

English Language & Literature

(Compulsory Subject - GCSE)

What will I learn about?

English Language

Students will study skills in reading and writing - reading literary and non-literary texts from the 19th Century through to the 21st Century. They will be required to demonstrate that they can write for a variety of different audiences and purposes. Students will also be assessed orally through Speaking and Listening, exploring the features of Spoken Language. Students will be required to complete one formal speech.

English Literature

Students will study Shakespeare's Macbeth, pre and post 1914 prose and drama, as well as a range of poetry, featuring the themes of power and conflict, from 1789 to the present day. This year we have been looking at Inspector Calls, a strange and mysterious play which deals with death, social class and deceit. A Christmas Carol is our choice of text for the nineteenth-century novel and allows students to immerse themselves in a novella based on political history steeped in symbolism and allegory.

How is the course structured?

Year 10

Students will learn the key skills needed for their English language and literature examinations. They will look at a range of 19th-Century fiction and non-fiction texts and show that they can write with technical accuracy. They will practise creative writing as well as transactional writing. The focus of year 10 however, is to read each of the set texts for literature and gain a clear understanding of the plot, themes and characters, as well as their social and historical contexts.

Year 11

Students will continue to develop their English language skills with a focus on the poetry required for their English literature examination.

How will my work be assessed?

There are two main ways that students' work is assessed:

Externally – Both courses are linear and students sit all external examinations in both GCSE English and GCSE English literature at the end of Year 11. They will have to sit two different language papers where their reading and writing skills are assessed. They will sit a further two English Literature papers where their knowledge of the texts and poetry they have studied are examined.

Internally – English teachers will feedback to students on their progress by marking classwork and homework regularly, feeding back and offering supportive advice in preparation for mock and external examinations.

(Staff also assess and mark Speaking and Listening performance – although an external moderator makes frequent visits to check that our standards are of the highest order).

What can these qualifications lead to?

Clearly a good pass in GCSE English is a must for all students leaving school hoping to embark on a career in the world of work or apply for a place in any Sixth Form.

It is a Government requirement that students must continue to study English at college if they do not pass their GCSE qualification. An English GCSE, along with a maths GCSE, is a crucial qualification for students making their way after Year 11.

Studying English opens so many doors; there are literally thousands of careers which look favourably on an English degree and students may find themselves becoming a chief editor, journalist, teacher or even a famous writer.