English Literature A Level strives to develop the students' appreciation of the ways in which literature written in English has developed from the 15th Century onwards. The course will allow opportunities for students to study a range of prose, drama and verse from a number of different genres and historical periods. There is also the chance for the students to develop their creative writing skills through original and recreative tasks.

### Unit 1: Poetry

Written examination: 2 hours (30% of A Level).

**Section A:** Study of a pre-1900 poet, e.g. Chaucer, John Donne, John Keats, John Milton, Christina Rossetti.

**Section B:** Study of a pair of post-1900 poets, e.g. Thomas Hardy & T.S. Eliot, Philip Larkin & Carol Ann Duffy.

### Unit 2: Drama

Written examination: 2 hours (30% of A Level).

**Section A:** Study of a single Shakespeare play, e.g. *King Lear*, *Hamlet*, *The Tempest*, *Antony and Cleopatra*.

**Section B:** Study of a pair of plays – one pre-1900 play, and the other post-1900, e.g. Harold Pinter's *Betrayal* and Oscar Wilde's *Lady Windermere's Fan*.

### Unit 3: Unseen Prose and Poetry

Written examination: 2 hours (20% of A Level).

**Section A:** Analysis of an unseen prose passage. Candidates choose whether to analyse a passage from the period 1880-1910 or rather to select one from the period 1918-1939.

**Section B:** Candidates will respond to their reading of an unseen poem. The poem may be taken from any period or genre.

### Unit 4: Prose Study

**Coursework:** 2,500 - 3,000 words (20% of A Level)

The candidates will write a coursework piece based on their reading of two prose texts from different authors. One must be published pre-2000 and the other post-2000, e.g. *The Great Gatsby* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*.

## Why study English Literature?

- Our aim is to develop independent thinkers who love debate and exploring literature, as well as helping students to write fluent and coherent responses to challenging questions.
- English Literature explores ideas relating to ethics, identity, history and philosophy.
- In recent years, students have studied Shakespeare, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Geoffrey Chaucer, John Donne, Mohsin Hamid, John Keats, Philip Larkin, Carol Ann Duffy, Oscar Wilde and Harold Pinter.
- Students consider not only the written word, but also the contexts in which the texts were written and received.
- English Literature is a discussion-based subject, encouraging you to express your own opinions and to learn the value of those expressed by others.





### **What can I do with a qualification in this subject?**

The study of English Literature is recognised as not only furnishing the student with skills in communication, interpretation and debate, but also providing a springboard into a wide range of university and career choices, including Law, Journalism, Philosophy, Politics and Social Sciences: all jobs linked with communication and relationships. Analysing detail and organising disparate ideas into a coherent argument are crucial skills in many areas of work. Understanding words and context is an invaluable skill, as is the ability to discuss and appreciate matters of an ethical nature.

### **Co-curricular Opportunities**

In recent years, students have had the opportunity to see theatre productions at a range of venues, including the National Theatre, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and the Vaudeville in London's West End. In addition, students have attended lecture days and the department has welcomed a wealth of prestigious visiting speakers to address the English Society.

### **What do I need to study English Literature?**

A minimum Grade 6 in GCSE English Literature is required and a Grade 7 is strongly recommended.

A Level subject video available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NDojNWBGwlc>