

SUBJECT GUIDE: ENGLISH LITERATURE

Entry Requirement

6 in GCSE English Literature and 5 in GCSE English Language

Specification

Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in English Literature (9ET0)

Course Outline (modules, weighting, topics etc)

Edexcel A level in English Literature consists of three externally examined papers (Drama, Prose and Poetry) and one non-examination assessment component (coursework). The qualification requires the study of eight literary texts plus unseen poetry.

For the Drama paper (worth 30% of the total qualification), students will study:

one Shakespeare play and one other drama from either tragedy or comedy – both texts may be selected from one or both of these categories.

critical essays related to their selected Shakespeare play. Students' preparation is supported by Shakespeare: A Critical Anthology – Tragedy or Shakespeare: A Critical Anthology – Comedy.

For this component we will study Hamlet by William Shakespeare and Doctor Faustus by Christopher Marlowe as our pair of tragedies, alongside the Tragedy Critical Anthology.

For the Prose paper (worth 20% of the total qualification), students will study:

two prose texts from a chosen theme. At least one of the prose texts must be pre-1900.

For this component we will study The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde and Beloved by Toni Morrison on the theme of 'The Supernatural'.

For the poetry paper (worth 30% of the total qualification), students will study:

poetic form, meaning and language

a selection of post-2000 specified poetry

a specified range of poetry from either a literary period (either pre- or post-1900) or a named poet from within a literary period.

For this component we will study a selection of post-2000 specified poetry and The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale by Geoffrey Chaucer.

For the coursework (worth 20% of the total qualification), students have a free choice of two texts to study. Chosen texts:

must be different from those studied elsewhere in the course

must be complete texts and may be linked by theme, movement, author or period

may be selected from poetry, drama, prose or literary non-fiction.

As an example, for this component we might study how modern writers rework ancient stories by looking at Omeros by Derek Walcott and Memorial by Alice Oswald.

Why study English Literature at The Swan?

An A-Level in English Literature opens up many doors. It secures a highly respected qualification for university, but also helps young people make sense of life. Students who study English at The Swan will receive excellent teaching from staff who care deeply about fostering a love of literature. They will benefit from rigorous evidence-based teaching in the classroom and the academic expertise of our highly qualified librarian. They will study compelling works of literature selected to satisfy the most curious of minds. These texts will cover a range of periods and styles and be a careful balance of traditional and contemporary works. Students will be encouraged to take advantage of the many and varied enrichment opportunities that Oxford has to offer, for example: lectures, essay writing competitions, poetry events and theatre trips. A student who wishes to study English at The Swan should have an insatiable appetite for reading, which they will want to share and develop, and a spirit of enquiry that motivates them to ask searching questions.
