



KING EDWARD VI

Handsworth School For Girls

ENGLISH LITERATURE B

Examination Board: AQA
Specification: Advanced GCE 7717
<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/as-and-a-level/english-literature-b-7716-7717>

Why should I study English Literature?

Offering clear progression from GCSE, this course allows students to build on the skills and knowledge already gained and prepare for their next steps. The English Literature course aims to develop a relevant, engaging and up-to-date approach to the reading and study of literature through the lens of genre and theory, encouraging independent study of a range of texts within a shared context, giving meaning to the way that texts are grouped. This unifying approach facilitates the inclusion of a range of wider reading, thus extending students' experience and appreciation of literature.

The variety of assessment styles used, such as passage-based questions, unseen material, single text questions, multiple text questions, open- and closed-book approaches, allows students to develop a wide range of skills, such as the ability to read critically, analyse, evaluate and undertake independent research which are valuable for both further study and future employment.

A LEVEL (7717BB) What will I learn about?

In **Literary Genres (Paper 1)**, the texts are connected through a mainstream literary genre. We have selected Aspects of Comedy. Comedy has a long tradition in literature, with its origins in the Ancient World and with a specific emphasis on drama. Texts have been selected and grouped together because they share some of the common features of traditional tragic and comic drama while also offering some interesting variations. We will study four texts: one Shakespeare play, one further drama text, one poetry text and one prose text.

In **Texts and Genres (Paper 2)**, the texts are grouped together as having elements of more modern genres. These genres, which are heavily influenced by culture, are continually evolving. You will study three social and political texts: one post-2000 prose text, one poetry collection and one further text, one of which must be written pre-1900. You will also respond to an unseen passage in the examination and comment on how it explores elements of the textual tradition. The paper for this component is open book. You may take a copy of your set texts into the examination.

Theory and NEA

The A-level non-exam assessment component provides opportunities for you to pursue your own areas of interest and develop personal and independent learning skills. Through the integration of a Critical Anthology with A-level non-examination assessment study, you are able to explore some of the critical and theoretical approaches that form the basis for literary study which in turn informs and illuminates your own reading of texts. You will complete two essays of 1500 words each.

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How will I be taught?

Your teachers will encourage you to explore a wide range of literature and study texts through a range of methods. You will research and present your findings to the class; you will have stimulating and interesting whole-class and small group discussion. Drafting of coursework and practice of timed examination questions will also be important parts of both courses. The key to success in English Literature at A level is an open mind, wider reading, being able to apply critical opinions and not being afraid to defend your opinion.

Application beyond school:

- A good grade at A level English Literature is a passport to all university courses but is especially suited for those intending to pursue careers in Law, Modern Languages, History, Journalism, Media & Communication Studies, Philosophy and the Civil Service. Additionally, many university faculties such as Medicine and Dentistry like to admit students with another 'string to their bow', as well as the usual science and mathematics A level subjects.

Assessment Format:

| Level | Component | Requirements | Duration | Marks |
|---------|------------------------------------|---|---|----------------------|
| A Level | Paper 1 Literary genres | Option 1B Aspects of comedy Shakespeare, <i>The Taming of the Shrew</i> ; Oscar Wilde, <i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i> ; Jane Austen, <i>Emma</i> . | 2 hours 30 mins Closed book Year 13 | 75 40% of A Level |
| A Level | Paper 2 Texts and genres | Option 2B Elements of political and social protest writing Margaret Atwood, <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> ; Khaled Hosseini, <i>The Kite Runner</i> ; William Blake, <i>Songs of Innocence and of Experience</i> . | 3 hours Open book Year 13 | 75 40% of A Level |
| A Level | Paper 3 Theory and independence | Study of two texts, chosen by students in collaboration with their teacher. | Two essays of 1250-1500 words | 50 20% of A Level |

Are there any special requirements?

- Enthusiasm to read widely and critically and to write fluently.
- G.C.S.E. grades 9, 8 or 7 **in both** English Language and English Literature.
- A sense of humour is also desirable, as some of our best writers can be a little eccentric and 'leftfield' at times!

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