

## English Literature AS/A level

### Introduction

English Literature is a subject for those who like reading independently. Whilst poetry and plays will be read together in class, there is an expectation that the novels will be read privately in preparation for class discussion. You need to enjoy discussing the books you study with others and be willing to investigate the underlying themes and issues implied by literary texts, novels, plays and poems. You need to have an interest in literature of the past as a number of texts will be pre 20<sup>th</sup> century. You also need to have an interest in language and how writers use it. Above all you must have a keen desire to improve your own ability to structure and support a written argument.

### Year 1

You will be encouraged to read widely in the first year of the course and to pay close attention to how narrative works in texts, as well as make connections across texts through exploring narratives. You will be introduced to notions of genre through the study of drama texts..

For the two hour Unit 1 examination, you will study four texts, (one of which must have been written post 1994) and two poetry texts 1800 -1945. The novels may include "The Kite Runner," by Khaled Hosseini and "The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night," by Mark Haddon. The poetry will be taken from an anthology of narrative poems and you will focus on two particular poets chosen by your teacher. You will be allowed a clean copy of the texts in the examination. Two questions must be answered. One question will focus on a chosen text and candidates will answer on the narrative method used in the given extract, as well as relating it to wider concerns within the text as a whole. The other will require candidates to compare aspects of narrative across the other three texts they have studied but not used for the first question.

Unit 2 is coursework based on Aspects of Tragedy. A portfolio containing two pieces of written coursework of approximately 1500 words each is required. One piece could be re-creative and one

more traditional covering an aspect of the tragic genre. One will be based on Shakespeare and the other on a more modern text. For example you could be asked to create a suitable voice and write a dramatic monologue as a particular character at key moments of the play or to comment on aspects of the text which define it as tragedy. Texts may include Shakespeare's "Othello" and Ibsen's, "A Doll's House" or "All My Sons," by Arthur Miller.

### Year 2

There will be a minimum of three texts for study including at least one text from 1300 – 1800. One exam answer will focus exclusively on one of the texts and the other the other will require you to compare a chosen aspect of the topic across three texts. Texts will focus on either Gothic elements or Pastoral and may include Marlowe's Dr Faustus, Bronte's Wuthering Heights and Carter's Bloody Chamber or Blake's Songs of Innocence and Experience, the poetry of Larkin or R.S. Thomas.

Coursework portfolios will include two pieces of written coursework. One will compare two chosen texts and the other will apply an aspect of pre released critical anthology to a further literary text. Candidates will have some flexibility to negotiate tasks. An example might be to discuss how authors create symbolic meaning out of the use of houses in Waugh's Brideshead Revisited and du Maurier's Rebecca.

### Assessment

In each year the course is assessed in 2 parts. One part is assessed by the coursework portfolio whilst the other is assessed through an examination.

### Specific Entry Criteria

Grade C in English Language and grade C in English Literature.