



English at GCSE

The purpose of this session is to:

- Share an outline of the structure, content and assessment of the two English GCSEs
- Outline how we are supporting students with key areas for development
- Outline how students can be supported at home.



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GCSE English Language

English Language Paper 1: FICTION texts (1hr 45m) One Extract

Section A (40 marks/60 mins)

- Q1 – List four things (4)
- Q2 – Analyse language (8)
- Q3 – Analyse structure (8)
- Q4 – Analyse Language and Structure (20)

Section B (40 marks/45 mins) Write a description/narrative

English Language Paper 2: NON-FICTION texts (1hr 45m) Two extracts

Section A (40 marks/60 mins)

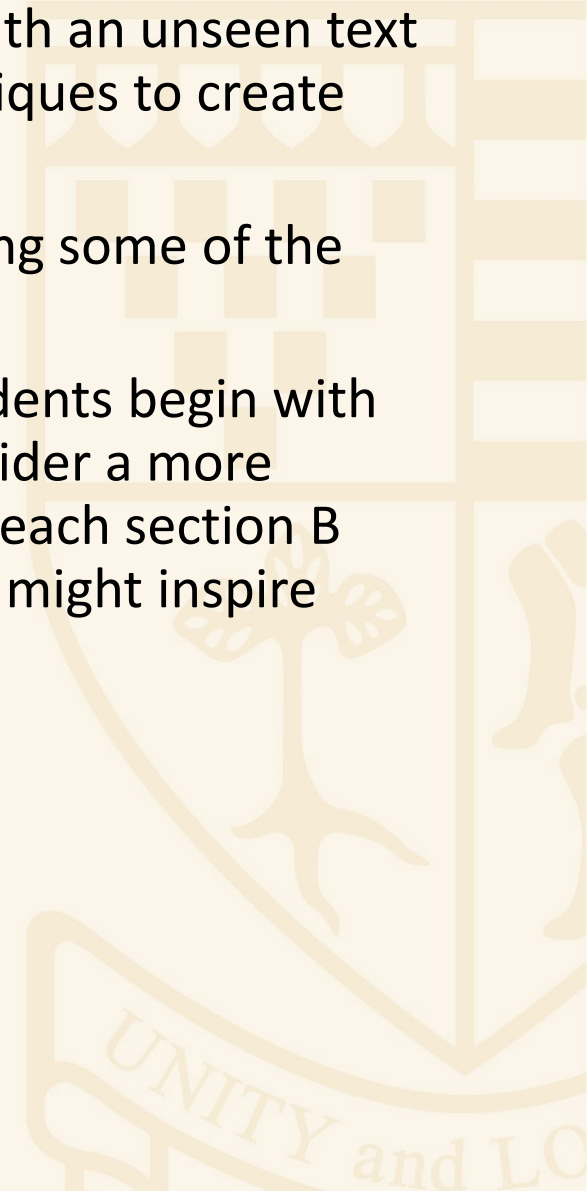
- Q1 – Tick 4 boxes that are true (4)
- Q2 – Summarise the two sources (8)
- Q3 – Analyse language (12)
- Q4 – Compare language and structure (16)

Section B (40 marks/45 mins) Write a non fiction piece



GCSE English Language: What is it?

- The English Language GCSE is, firstly, a test of students' abilities to engage with an unseen text (two for paper 2) and explore how writers use language and structural techniques to create meaning.
- Furthermore, it is a test of how students can then craft their own writing using some of the same techniques they have analysed.
- The English Language exams are structured like a quest (AQA's words!) – students begin with the fundamentals of a text and the questions gradually lead them on to consider a more holistic approach to the analysis. Furthermore, it means that once students reach section B (the writing question), they have been exposed to ideas and techniques that might inspire them in their own writing.
- Fundamental differences:
 - Language Paper 1 (Explorations in creative reading and writing) – fiction; one extract.
 - Language Paper 2 (Writers' viewpoints and perspectives) – non-fiction; two extracts.

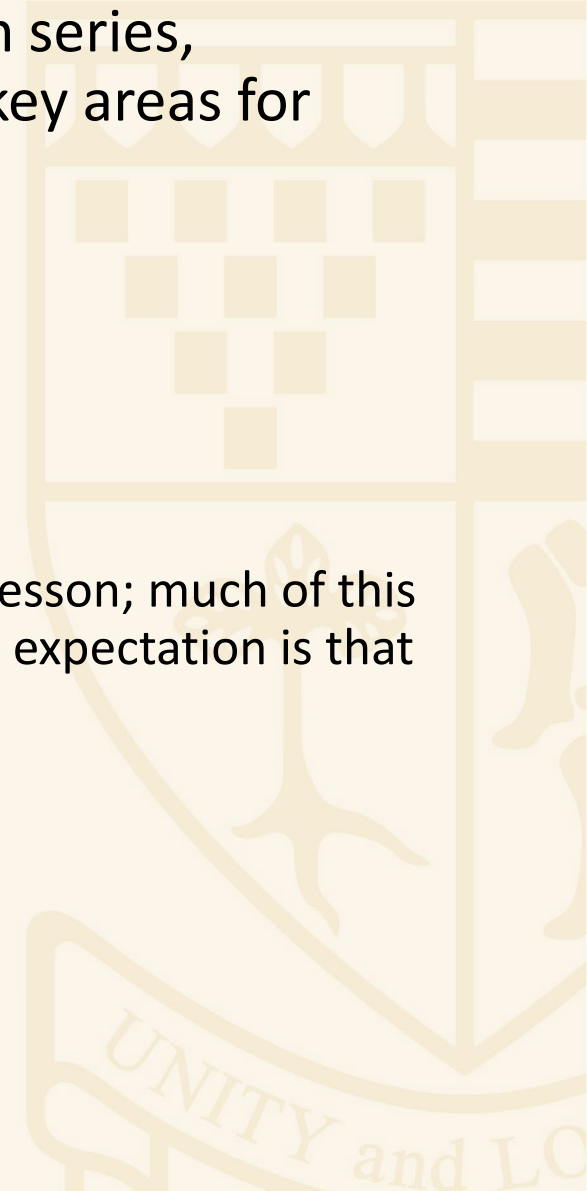


GCSE English Language: What do students need to know and be able to do?

Key knowledge	Implementation of knowledge: students should be able to...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Word classes (noun, verb, adjective, adverb)• Language techniques (imagery, metaphor, simile, personification, alliteration, onomatopoeia, rhetorical question, direct address)• Structure techniques (list, repetition, sentence structure, punctuation)• How to write a comparison (using a 'both...however...whereas...' structure)• How to write an analytical response (using a 'what...how...why...' structure)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read a text and establish the mood (paper 1) or viewpoint (paper 2).• Select 'high value' quotations which support their idea about the mood or viewpoint.• Identify word classes and language/structure techniques within a quotation.• Comment on the impact of single words or short phrases.• Compare the ways writers have achieve effects (paper 2).• Craft a description or narrative that makes use of language techniques and is structured effectively• Argue their own viewpoint using language and structure to craft their writing

GCSE English Language: Our key focus

- Analysis (question level data and examiners' reports) of the 2023 exam series, combined with internal data about **our** students, has highlighted two key areas for development for the whole cohort:
 - Reading for speed and meaning
 - Building and utilising a richer vocabulary.
- **What are we doing at school?**
 - English lessons (language and literature) have key vocabulary attached to each lesson; much of this vocabulary is higher level. The vocabulary is utilised throughout lessons and the expectation is that students begin to use this vocabulary further afield.



What do 'word detectives' do?

1: Have you heard the word before? You might find clues here...

- If you've read Harry Potter, you'll know that the spell 'Lumos' gives light.
- You might also know that 'lumens' relates to light power.

2. Does the word sound familiar?

- You might notice that it sounds a bit like 'illuminate' which means to light up.

'The celebration was attended by 45 luminaries from various walks of life'

A luminary is someone who guides and inspires other people.

3. Look at the whole sentence/passage.

- If a celebration was 'attended by...', we can probably deduce that 'luminaries' are people of some description.

4. Consider the connotations of what you've worked out...

- If a person is linked to light, are they likely to be positive or negative?
- How might they be linked to light?

GCSE English Language: Our key focus

- **What can you do at home?**

- Read, read, read! It doesn't need to be a special text – the opening page of a cookery book; yesterday's front page of the paper; the last page of the novel you read...reading anything is important and useful.
- Select 10 words (you can do this together!) that are unfamiliar and practise being detectives to decode the meaning of words and then discuss why that particular word might have been chosen.



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GCSE English Language: Other ways you can help

- Read a page of fiction and establish what mood is created – which key words create the mood? What techniques are being used to create the mood?
- Read a page of non-fiction writing and establish the writer's perspective – which key words tell us that? What techniques are being used to communicate the perspective?
- Select a picture at home (a photo or an image online) and discuss which words and ideas could be used to describe what's in the image.
- Discuss a contentious topic like homework, uniform, certain policies and practise devising 'for and against' arguments.



GCSE English Literature

English Literature Paper 1: Shakespeare and 19thC Text (1hr 45m) – WITH extracts

Section A: 'Macbeth' (34 marks/55 mins)
Starting with the extract **and the rest of the play**, how does Shakespeare present...

Section B: 'Jekyll & Hyde' (30 marks/50 mins)
Starting with the extract **and the rest of the novel**, how does Robert Louis Stevenson present...

English Literature Paper 2: Modern Text, Anthology Poems and Unseen Poetry(2hr 15m)

Section A: 'An Inspector Calls' (30 marks/45 mins)
Choice of two questions on character or theme
– pick one.

Section B: Power and Conflict poetry (30 marks/45 mins)
Compare a given poem with a poem of your choice based on a theme

Section C: Unseen poetry (32 marks/45 mins)
Analyse an unseen poem then compare with another poem.



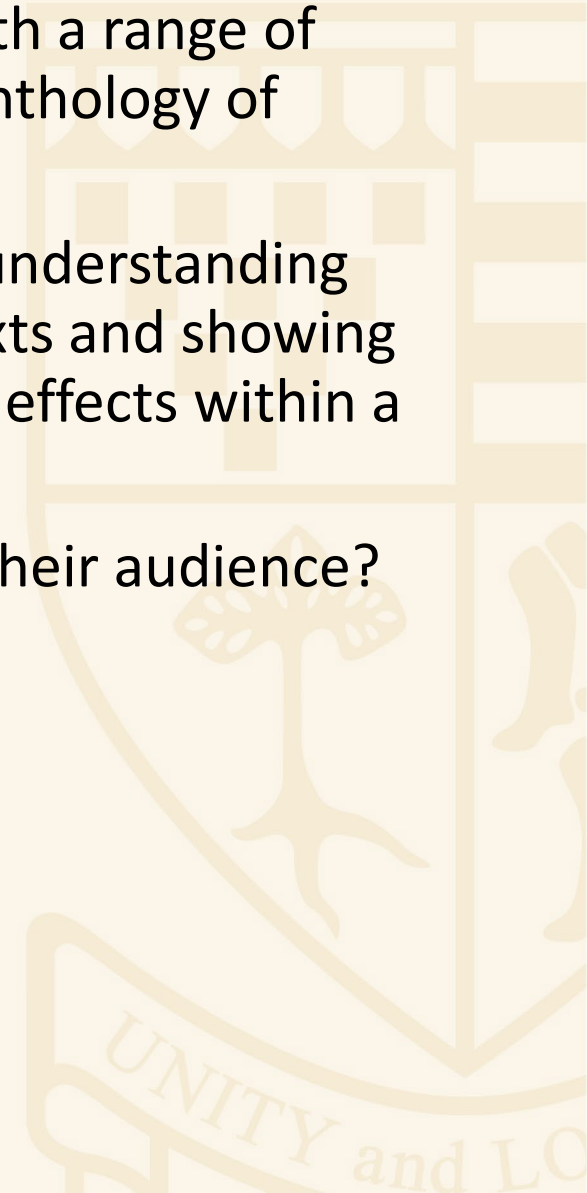
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GCSE English Literature: What is it?

- The English Literature GCSE is a test of students' abilities to engage with a range of literature: Shakespeare; a 19th century novel; a 20th century play; an anthology of poems on the theme of power and conflict, and an unseen poem.
- Students will demonstrate their engagement in the text by having an understanding of the social and historical context of texts, knowing the plot of the texts and showing an understanding of how writers use language and structure to create effects within a text.
- In short: how do writers communicate their ideas about the world to their audience?



GCSE English Literature: What do students need to know and be able to do?

Key knowledge	Implementation of knowledge: students should be able to...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contextual information about when, where and why a text was produced.• Plot of the text – inside out and back to front!• Writers’ key messages about topics including: gender, class, religion, science, deception, social identity, power, conflict• Key quotations that reflect writers’ ideas• Word classes (noun, verb, adjective, adverb)• Language techniques (imagery, metaphor, simile, personification, alliteration, onomatopoeia, rhetorical question, direct address)• Structure techniques (list, repetition, sentence structure, punctuation)• How to write a comparison (using a ‘both...however...whereas...’ structure)• How to write an analytical response (using a ‘what...how...why...’ structure)  <p>BE KIND BE BRAVE BE THE BEST YOU</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outline what mood, tone or idea writers create in a text.• Support their arguments with reference to the text (this can be with quotes but a well described 'reference to an event' in a text can be just as effective).• Analyse the techniques used within a quote to communicate an idea, with particular reference to how an audience might respond.• Comment on what might have influenced a writer's ideas, with reference to key events and concepts from the time that they were writing.

GCSE English Literature: Our key focus

- Analysis (question level data and examiners' reports) of the 2023 exam series, combined with internal data about **our** students, has highlighted two key areas for development for the whole cohort:
 - Knowledge of the plot of a text, particularly what happens before and after an event rather than just 'knowing the whole plot'.
 - Building and utilising a richer vocabulary to attach to writers' ideas and messages.

Myth buster: learning key quotations is great BUT it shouldn't be the be all and end all. They must be able to say something about the words in the quotations and sometimes remembering key events with a single word in detail is a better plan.

- **What can you do at home?**

- Re-read the texts – together is even better! Students explaining what has happened/what ideas are being shown is a really powerful tool.
- Write out the key events in a text and cut into separate pieces (one event per piece). Mix them up and ask students to explain what happens before and after that event and why it is significant.

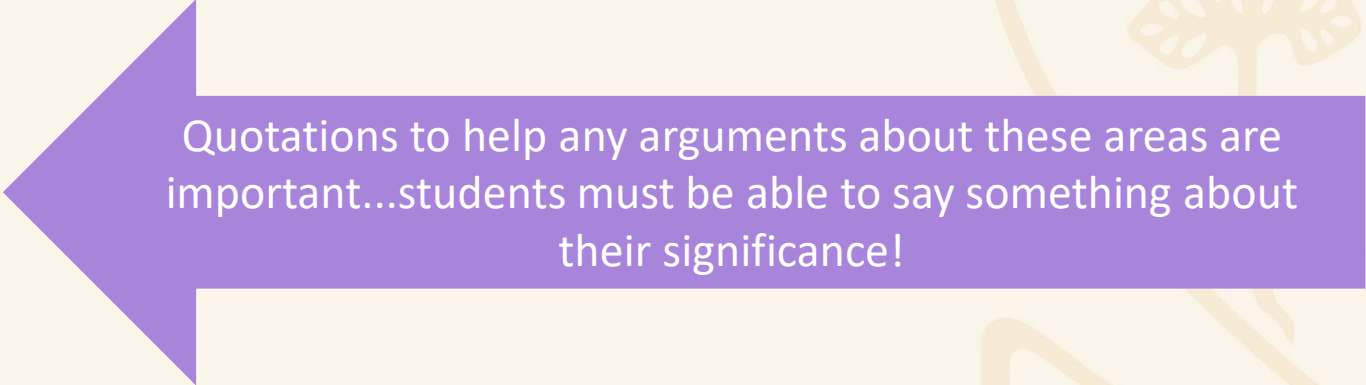


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GCSE English Literature: Other ways you can help

- Have a discussion about the impact of war on key groups in society.
- Discuss how holders of power might abuse that power.
- Discuss how nature might hold more power than humans.
- Discuss how different writers express ideas about identity.
- Practise learning quotations from the P&C poems – 3-5 from each!
- Revisit texts studied in Year 10: ‘An Inspector Calls’ and ‘The Strange Case of Jekyll and Hyde’. Topics to revise are:
 - Social and historical context
 - Writers' messages
 - Key characters
 - The structure of the text
 - Important themes



Quotations to help any arguments about these areas are important...students must be able to say something about their significance!