

English Language and Literature

Title of course: English Language and English Literature

Qualification/level at the end of the course: GCSE (2 GCSEs)

Course description: the English Language and Literature GCSE specifications have been rewritten recently and you will be the third year to take the new Grade 1-9 examinations. The expectation is that unless there are exceptional circumstances you will study and sit both Language and Literature. This will give you two GCSE qualifications.

You will study a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts from various periods in British history. This will include some Shakespeare, some poetry, a pre-1914 text for Literature and a wide range of both fictions and non-fiction texts for English Language. We will look at speeches, reportage, travel writing and news articles from the 1500s to present day. The non-fiction study will cover a wide range of topics, from adventure and exploration to education and childhood experiences.

Writing skills will also be assessed in English Language, so we will give you plenty of opportunity to write for a wide range of audiences and in a range of styles. If you like writing speeches, you will have the opportunity to do this. If you like writing descriptive pieces and articles, you will have the opportunity to do both.

Speaking and Listening will still play a part in your assessment. Be prepared to have some lively discussions in English and present your ideas about the world in a passionate way.

Skills required: the English Language and Literature GCSEs will require you to engage with texts critically and enthusiastically. You need to ask questions and be prepared to look beneath the surface, analysing texts for meaning and considering the key perspectives the author is trying to convey. Increasingly, your own opinion is going to be important when you look at texts. How well do you think the text is written will be a question your teacher will ask again and again. You need to come to lessons full of ideas, questions and opinions.

You will also be required in both English Language and Literature to read and write independently at length. This means you need to listen to the news, form opinions and engage with issues you feel passionately about. The more you have to say, and the more about the world you know, the more you can write about!

Assessment: assessment will take place at the end of Year 11. Coursework is no longer a component of the course, so the final grade given is the result of the exams you sit in May/June of year 11.

GCSE English Language consists of two exam papers. Paper One focuses on fictional writing from either the 20th or 21st century. You will be given an extract from a piece of fiction you have not seen before and asked a series of analytical questions on it. You will then be asked to complete a piece of narrative or descriptive writing. Paper Two focuses on non-fiction writing from the 19th and either 20th or 21st century. You will be given two non-fiction pieces which you have not studied before and asked to answer a series of questions on them. You will then write a piece of non-fiction writing.

GCSE English Literature consists of two exam papers. Paper One focuses on Shakespeare and pre-1900 texts. Paper Two focuses on modern plays and poetry. For both exams you will be asked to write extended pieces on texts you have already studied in Year 10 and 11. You will need to know them well as you cannot take the books in with you.

