



English Literature A Level



Exam Board: Edexcel

Entry requirements: Grade 5 in English Literature and Language GCSE

Intent

Structure

We aim to inspire students who are passionate about Literature, and we develop their curiosity to want to find out more. We support students in delving deeper into their understanding of Literary Heritages to enable them to understand a writer's intention. This will formulate their own thoughts on the impact that these writers have had on our society. Our course provides students with the opportunity to read some excellent novels, plays and poetry that are part of the Literary Canon and we will strengthen their critical approaches to understanding how the context of a piece influences the way it was written. We teach students to read around a topic or text to help them understand other approaches and critique of the chosen texts.

Implementation

Content & Sequencing

2 Year course. (No AS Level.)

Drama: *Othello* (William Shakespeare) and *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Tennessee Williams)

Study of both dramatic texts to include critique and analysis of the dramatic intentions of the playwright. Contextual research and understanding. A focus on the Tragic (genre).

We start with this so that students can build on their prior attainment with the Shakespeare text at GCSE, and can then elevate their thoughts to the higher analytical standard required.

Poetry: Poetry of the Decade (anthology) and The Romantics (chosen works)

Comparative analysis of poems from modern writers, both known and unseen.

A study of 'The Romantics' as a movement in which we explore a wide range of poetry, and consider the impact that Romantic ideals had on this poetry.

This is studied in the first year to embed and develop skills of analysis which are vital for success at A Level. Additionally, there is a high volume of poems that need to be covered so ample time is required.

Prose: *Beloved* (Toni Morrison) and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Oscar Wilde).

Comparative study of the two texts based on thematic links. Students will develop an in-depth knowledge of both texts and the context in which they were written. These texts are studied in the second year due to their complexity. Moreover, this structure allows time for students to read both texts over the summer holidays.

Coursework component:

This is a comparative study of two novels (1 piece of 3000 words). The base text is *A Handmaid's Tale* (Margaret Atwood), and students then have a choice as to which novel they use for comparison.

Assessment Methods

We are an Edexcel centre, and there are three external exams at the end of the two year course. All exams are open book (excluding the Critical Anthology for Shakespeare):

Drama: One exam lasting 2 hours and 15 minutes in which students write two essay responses (one on *Othello* and another on *A Streetcar Named Desire*). This 30% of the qualification.

Prose: One exam lasting 1 hour in which students write a comparative essay on *Beloved* and *Picture of Dorian Gray*. This is worth 20% of the qualification.

Poetry: On exam lasting 2 hours and 15 minutes in which students write one comparative essay on Modern Poetry, and one essay on Romantic poetry. This is worth 30% of the qualification.

Coursework essay: A comparative essay of 3000 words, to be completed towards the end of first year of the course. This is worth 20% of the qualification.

Impact

Onward Progression

This course builds dynamic, independent thinkers. We allow and encourage students to explore the text they read and look for the inner depths of critical and analytical thinking. We want to build strong lovers of Literature that truly understand where a piece of Literature comes from. We have chosen texts from highly acclaimed writers that perhaps students have not yet come across. These texts offer a wide and diverse insight into our Literary world and are a reflection of our society today.

A Level English unlocks many doors. It is a marker for high levels of skill in communication and thought processing. It can take you on to a degree in similar areas: Literature / Language / Journalism. However, it can also be used to obtain places on Law degrees and beyond. Most, if not all, professional employers will look favourably on a high level of competency in A level English and therefore it is a great choice as an academic subject.

Further information contact

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