

A Level English Language and Literature

Love writing? Like to analyse...well, everything?

Why choose this course?

The English Language and Literature A Level allows you to be creative - not only in the fiction and non-fiction writing you will produce - but also in the creative approach you can take in your analytical work. How? This multi-disciplinary A Level imposes no rules as to how you should approach your analysis of a text. Word class? Sure. Imagery? Of course!

What will I learn?

Year 1

Voices in Speech and Writing

This component has an explicit focus on the concept of 'voice'. You will study how spoken voices are formed and written voices created in literary, non-literary and digital texts. You will study how texts are formed for specific audiences, purposes and genres and learn how to craft written work for a range of contexts. This will allow you to produce your own creative work in response to a stimulus text for the coursework module.

You will develop an understanding of how writers and speakers shape and craft language to create a sense of voice in their work, and will look at connections between texts as well as the significance and influence of context.

Varieties in Language and Literature

This component focuses on the ways in which different writers convey their thoughts or ideas towards a theme in literary texts. We will be focusing on the theme of 'Society and the Individual' in the novel 'The Great Gatsby' by F. Scott Fitzgerald and the poetry of Philip Larkin from The Whitsun Weddings. Your understanding of how writers use language techniques and literary devices to craft their pieces and communicate ideas or issues will be developed in this module as well as analysing the significance and influence of contexts.

Year 2

Voices in Speech and Writing (exam worth 40% of the A Level grade)

Using the same Anthology on 'voice' as in Year 1, this unit develops the study of how spoken voices are formed and written voices created in literary, non-literary and digital texts. You will develop your understanding of how writers and speakers shape and craft language to create a sense of voice in their work, through the study of a twentieth century play 'A Streetcar Named Desire' by Tennessee Williams. Again, you will look at connections between texts as well as the significance and influence of context.

Varieties in Language and Literature (exam worth 40% of the A Level grade)

As in Year 1, we will be focusing on the theme of 'Society and the Individual' and the novel 'The Great Gatsby' by F. Scott Fitzgerald and the poetry of Philip Larkin from The Whitsun Weddings. Your understanding of how writers use language techniques and literary devices to craft their pieces and communicate ideas or issues will be developed further in this module as you learn to apply your analytical skill to an unseen text.

Investigating and Creating Texts (Coursework – worth 20% of A Level grade)

This module allows you to express your creative writing skill through the production of two pieces of writing which have been inspired by your wider reading: one piece of fiction writing and one piece of creative non-fiction writing. You will then write one analytical commentary reflecting on your studied texts and the pieces of writing they have produced.

Assessment Arrangement

You will complete an A Level qualification based on the modules covered in Year 2.

You will be assessed regularly on written essay work that is conducted either as homework or under timed conditions in class and given feedback on your progress. You also will be assessed regularly on linguistic terminology.

Discussions and presentations are a vital part of our assessment process and you will be expected to contribute to those and reading exercises.

You will review your own performance in 1:1 sessions with your tutor.

You will undertake mock examinations on each unit in advance of your final exams at the end of Year 1 and Year 2.

You will be formally examined on each unit that you study. The examinations are traditional and essay-based, and are sat at the end of the second year, although mock exams will be administered at the end of the first year to ensure progress. Coursework in the second year is compulsory.

Information & Support

We encourage all students to read widely and conduct their own research into language and literature, especially those who wish to study English at degree level. Unit 3 encourages you to explore non-fiction and fiction writing which suit your interests. We will guide you towards writers, themes or texts should you require some inspiration.

What will I need?

Five GCSEs at grade 4 or above including a grade 6 or above in English Language and a grade 5 or above in English Literature. Successful A Level students would normally have achieved a grade 6 or above in a number of relevant GCSE subjects. It clearly helps to enjoy reading and have an interest in grammar and a love of the written and spoken word. You also need to be highly motivated and capable of carrying out independent research and wider reading.

Where will it take me?

This A Level enables you to develop the key critical, creative and analytical skills required both for progression to higher education and for enhanced employability. Whether you go on to study Language or Literature at degree level, the course provides a grounding for both disciplines.

English Language and Literature is also an excellent subject to complement many courses, such as psychology, sociology, any media-related course, communication and education.

Additional Information

Awarding Body:

Edexcel