



# ENGLISH LITERATURE

The study of English Literature is essentially a study of humanity. Writers throughout the ages have dealt with the same basic human concerns, ideals and emotions. Students of literature investigate the cultural contexts that form the background to the texts, whilst analysing the ways in which the writers communicate emotionally and intellectually with the reader today.

The subject requires an open mind, an eagerness to enter into debate (with the texts, the teacher and with fellow students), the ability to write structured essays, and, of course, an enjoyment of reading.

The subject aims to develop the analytical and critical faculties of students, to deepen their enjoyment of reading, and to encourage confident, fluent, reasoned argument both orally and in writing.

Texts studied will range from the 14<sup>th</sup> Century to the modern day, and will include poetry, prose and drama in a variety of genres.

Those students contemplating English at University might also choose to take both English Language and English Literature to A-level.

## THE COURSE

### **Examination Board: Edexcel**

Students will take the A-level qualification in their Upper Sixth year.

### **A-Level (First Certification 2017)**

#### **Component 1: Drama**

Study of one Shakespeare play and one other drama text from the genres of tragedy or comedy. The texts may be selected from the same genre, or one from comedy and one from tragedy.

The plays are studied with reference to Board-supplied critical material on each of the genres.

Examination Length: 2 hours 15 minutes

Section A: Shakespeare. A choice from two questions on the selected text. For 2019, this is likely to be *Twelfth Night*.

Section B: Other Drama. A choice from two questions on the selected text. For 2019, this is likely to be Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

### **Component 2: Prose**

Study of two prose texts (at least one of which must be written before 1900) on a chosen theme: Childhood, Colonisation and its Aftermath, Crime and Detection, Science and Society, the Supernatural, or Women and Society.

Examination Length: 1 hour

One question: a choice of two essay questions on the chosen texts. For 2019, these are likely to include *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelly and *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishigoro, or *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy, *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë or *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini.

### **Component 3: Poetry**

Study of 21<sup>st</sup> century poetry (*Poems of the Decade. An Anthology of the Forward Books of Poetry 2002-2011*), and either a range of poetry from a literary period or a range of poetry from a named poet.

Examination Length: 2 hours 15 minutes.

Section A: Contemporary Poetry. One essay in response to a choice of two questions on an unseen poem compared with a named poem from the studied 21<sup>st</sup> century collection.

Section B: Poetry Collections. One essay in response to a choice of two questions on the studied poems. For 2019 this is likely to be *The Romantics*.

### **Component 4: Coursework**

Students study a free choice of two texts linked by theme, movement, author or literary period.

Assignment 1: an extended comparative essay on the two chosen texts: 2500-3000 words.

## **CAREERS**

Because it is an analytical subject, English Literature A-level is an advantage for a career in any profession, as it proves that the student is able to analyse and to form independent ideas. AS or A-level English Literature could lead to a career in the following:

Law	Education
Management at all levels	Civil Service
Advertising	Speech Therapy
Writing	Politics
Finance	Broadcasting
Accountancy	Management Consultancy
Publishing	Librarianship
Journalism	