

Eduqas

A level English Literature



English Literature/literary criticism is the study of literary works of the imagination: poetry, drama, prose and narrative fiction being the main genres of study. It is an exploration of literary traditions and critical thinking. Students delve into the works of canonical authors, analysing themes, styles, and historical contexts across various literary periods and genres.

Topics you will study

Year 12:

'Mean Time' a collection of poetry by Carol Ann Duffy: The first British female poet laureate. Described by the Guardian as 'the most humane and accessible poet of our time'. This collection dramatizes scenes from childhood, adolescence and adulthood, and explores the complexities of life.

King Lear by William Shakespeare: A tragedy that presents a bleak world without meaning and explores the full range of human behaviours from wretched cruelty to perfect love. Widely regarded as Shakespeare's crowning artistic achievement.

The Duchess of Malfi by John Webster: A contemporary of Shakespeare. A tragedy known for its blend of inventive and grotesque violence and dark humour. It explores how anyone can survive in a world where masculinity has become toxic.

A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennessee Williams: One of the most critically acclaimed plays of the 20th Century. Williams presents a sharp critique of the way the institutions and attitudes of post-war America placed restrictions on women's lives, and on society as a whole.

The Novel: For your coursework, you will study and compare two prescribed novels. This is in preparation for Component 4 – the NEA/Coursework aspect of your Literature A Level.

Year 13:

The Whitsun Weddings by Philip Larkin: One of post-war Britain's most famous poets. This popular collection of poems is described by the Times Literary Supplement as full of 'compassion, violence, humour, love, a sense of order, a sense of waste.'

An anthology of poems by William Blake: One of the greatest poets in the English language and one of the greatest visionaries of the early Romantic era. A rebellious, revolutionary writer who challenged the social order of the time.

Unseen Poetry and Prose from the years 1880 – 1910 and 1918 – 1939: You will study a range of prose extracts and poems from the most influential works written by both British and American writers. You will apply your skills of literary and critical analysis in a more personal way.

Why study this subject? By studying English at A Level you will:

- Understand how books, verse, poetry, and prose contribute to culture.
- Learn how to contextualise and evaluate texts
- Develop your analytical and critical thinking abilities
- Develop independent study and research skills
- Develop your ability to articulate your ideas and viewpoints more – to discuss and debate ideas
- Develop your understanding of the complexities of human nature – to think more about the way things are/the way we are.

Why study this subject at Aston?

- 100% pass rate (2024)
- Taught by experienced teachers who are English Literature graduates and have an infectious passion for the subject.
- Smaller class sizes than college allowing for more personal support and guidance

Assessment

Your grade will be based on three 2- hour exams in the summer of Year 13 and one piece of coursework

Component 1: Poetry: William Blake; a comparison between the poetry of Larkin and Duffy

Component 2: Drama: King Lear; a comparison between The Duchess of Malfi and A Streetcar Named Desire

Component 3: Unseen Poetry and Prose. Extended analysis responses to one extract and one poem from a specific time period either 1880 – 1910 or 1918 – 1939

Component 4: NEA (coursework) One 2500-3500 word assignment based on the reading of two prose texts from different periods, one pre-2000 and one post2000, nominated by the centre.

Links particularly well with these subjects: English Language, History, Psychology, Sociology, Business/Economics, Biology

Entry requirements: Grade 5 or above in GCSE English Literature AND English Language.

Useful for careers in: English Literature is especially helpful for the following careers: journalism and media, marketing, teaching, librarianship, museums and archives, web content writing/management, paralegal, copywriting/proof reading