



English Literature A Level

Awarding Body: **OCR**

English Literature

We are now in our third year of teaching the OCR English Literature A Level, a two year course with final examinations at the end of Year 13. Our students achieved 91% A*-B grade in last year's exams.

The OCR English Literature course is varied, challenging and offers deep and wide-ranging engagement with the subject area. Students will have the opportunity to engage with literature from Chaucer to the present day, looking at set texts and works that they have selected themselves. There is a focus on studying texts within their historical context and students are encouraged to compare texts by different authors across prose, poetry and drama.

The course is assessed through three components: two examination papers worth 40% each and one coursework submission worth 20%.

PAPER 1: Drama and pre-1900 Poetry – 40% of A Level

Candidates study three set texts for this paper: one Shakespeare play, one pre-1900 drama text and one pre-1900 poetry text. Shakespeare plays available for study are ***Hamlet, Measure for Measure, Richard III, The Tempest, Twelfth Night*** and ***Coriolanus***. Students will study one play written before 1900 by either **Marlowe, Webster, Goldsmith, Ibsen** or **Wilde**. The poets on the syllabus are **Chaucer, Milton, Coleridge, Tennyson** and **Christina Rossetti**.

The component is assessed with a two-hours and thirty minutes *closed text* examination.

PAPER 2: Comparative and Contextual Study – 40% of A Level

This component encourages the development of close reading and comparative analysis skills by studying at least two novels from a particular historical period or genre.

As well as exploring connections between their texts, students will develop an understanding of the influence of the contexts in which their chosen texts were written and received. The nature of this unit encourages students to read widely and develop an understanding of their topic by gaining familiarity with more than the minimum of two novels and also engaging with non-fiction and literary criticism

related to their topic. Your teacher will select from the following list (with some of the texts available for study also noted here).

- **American Literature 1880–1940** (F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*; John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*; Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*)
- **The Gothic** (Angela Carter's *The Bloody Chamber*, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*; Iain Banks' *The Wasp Factory*)
- **Dystopia** (Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*; George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*; Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*)
- **Women in Literature** (Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*; Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*; Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*)
- **The Immigrant Experience** (Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*; Henry Roth's *Call it Sleep*; Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*)

This paper will be assessed with a two-hours and thirty minutes *closed text* examination.

PAPER 3: Non-examined Assessment – 20% of A Level

This component is designed to encourage individual study and a particular enjoyment of modern literature. Learners will study three texts, which must include one prose text, one poetry text and one drama text. The chosen texts must have been published or performed in 1900 or later and one of the texts must have been first published or performed in 2000 or later. You will be supported by your teacher when selecting your texts and a proposal form will be submitted to the examination board before you commence your investigation.

Topics suggested by the examination board include: **War Through Time, Youth In Time, Irish Literature, Time, Young Women, Invasion and The City**. Suggested authors include **Wilfred Owen, Alan Bennett, W.B. Yeats, Ian McEwan, Sylvia Plath, Seamus Heaney, T.S. Eliot** and **Caryl Churchill**.

Paper 3 will reward those who are independent readers. The basis of the whole course is the encouragement of an active engagement in responding to literature. Developing your enthusiasm for reading is therefore crucial.