**English A Level – OCR**

*Literature adds to reality, it does not simply describe it. It enriches the necessary competencies that daily life requires and provides; and in this respect, it irrigates the deserts that our lives have already become.*[***C. S. Lewis***](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/c/cslewis115363.html)

The A level will be taught over two years with all units examined at the end of Year 13. The A Level will be assessed via **two** examinations (Components 1 and 2) and **one** internally assessed folder of work (Component 3).

Over the duration of the course you will study texts from a range of genres written between the sixteenth century and the present day. Your reading of the set texts will be enriched through teaching of the texts within their literary, social and historical contexts and informed by the study of secondary critical material. The purpose of the A level course is to introduce you to a varied range of challenging works of Literature and to fuel your love for and critical appreciation of the written word.

*Great literature is simply language charged with meaning to the utmost possible degree.****Ezra Pound***

In their written responses students will be expected to:

Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.

 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts.

 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.

 Explore connections across literary texts.

Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

Assessment Objectives:

* AO1 Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated

concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.

* AO2 Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts.
* AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.
* AO4 Explore connections across literary texts.
* AO5 Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

**Outline of units**

**Component 1 – Shakespeare, drama and Poetry Pre-1900**

(Written paper, closed text, 2hrs 30mins, 40%)

In **Section 1** of the exam students will be assessed on **one** **Shakespeare** play. In **Section 2** they will write on **one pre-1900 drama text** and **one pre-1900 poetry text.** They will be assessed on their ability to **compare a drama** and **poetry** text**.**

Text for Section 1 (Shakespeare): *Hamlet*

In this section of the examination, you will write a passage-based response commenting on Shakespeare’s use of language and dramatic effects followed by an essay on the play as a whole.

Text for Section 2 (drama) Webster’s *The Duchess of Malfi*

Text for section 2 (poetry): Alfred Lord Tennyson’s *Maud*

In this section of the examination, you will write an essay comparing the two texts.

**Component 2 – Close reading in chosen topic area and comparative and contextual study in chosen topic area**

(Written paper, closed text, 2hrs 30mins, 40%)

We will focus on **one topic** area and **study at least two texts** in this area, at least one of which must be from the core set text list. For the second text, centres may choose to study the other core set text or one from the suggested set text list.

Learners will have to **respond to the set texts** and to a **thematically linked unseen prose passage.**

Topics:

American Literature (1880 -1940) - *The Great Gatsby* (core set text) & *The Sound and the Fury* or *The Age of Innocence*

In the first part of the examination you will write a critical appreciation of an unseen passage, relating your discussion to your reading of American Literature 1880–1940.

In the second part of the examination you write an essay comparing *The Great Gatsby* and *The Sound and the Fury*

**Component 3 – Critical piece and a comparative essay- Literature post-1900**

(Non-examined assessment, 20%)

You will study **three literary texts** from across **three genres** (poetry, prose and drama) written after 1900 and at least one must have been **published or performed in 2000 or later**. One text may be a significant or influential text in **translation.**

Your English teachers have a free choice of texts to for this unit.

You will be comparing Pinter’s *The Homecoming / A Room with a View* with a selection of T S Eliot’s early poems for the coursework and will be analysing a piece of post-2000 prose for the short analytical response.



**Summer Preparation**

*The summer break is an ideal opportunity to catch up with some reading and other cultural pursuits, partly for sheer enjoyment but also as an important preparation for your A Level studies in English Literature.*

Here are a few things we’d like you to do before starting the course in September:

1. **Read a work of American fiction (1880-1940).** This is the period we’ll be studying for Component 2. The more you’ve read, the better prepared you’ll be, particularly for the unseen task. As you read, select your favourite passage (about 500 words long) which you’ll contribute to a class anthology of extracts – to submit to PEP/SV/CAB in September
2. **Read at least one other novel** of your own choosing, either contemporary or classic. Look at our reading list for inspiration but also visit the library and / or bookshops (second hand ones, as well as those selling new books). Bookshop staff, particularly in independent bookshops, often love giving recommendations! You’ll be writing a review of one of the books you’ve read in September.
3. **Dip into a poetry collection** – something like *The Rattle Bag* or *The Oxford Anthology of English Poetry*. Read a selection of poems from a range of periods then try to read a few poems by a single author. Again, our reading list has a few suggestions, contemporary and classic.
4. **Go to see a play or try to hear an author speak**. While reading or studying a play is certainly worthwhile, there’s nothing like seeing a live performance!