

A-Level English Literature

EXAM BOARD: Edexcel

What does the course cover?

During this course you will learn to consider how and why great works of literature were written. You will read a range of texts from Shakespearean tragedy to poetry written post-2000, from classic works of English literature to twentieth century feminist novels, from drama written in the 1600s to Victorian poetry. The questions we will ask of texts include:

- Why did the author write a text?
- How does an author create meaning?
- How does language affect meaning?
- Is the author trying to convey a message?
- What was happening socially and historically when the text was written?
- How does structure and structural devices create meaning?
- How might a reader respond to this text?
- How might a feminist reader respond to a particular text?
- Why would an author want to re-write history?
- Does an author play with genre and form? Why?
- Is this text a Marxist text?
- How does Shakespeare use the form of Greek tragedy?
- Does the text carry political messages?
- How might a Victorian readership respond to this poem?
- What happens when we read a text from a feminist perspective?
- How does the text reflect what was happening politically when it was written?

What skills will the course help you develop?

Studying English Literature will help broaden your knowledge of prose, plays and poems. This subject will develop your essay writing skills, enhance your written and verbal communication, allow you an opportunity to read a range of texts from different time periods, and promote your already existent love of reading. With an emphasis on discussion and written communication, English Literature will help you develop a range of important skills for the future.

How is the course assessed?

The course is assessed predominantly through exams (80% examination and 20% coursework). There are three exams at the end of Year 13 (two 2 hours and 15 minutes exams and one 1 hour exam). Additionally, in Year 13 there is an independent coursework unit comprising 20% of the qualification.

What are the entry requirements?

Students wishing to study English Literature will have 5 GCSEs A*-C with a minimum of two grade 5s in English Literature and English Language. Students choosing this subject will have a love of reading and will be confident independent readers. Additionally, students will need to have been successful in essay-based subjects they have studied and enjoy writing.

What do students who study this course go on to do?

Students who study this course have gone on to study a wide range of subjects at university from sciences to arts subjects. This subject is popular with all providers of further education and employers as it promotes excellent skills of communication and a questioning approach to learning.

Who is the staff contact for English Literature?

Ms Pollard is the Head of Department. English Literature A-Level teachers include Ms Pollard, Ms Lenihan, Dr Sutton, Ms Hoyles and Mr Howard.