

A-level English Literature

Board and Specification: **AQA 7712**

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Subject specific entry requirements:

A Grade 6 in GCSE English Language and a Grade 6 in GCSE English Literature.

What skills are required of students?

- Independent reading and research skills, along with the ability to critically analyse challenging texts.
- Drafting, redrafting and editing, along with the ability to discuss their own opinions about texts with the rest of the class.
- Students should be able to work independently on their own coursework, with guidance from their teachers.

Course Outline

As an English Literature A-level student, you will further enhance the skills and abilities acquired at GCSE. Over the two years, you will study various literary works in depth: ranging from Shakespeare to texts by modern writers. Students will also study a range of poetry and drama texts whilst exploring two major themes: Love through the Ages and World War One and its aftermath.

In terms of assessment, all students will sit two exams at the end of the two-year A-level course. These exams are worth 80% of the final A-level grade. The remaining 20% of the overall grade is made up by the Independent Critical Study which is an extended piece of coursework. For this piece, students will be required to complete a comparative critical study of two texts which they have read and studied in depth.

Modules titles and codes:

Paper 1: Love Through the Ages: assessed through examination

Students will study three texts: 'Othello' by William Shakespeare; 'The Great Gatsby' by F. Scott Fitzgerald and the AQA 'Love Through the Ages' pre-1900 poetry anthology. They will also be required to respond to unseen poetry in the exam.

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

Paper 2: Texts in Shared contexts: Option 2A: 'WW1 and its aftermath': assessed through examination

Students will study three texts: 'Regeneration' by Pat Barker; 'The Wipers Times' by Ian Hislop and Nick Newman and Wilfred Owen's poetry. The examination will also include an unseen extract of WW1 prose.

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

Non-examined assessment: Independent Critical Study: texts across time

This is the coursework element of the A-level: now referred to as the non-examined assessment. This involves the comparative critical study of two texts: 'Frankenstein' by Mary Shelley (this is the pre-1900 text) and one other text chosen by students under the guidance of their teacher.

Students will then complete one extended essay of 2,500 words and an accompanying bibliography, working independently with the guidance of their teachers.
Worth 20% of A-level, assessed by teachers, moderated by AQA, 50 marks.

What kinds of work will you do in class and at home?

Research focusing on authors, texts and their contexts
Reading around your set texts
Essay Writing

Exam Practice
Writing notes
Discussion
Presenting your ideas to the rest of the class

What other A-levels does this subject connect well with?

English Literature A-level connects well with many other subjects – especially those that require analysis and allow for independent thinking and creativity. Understanding the social, cultural and historical context of the different texts studied for English Literature is also key, meaning that History and Sociology are A-levels which link particularly well with this course. Also, studying English literature often requires us to delve into the minds of both the writers and their characters, meaning that Psychology A-level also links well with this course. The English Literature A-level is highly respected by all universities as literature students are known for their analytical skills and their ability to work independently and discuss their ideas in a mature and confident way. English literature graduates go on to work in many different fields, such as publishing, law, the civil service, journalism and even teaching!

What types of university course will be helped by this A-level?

English Literature, English and Creative Writing, Psychology, Sociology, History, Law, Education, Journalism and Linguistics.