

## AS ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERATURE (EDEXCEL)

### What do we study?

This A level mixes a study of language and literature. In the first term we look at lots of different kinds of texts to start with so you get a broad range of reading experience. Then we focus in on the way VOICES are expressed in different kinds of writing. We study “Their Eyes were Watching God” by the African-American novelist Zora Neale Hurston and the play “A Streetcar Named Desire” by Tennessee Williams, as part of our work on the theme of Women’s Lives. From our study of these texts, you produce a coursework folder of both creative and analytical writing – 2,500 words in total.

For the exam, we study the set text novel “The Color Purple” by Alice Walker. Again, the focus is on voice, and human speech. We also study discourse analysis – everything about how people actually talk in real life, and what happens in conversations. We then extend this to how writers (of plays, novels, poetry) portray human speech and interaction.

### What it’s like studying English Language & Literature?

We try to make lessons as interesting as possible because an interested learner is an effective learner! There is plenty of discussion, in pairs, in groups and as a whole class, and of course reading. We illustrate the texts we study by showing films that help you understand the context, and there are opportunities for acting and role play in the classroom. This year, it has been a very popular subject – we had to open an extra group to meet demand!

### Typical essay questions in the exam:

“How does Alice Walker create the voice of Shug Avery in the novel?”

### And typical coursework tasks:

“Write a short play script featuring the characters in Eatonville, Florida, in which they discuss Janie’s return from the South.”

“Write a T.V. script for the section of the novel where Janie defends herself in court.”

“Re-write the opening of “A Streetcar Named Desire” as a novel. You can choose whether to use a first or third person narrative voice.”

### Student voice:

“I like the reading, the interesting stories, and also learning different techniques, like personification and similes. We’ve learnt a lot.” - Cheila Dos-Santos.

### Teachers

There are 3 A Level English teachers: Lorraine Gaylor; Dave Hampton and Isabelle Parkinson. We have all taught at BSix since we opened in 2002 and, between us, we have 44 years of A level teaching experience!

### Recommended reading:

Any classic novels, plays and poetry (e.g. Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy, Ben Jonson, Oscar Wilde, John Donne, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Robert Browning, William Blake)

And:

Mother Tongue – Bill Bryson

Meridian – Alice Walker

By the Light of my father’s Smile – Alice Walker

Black Boy – Richard Wright

Dust Tracks on a Road – Zora Neale Hurston