English Literature

A-Level

What will I learn?

Students will discover a world of literature that is more challenging than that of the GCSE courses. At this level, our texts engage with more adult themes and require greater independence of thought. As our students journey through their A-Level, they encounter poets, playwrights and authors from past and present. They discover what love and relationships were like over the course of history and examine texts that were written after World War Two, like "The Handmaid's Tale". Students will engage with modern events, like war, in order to develop an appreciation of contexts and plurality of reading. Excitingly, the NEA is an independent study where students have the opportunity to select their own text and question, and embark on an adventure through areas of literature that enthuse them.

How will I learn?

Our lessons are mostly focused on discussion around the texts that we are studying, with some written tasks and annotation. We encourage healthy debate about the ideas and themes, and the texts offer lots of opportunities for this. Independent study time is often used to complete secondary reading and research. Homework might be essay based or a reading task. We may also ask you to prepare to present an idea or some of your research findings to the class.

How will I be assessed?

The A-Level in English Literature is assessed through two examinations that occur at the end of the two year course, and one NEA essay. The NEA is an independently chosen exploration of two texts and the examinations cover all of the other aspects of the course. Some questions require comparison between texts that have been studied, but there are also two unseen elements to grapple with.

FAQs.

Is this the right course for me if I don't enjoy reading?
This course is not suited to those who find reading a chore. However, it definitely helps you to develop a strong reading habit. Being "well-read" is an enormous benefit in situations where you have to interact with others in a professional capacity.

What if I hate writing essays?
There are a lot of essays to be written during this A-Level. This course will help you to write better essays. Most university courses and professions require you to write well. An A-Level in English Literature communicates this for you.

Can I just watch the films instead?
You can definitely watch the films as well as reading the set texts. Watching the films is not a substitute for reading the set texts.

Is there a lot of transition work to do over the summer?
It will be of great benefit to you to have read the Year 12 texts before you start the course. This will probably be one novel, one play and some poetry.

What is the benefit of studying A-Level English Literature?
Russell Group universities describe English literature as a subject which keeps options open, with regard to degree courses, as it is a well respected qualification.

Exam Board

AQA
(Literature A specification with paper 2B option)

Skills Gained

Critical thinking
Evaluation
Research
Debating
Presentation
Team work
Organisation
Academic writing

Careers

Journalism
Publishing
Teaching
Law
Web Editing
Public Relations
Social Media Management
Copywriting
Curation