English Literature

The A Level Literature course will comprise the study of at leasteighttextspublishedor performed acrossa range of time and across the major literary genresof poetry, prose and drama. Students will beexpectedto read set texts as well as others that they have selected for themselves thereby engaging critically and creatively with a substantial body of texts and ways of responding to them. They will develop and effectively apply their knowledge of literary analysis and evaluation whilst exploring the contexts of the texts they are reading and others' interpretations of them. During the course, students will undertake independent and sustained studies to deepen their appreciation and understanding of English literature, including its changing traditions.

Course Structure & Content

Component 1: Drama

Students will study the genre of tragedy focusing on Hamlet by William Shakespeare and A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennessee Williams. In addition, they will be provided with an anthology of critical essays related to Hamlet. In the written examination, they will answer one essay question from choice of two on Hamlet, incorporating ideas from the wider critical reading studied and then a further question from a choice of two on A Streetcar Named Desire. Component 1 will be assessed by an open book written examination and is worth 30% of the total marks.

Component 2: Prose

Students will study aspects of prose via two texts linked by the shared theme of Science and Society: Frankenstein by Mary Shelley and Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro. They will articulate personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, analyse how meaning is shaped, consider the significance and influence of the contexts and explore connections between the texts. Component 2 will be assessed by an open book written examination in which they will answer one comparative essay question from a choice of two on their studied theme. It is worth 20% of the total marks.

Component 3: Poetry

Students will study a selection of poems from two published poetry texts. They will consider poetic form, meaning and language in a selection of post-2000 poetry from Poems of the Decade: An Anthology of the Forward Books of Poetry 2002–2011. They will also develop depth of knowledge about poetic style by studying a selection of poems by Christina Rossetti; this unit will be enhanced by study of the contexts in which the text was written and received. Component 3 will be assessed by an open book written examination consisting of two sections: one comparative essay question from a choice of two on an unseen modern poem and one named poem from the studied contemporary text; and one essay question from a choice of two on Rossetti's poetry. This component is worth 30% of the total marks.

Component 4: Coursework

Students will be taught two texts (The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde and The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald) from which they must select one. They then choose another text of their choice in order to write one extended comparative essay of between 2500–3000 words. This will be internally marked and externally moderated and comprises 20% of the total marks.

Entry Requirements

A grade 6/5 or above in English Language and English Literature at GCSE. Or grade 6 in English Language or English Literature and Grade 5 in History or RE

Career Prospects

Students who complete the course will be well prepared for further specialist study in literature or language based courses at university, or diverse courses or careers in many fields, for example drama, journalism, media, psychology, politics, philosophy, business, education and law.