



AS ENGLISH LITERATURE AQA SYLLABUS A

What do we study?

The new English Literature AS level course has two units. The first is called Texts in Context and it is assessed in an exam in May worth 60% of your grade. You will be given a short unseen non-fiction extract related to the chosen topic to compare and contrast with your own wider reading of poetry, prose and drama. You will also write an essay on the set poetry text focusing on one poem and comparing it to the rest of the collection.

Unit 2 is called Creative Study and is assessed through coursework. First, we study a novel and you have a choice of creative writing tasks, based on the novel. Then we study a play, and you produce a literature essay comparing the play with other texts we have studied. Your coursework folder will come to 2,000 – 2,500 words in total.

What it's like studying English Literature?

Over the two years you will be reading across centuries, styles of writing, genres and gender, from the older traditions of English literature to the new. We will encourage you to read, watch and listen to a wide variety of texts and to talk about them and the ideas they provoke. There will be lots of discussion, as well as visits to the theatre and exhibitions.

Typical essay questions in the exam:

Text: *Birdsong*, Sebastian Faulks

a) Analyse Faulks' presentation of friendships and love affairs in *Birdsong*, showing which relationships had the greatest impact on your understanding of the novel.

or

b) Write the letter that Stephen Wraysford wrote to Jeanne Fourmentier after his escape from the tunnel, describing his thoughts about being trapped underground, his attitude to Weir and Firebrace and his feelings for Jeanne.

Student voice:

"I love English Literature because you learn about everything...it's about life. I love discussing the ideas and talking about the characters."
(Amber Rismay)

Teachers

There are 3 A Level English teachers: Lorraine Gaylor; Dave Hampton and Isabelle Parkinson. We have all taught at BSix since 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)

Literature about World War One, such as Pat Barker's *Regeneration*, RC Sherriff's *Journey's End*,
The Oxford Book of War Poetry: ed. Stallworthy pp.160 – 225, *Strange Meeting* by Susan Hill