

Supporting your child in English Language and English Literature

Overview

- Students are entered for two GCSEs in English – English Language and English Literature.
- Both qualifications are awarded by the AQA exam board and students will be awarded a grade 1-9 (visit the Ofqual or DfE websites for more information)

Course Content and Examinations

English Language – Two Exams

- Year 10 students will do a trial exam on **Paper 2** only in June

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

What's assessed

Section A: Reading

- one literature fiction text

Section B: Writing

- descriptive or narrative writing

How it's assessed

- written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 80 marks
- 50% of GCSE

Questions

Reading (40 marks) (25%)– one single text

- 1 short form question (1 x 4 marks)
- 2 longer form questions (2 x 8 marks)
- 1 extended question (1 x 20 marks)

Writing (40 marks) (25%)

- 1 extended writing question (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy)

Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

How it's assessed

Section A: Reading

- one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text

Section B: Writing

- writing to present a viewpoint

Assessed

- written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 80 marks
- 50% of GCSE

Questions

Reading (40 marks) (25%) – two linked texts

- 1 short form question (1 x 4 marks)
- 2 longer form questions (1 x 8, 1 x 12 marks)
- 1 extended question (1 x 16 marks)

Writing (40 marks) (25%)

- 1 extended writing question (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy)

Spoken Language component (separate qualification)

All students will complete a filmed presentation after their work experience on this or a topic of their choice. This will not count towards their GCSE but will be awarded a separate (not equivalent) grade

English Literature – 2 exams

- Year 10 students will do a trial exam on **Paper 1** only in June
- Students are not allowed their texts in the exam

Texts Studied:

Shakespeare – Romeo and Juliet or Macbeth

19th Century Novel – A Christmas Carol or Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

Modern Texts – An Inspector Calls, DNA or Lord of the Flies

Poetry on the theme of Power and Conflict in an Anthology from AQA

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel

What's assessed

- [Shakespeare](#) (page 11)
- [The 19th-century novel](#) (page 11)

How it's assessed

- 1 hour 45 minute written exam
- 64 marks
- 40% of GCSE

Questions

Section A Shakespeare: students will answer one question on their play of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole.

Section B The 19th-century novel: students will answer one question on their novel of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole.

Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry

What's assessed

- [Modern texts](#) (page 11)
- [Poetry](#) (page 12)
- [Unseen poetry](#) (page 12)

How it's assessed

- 2 hour 15 minute written exam
- 96 marks
- 60% of GCSE

Questions

Section A Modern texts: students will answer one essay question from a choice of two on their studied modern prose or drama text.

Section B Poetry: students will answer one comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster.

Section C Unseen poetry: Students will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.

Revision guides, reading and websites

Exam Board - <http://www.aqa.org.uk/>

Active Learn – all students have their login details - <https://www.pearsonactivelearn.com/>

CGP Guides – speak to the library

York Notes for each text

Cambridge also have produced revision guides for Language and Literature – speak to your teachers for more information

Websites – General Skills based websites

<http://www.englishbiz.co.uk/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/english/>

<http://www.universalteacher.org.uk/>

<http://www.s-cool.co.uk/gcse/english>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/studentlife/debate/>

Top 5 Tips to support your child in English

- 1. Help your child to create a revision timetable** (a sample one in the back of this booklet), leading up to all examinations. Discuss with them the importance of revising early for subjects. English skills are not acquired at the last minute so it is vital that they are practising the techniques behind analysis or writing early in the year to make maximum progress.
- 2. Create a “revision only” space.** Make this area free from distractions such as games consoles. Equally, if they are revising on computers, keep these in areas where you are able to monitor what they are looking at. Regularly check their progress.
- 3. Make sure that they are getting plenty of sleep.** Again, games consoles are often a factor in too little rest. In the vital months now leading up to all examinations, all students need to be prioritising their education and going to bed at a reasonable hour is part of this. Tell them that after their exams, they will have one of the longest summer holidays they will ever be likely to have so can stay up late then! Worst case scenario – remove their games consoles from bedrooms if this is causing a problem.
- 4. Look in their English books/folders and get them to talk you through what they have been studying.** Get them to teach you new ideas or concepts! We supposedly learn 80% better from teaching others and they will love being the experts (possibly!). Also – you will be able to see the areas that their English teachers are picking them up on. If their books are messy with poor checks made by your child, get them to talk you through why this is the case.
- 5. Above all – always be positive about your child’s abilities in English.** We know that this isn’t a subject that every child finds easy but you know as an adult that the best way to get them engaged is if they believe they can achieve, even if they make mistakes along the way.

Tasks you can share with your child

Reading is vital. Students cannot access the top bands if they do not become critical readers or thinkers.

Non-fiction - The English Language Paper 2 exam contains non-fiction texts so students should be reading newspapers, magazines, letters, reports, speeches and literary non-fiction such as travel writing biographies and autobiographies. Weekend newspapers are ideal for this type of reading.

Fiction – we study fiction in both English Language and English Literature so encourage your child to read texts other than their set Literature texts. Short stories, plays and novels are all suitable. They will need an impressive vocabulary so should read frequently.

Effectively, the more they read, the more competent they will be as writers or critical thinkers. Students should ask their teachers or the librarian if they would like recommendations.

Other example tasks for students if they say they “Can’t revise for English!”

Reading

1. List 4 things you learn from an article in your own words. Use inference to pick out meanings not stated in an obvious way. Find a quote for each one OR summarise the article and embed some quotes
2. Read one chapter of your choice from an autobiography (pick from a range of sports/celebrities/actors/travellers etc.) OR an extract from the opening of a novel and explain why the writer has used the language they have or structured it in a particular way.
3. Draw a quick storyboard of the story of one of your set texts, using key quotes to exemplify each moment
4. Learn a range of different language techniques and practise identifying and commenting on how they are used in a range of texts. See if you can spot similarities or differences between two texts
5. Re-read your set texts and research and make notes on other people’s ideas in revision guides or on the internet to give you some fresh ideas.

Writing

1. Select a picture/photo (from a book, magazine or your own selection) and write a description of it using adjectives, the 5 senses, emotive verbs, emotions/thoughts. Use a range of interesting vocabulary
2. Select a topical issue from the website address below and argue one side of the opinion using AFOREST techniques to be persuasive to your reader - then write the other side of the opinion <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/studentlife/debate/>
3. Using the title of a film as inspiration, write a short story where you try to develop a dramatic scene/a mysterious character/an unusual setting or an interesting structure
4. Learn how to use all of the punctuation on the bottom layer of the punctuation pyramid in your planner.
5. Learn three new words each week and aim to use them regularly and accurately