

GCSE English Language & English Literature

Why study English?

English contains a plethora of both functional and transferable skills. Reading and writing skills are relevant, not just to the subject of English, but are also necessary for accessing most of the other academic subjects that you will study.

English Language poses questions about how and why we use language and about why we change the way we speak or write in different situations and contexts. English Literature will provide you with key analytical and questioning skills, as well as the ability to see things on a deeper level than just the literal. Both subjects are rich in interesting and engaging content and will allow you to view the basic and more complex skills of human communication in great detail. Both GCSE English Language and English Literature will now be examined terminally at the end of Year 11.

What will you be learning?

English Language will now be assessed via two examinations. You will study and be examined on:

- reading and responding to 19th, 20th and 21st century literature and non-fiction
- writing for different purposes and audiences

Speaking and Listening will also be assessed throughout the course but it will be separately endorsed and does not contribute to your final GCSE grade.

English Literature is also assessed via two examinations. You will study and be examined on:

- a Shakespeare play
- a 19th century novel
- a range of poetry from British poets
- and a post-1914 prose or drama text

What are the lessons like?

English is basically a skills based subject so you will spend lessons honing your reading and writing skills. To do this you will have the opportunity to enjoy the work of some of the finest writers in history and you will be expected to think carefully about why they are so popular and what makes their work so effective. This requires a combination of lessons spent discussing various interpretations of this kind of material and also completing written tasks. Furthermore, you will spend time developing the sophistication and flexibility of your writing style in order to be able to adapt it to different purposes and audiences. This will involve writing to persuade, entertain, inform, advise, argue and describe.

What can it lead to?

The skills that you will develop in English are widely applicable to any field of study or work. Reading, writing, speaking and listening skills are essential parts of everyday life, let alone academic life. Because of this, most A-level subjects will take your English result into account. A-level subjects offered specifically by the English department include English Language, English Literature and Media Studies.

Want to know more?

You can speak to Mr Worsley, Mrs Astbury-Smith or Miss Abraham to find out more about the courses and what sort of work is required.