

## English Literature at A level: FAQs



### **Q. How much reading and independent study is required in A Level English Literature?**

A. Pupils should spend 4-5 hours outside of lessons per week reading the key texts, exploring wider reading and research, re-visiting class notes and undertaking homework tasks. *Independent study is extremely important in this A Level so motivation and organisation are key skills.*

### **Q. How do I know if this is the right course for me?**

- A. If you have enjoyed both your English GCSEs and particularly the analytical and class discussion elements of your work in English Literature; if you are a keen, curious and serious reader; if you write your own stories, poems, articles, reviews in your own time; if you aspire to be a writer in the future and enjoy studying how other writers use language, you should absolutely consider doing this course.

### **Q. Do pupils have a choice about what texts they study on the course?**

- The set texts at A level (those you will write about in the final exams) are chosen by your teaching team from a list produced by the exam board (AQA). The A level team makes this selection based on careful discussion about the themes, issues, and variety of texts and writers that work most effectively with our TWGGS cohort.
- Each A level pupil has the opportunity to select the two key texts they will explore for the NEA element of the course (independent critical study). Careful guidance is provided here to help pupils choose ambitious, interesting texts and ONE text is taught to the whole class that can then form the basis of the NEA comparison.

### **Q. What could I expect to be doing in a typical A level English lesson?**

The central feature of English lessons at A level is discussion of the key text being studied - this is usually in the form of small group work, followed-up by whole class feedback. Much of this approach will be an extension of the teaching and learning approach you will have experienced at GCSE. Depending on the lesson focus, other tasks and learning activities will include:

- Shared reading of a key extract
- Practice writing under timed conditions
- Active listening/viewing of literary adaptations
- Creative group work to produce a shared resources (tables, narrative maps, etc)
- Creative responses to key set texts to explore style, language, structure, voice

**Q. Where would A level English Literature help to take me in the future?**

- A good grasp of the English language, literacy and communication is essential in many careers.
- English will help to develop your critical and interpersonal skills. Every business, whether in the publishing industry, marketing or financial sectors, needs staff to present products and services in a professional and attractive manner.
- If you enjoy writing, you may find that you already have a number of the skills that employers are looking for. More and more businesses are increasing their online presence, and need articulate individuals to promote their products and services to a global audience. Roles can include apprenticeships in legal services, journalism, recruitment, digital marketing and social media amongst others.

**Q. Do trips play a part in the A level course?**

- Under normal circumstances, we are very keen as a department to enrich our A level course with a varied programme of theatre trips, visiting writers/speakers, etc.
- In the current climate of Covid restrictions, where theatre trips look very unlikely to be possible, we will be working hard to plan for alternative subject enrichment. We very much hope this can include an imaginative use of digital theatre experiences, as well as the possibility of carefully planned in-school theatre productions and speakers where this is possible.

**Q. Is English Literature A Level a good option for those aiming to study Medicine?**

A. English Literature A Level involves the following key skills:

- Learning to express complicated ideas clearly and concisely both verbally and in writing
- Group work which helps to hone social skills
- Empathy is essential in order to understand texts about others' life experiences
- Exposure to diverse opinions, backgrounds and cultures
- Classroom discussion and presentations build confidence

**\*\*As a prospective pupil or parent, please do not hesitate to contact our A level English team if you have any questions or concerns about what to expect from joining our course. Enquiries can be made directly to our class teachers, or to myself as Curriculum Leader in English: [english@twggs.kent.sch.uk](mailto:english@twggs.kent.sch.uk)**

**On behalf of the English department at TWGGS, we very much hope to meet with you in September 2021.**

**Dr Sophie Blanch**

**Curriculum Leader, English**