



A-level English Language & Literature



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Our A-level English Language and Literature course adopts an increasingly integrated approach. You will find that Language and Literature are treated in a more integrated and combined way than at GCSE. As you move through the course, Language and Literature components will become more and more integrated.

The key principle underlying the course is that the text itself is all important. Our approaches to studying texts should be logical and methodical. We study contexts and critical readings, but it's the text we are studying that is paramount.

We apply similar concepts and approaches to studying all texts, whether they are fiction or non-fiction, literary or non-literary. We study the key characteristics of particular genres – especially the novel, poetry, drama and travel writing. You will broaden this by choosing your own texts, genres and approaches for your **NEA** (Non-Exam Assessment).

Meet the A-level English Lang & Lit Team

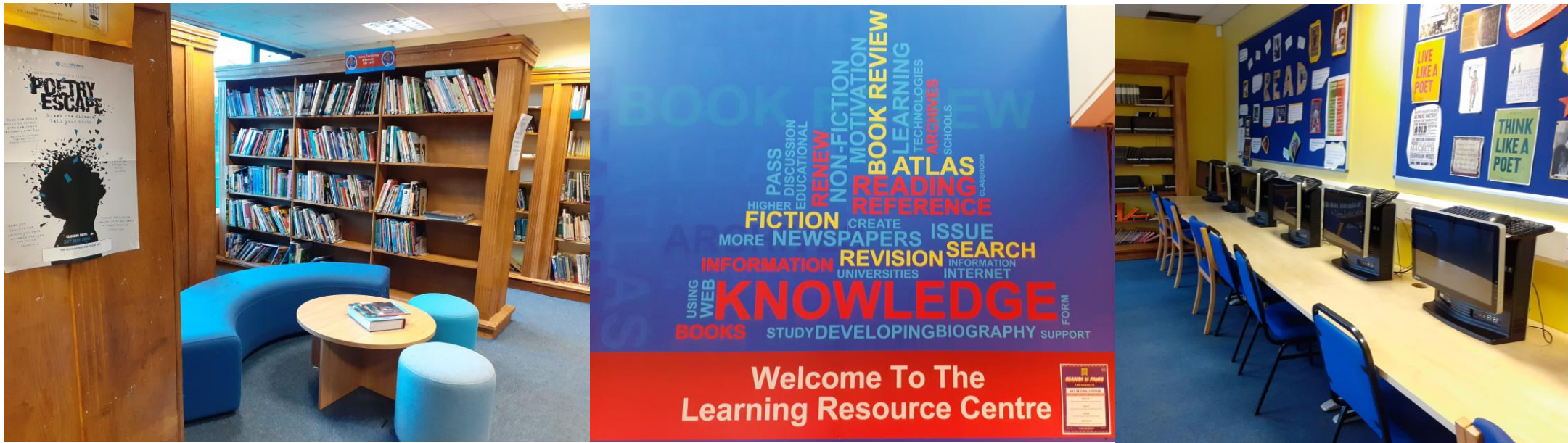
The teachers currently teaching the A-level English language and Literature course are:

Mrs B. Hughes (Head of KS5 English)- Y12- Heaney and Paris Anthology; Y13- The Great Gatsby and NEA

Mrs H. Griffiths (Head of Department)- Y12 Frankenstein and Paris Anthology; Y13- A Streetcar Named Desire

English Department: Blounts Building

English is taught in the Blounts building which includes the **Library** which has plenty of space for **private study**, plus an adjoining study room with **computers** that can be used by sixth form students when not booked or timetabled for lessons. There is also a **printer/copier** that can be used by students.



What you can expect in your English lessons

Teaching and learning in English varies according to what is being taught and learnt:

- We use **questioning and discussion** to develop understanding and engagement with settings, characters, themes and ideas in texts;
- **annotation and close analysis** of texts to develop in depth knowledge;
- **quizzing and glossaries** to ensure knowledge of terminology, definitions and details;
- and other methods as required.

You should definitely expect to participate, think for yourself and have an enquiring mind.

Being an independent thinker and learner is important in English.

You will do a lot of background reading and research into concepts and contexts.

Alongside this there is always plenty of support available from your teachers when needed.

An example of how we learn

Personal Helicon

→ Mountain of inspiration in Greek mythology – home to the muses (goddesses of music and poetry) – two springs also symbolizing inspiration.
– Also where Narcissus fell in love with his own reflection in a pool and drowned.

→ Fittingly and ironically – Heaney's personal Helicon is not a mountain but holes in the ground.

For Michael Longley → A fellow Northern-Irish poet – also a member of Philip Hobsbawm's group.

→ Begins with a familiar tone of reminiscence.

As a child, they could not keep me from wells

And old pumps with buckets and windlasses.

I loved the dark drop, the trapped sky, the smells
Of waterweed, fungus and dank moss.

begins with a sense of the forbidden
– a slightly rebellious tone.

listing conveys his excitement and fascination as a child – and still as an adult perhaps.

a second list, with a third list tagged onto it.

all the adjectives have a feeling of the unwanted, discarded and forbidden.

Strong expressions of pleasure – verbs convey physical + emotional delight.

specific, down-to-earth locations.

Simile suggests that it is full of life/growth/fruit.

perhaps symbolic of history/heritage (compare with "Digging" and "Bojland")

Gradual emergence of his own reflection from "no reflection" to "see myself". This poem is about self-discovery first as a child, then as a poet.

Discovery of his voice – familiar yet new.
"clean new music" – discovering his voice

5 One, in a brickyard, with a rotted board top.

I savoured the rich crash when a bucket

Plummeted down at the end of a rope.

So deep you saw no reflection in it.

A shallow one under a dry stone ditch

10 Fructified like any aquarium.

When you dragged out long roots from the soft mulch

A white face hovered over the bottom.

A ghostly image.

Others had echoes, gave back your own call

With a clean new music in it. And one

15 Was scaresome for there, out of ferns and tall

Foxgloves, a rat slapped across my reflection.

Strong narrative structure.

Each stanza is an episode in the story.

assonance

An example of how we learn

assonance
is onomatopoeic of
the rat's
movement.

Now, to pry into roots, to finger slime,
To stare, big-eyed Narcissus, into some spring
Is beneath all adult dignity. I rhyme
20 To see myself, to set the darkness echoing.

- Temporal deixis
- Switches to present tense to interpret the poem from an adult perspective.
- Similar to 'Digging': memories of childhood become a metaphor to explain his decision to be a poet.

"I write poetry
as a form of
self-discovery..."

Suggests that being a poet is exploring/expressing
"the darkness" - what is hidden, secret, disturbing, etc.

"Clean new music" - discovering his poetic
voice (Muses inspired music + poetry)

The recognition of something frightening
and surprising in nature and self-discovery.

Admits the danger of becoming
self-obsessed as a child and as a
writer/poet - but does it with humour
in a slightly self-mocking way.

Form: Regular quatrains in iambic pentameter.
Regular rhyme scheme - alternating ABAB.
All stanzas end with a full stop - no "spill" of enjambment
between stanzas.
This is the most regular and resolved of these poems,
suggesting that Heaney is clear and confident about
becoming a poet - much more so than in "Digging".
This "personal" story of self-discovery is neatly combined
with the traditions of Ancient poetry symbolised by
Mount Helicon.
It was the final poem in Heaney's first collection of poems.

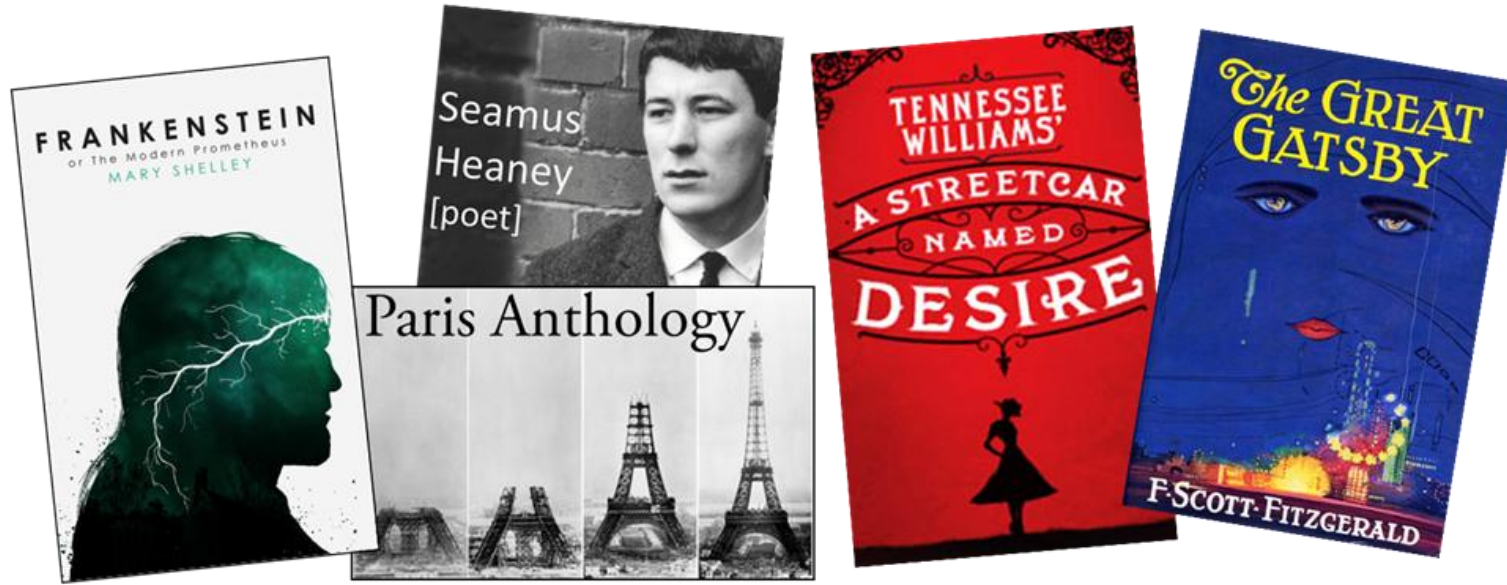
Quality of Teaching and Results

You will be inspired, challenged and fully supported by your teacher.

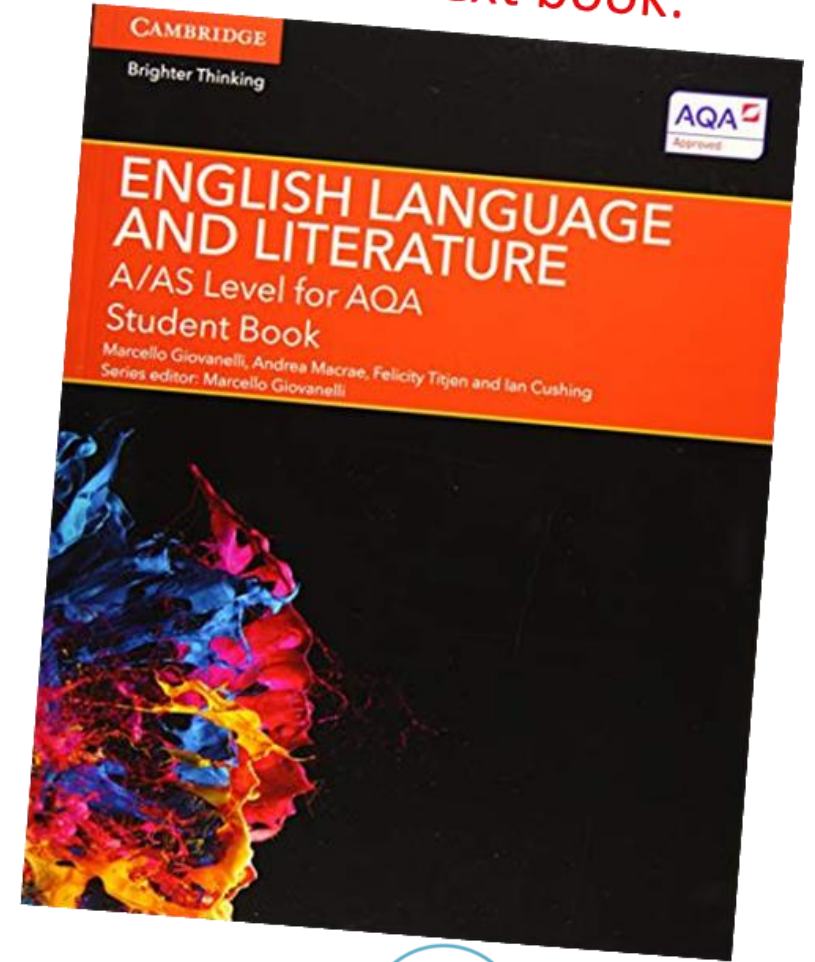
The staff teaching the course are all passionate and successful English teachers with lots of experience and expertise.

For the past 6 years [2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025] our A*-D rate has been 100%: with all students gaining grades A*, A, B, C or D which enabled them to go onto future options at university or into their chosen career.

Texts you will study



Our course text book:



NEA: with support, choose your own fiction and non-fiction texts



What you will study (1)

The A-level English Language and Literature course has six components:

- 1. Remembered Places:** a non-fiction module based around an anthology of extracts about visiting and living in Paris.
- 2. Imagined Worlds:** one of the novel modules, where you will study Mary Shelley's novel "Frankenstein" and its context.
- 3. Poetic Voices:** a poetry module where you study a small selection of poems by one poet; you will study fifteen poems by the modern Irish poet, Seamus Heaney.

What you will study (2)

The other three components are:

4. **Writing About Society:** the other novel module; you will study “The Great Gatsby” by F. Scott Fitzgerald and produce a creative writing response with your own commentary on your writing.
5. **Dramatic Encounters:** you will study the C20th American play, “A Streetcar Named Desire” and look at spoken language, stagecraft, characters, relationships and the context of the play and its writer, Tennessee Williams.
6. **Making Connections:** this is the NEA (non-exam assessment) or coursework module. For the NEA you will be able to choose your own literary and non-literary texts, and your own focus for research and study.

The English Language and Literature Qualification

The A-level qualification we prepare you for is English Language and Literature awarded by AQA (7707).

There are two exam papers and a non-exam assessment (NEA):

Paper 1: Telling Stories – 3 hours (100 marks = 40%)

A. Remembered Places: *Paris Anthology* (40 marks)

B. Imagined Worlds: *Frankenstein* (35 marks)

C. Poetic Voices: *Seamus Heaney* (25 marks)

Paper 2: Exploring Conflict– 2½ hours (100 marks = 40%)

A. Writing About Society: *The Great Gatsby* (55 marks)

B. Dramatic Encounters: *A Streetcar Named Desire* (45 marks)

Non-Exam Assessment: Making Connections (20%)

- Own choice of texts and topics for reading, research and writing an investigation of 3000 to 5000 words (50 marks)
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Course Outline and Overview

A LEVEL ENGLISH LANG & LIT – TWO YEAR COURSE OVERVIEW									
	AUTUMN 1	AUTUMN 2	SPRING 1		SPRING 2	SUMMER 1	SUMMER 2		HOL
YEAR 12	7707/1 VIEWS AND VOICES: IMAGINED WORLDS – PROSE TEXT Frankenstein	7707/2 REMEMBERED PLACES: PARIS ANTHOLOGY. Language analysis – Compare & Contrast	7707/1 VIEWS AND VOICES: IMAGINED WORLDS – PROSE TEXT Frankenstein		7707/2 REMEMBERED PLACES: PARIS ANTHOLOGY. Language analysis – Compare & Contrast	7707/1 VIEWS AND VOICES: IMAGINED WORLDS – PROSE TEXT Frankenstein	YEAR 12 EXAMS	7707/2. EXPLORING CONFLICT: A. WRITING ABOUT SOCIETY e.g. The Great Gatsby	DEVELOP NEA INVESTIGATION Reading, Research & Proposal.
	7707/1 VIEWS AND VOICES: POETIC VOICES – POETRY TEXT Seamus Heaney		7707/2 REMEMBERED PLACES: PARIS ANTHOLOGY. Language analysis – Compare & Contrast	7707/NEA – MAKING CONNECTIONS - Initial Reading and Research					
	7707/1 VIEWS AND VOICES: POETIC VOICES – POETRY TEXT Seamus Heaney		7707/1 VIEWS AND VOICES: POETIC VOICES – POETRY TEXT Seamus Heaney	7707/2. EXPLORING CONFLICT: B. DRAMATIC ENCOUNTERS e.g. A Streetcar Named Desire.					
YEAR 13	7707/2. EXPLORING CONFLICT: A. WRITING ABOUT SOCIETY – RECAST AND COMMENTARY The Great Gatsby	7707/1. TELLING STORIES: B. IMAGINED WORLDS – PROSE TEXT. Frankenstein	YEAR 13 MOCK EXAMS	7707/2. WRITING ABOUT SOCIETY: RECAST AND COMMENTARY The Great Gatsby	7707/1. TELLING STORIES: B. IMAGINED WORLDS – PROSE TEXT. Frankenstein		A LEVEL EXAMS		
	7707/NEA. MAKING CONNECTIONS: 3000 words.	7707/1. TELLING STORIES: PARIS ANTHOLOGY – Compare and Contrast.		7707/NEA. MAKING CONNECTIONS: 3000 words.	7707/2. EXPLORING CONFLICT: A. WRITING ABOUT SOCIETY – RECAST AND COMMENTARY. The Great Gatsby				
	7707/2. EXPLORING CONFLICT: B. DRAMATIC ENCOUNTERS A Streetcar Named Desire.	7707/1. TELLING STORIES – C. POETIC VOICES – POETRY ANTH. Seamus Heaney		7707/2. B. DRAMATIC ENCOUNTERS A Streetcar Named Desire.	7707/1. TELLING STORIES: C. POETIC VOICES – POETRY ANTH. Seamus Heaney				
					7707/2. EXPLORING CONFLICT: B. DRAMATIC ENCOUNTERS. A Streetcar Named Desire.				

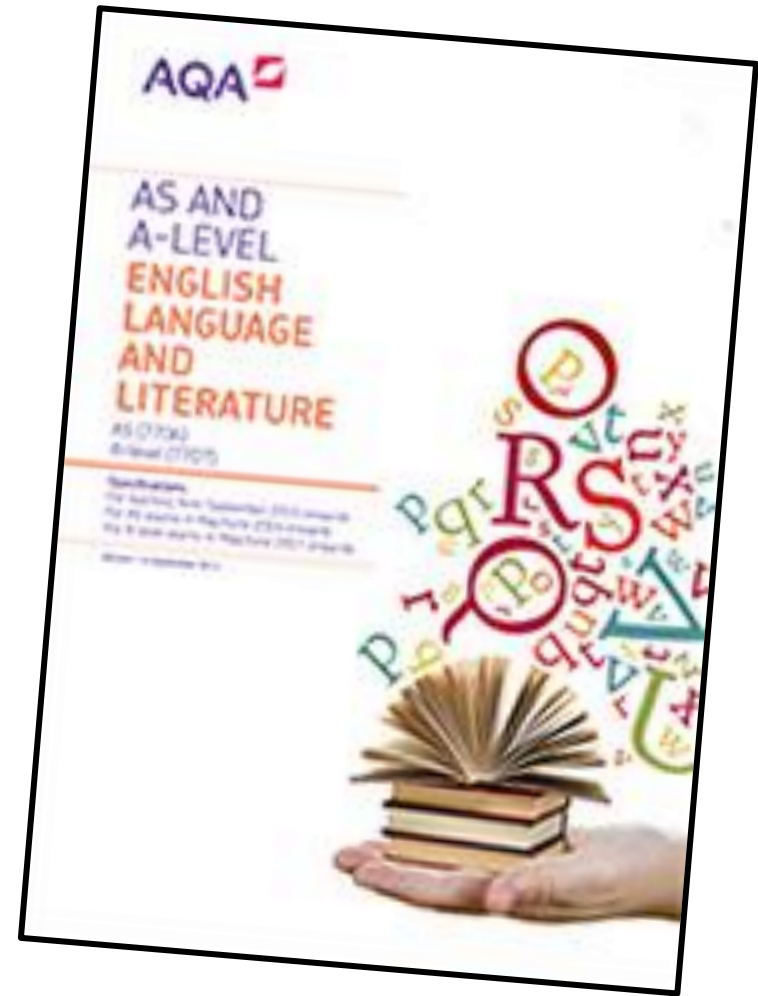
The course is carefully planned so that we can revisit and revise all components during the two-year course.

Additional Information about the NEA

For the NEA [non-exam assessment]
you might choose to study...

Love poetry Spoken Texts
Texts from other cultures
Feminist writing
Crime and Thriller
Nature & Ecopoetry Drama

...or another theme, genre or
writer of your choice.



Character Academy Opportunities in English

In English we encourage you to participate in as many extra-curricular opportunities as you can. These include:

A Sixth Form Creative Writing group, where we encourage each other to develop our writing by doing writing workshops and sharing our ideas with each other.

Talks, readings, lectures and theatre productions: these have, of course, been halted by the pandemic – but we hope to have them up and running again soon.

The paired-reading scheme, where you can support a younger pupil with their reading progress and development.

Lesson-support, where you arrange to go into a main-school English lesson in one of your study periods to support learning in the classroom – this has been halted by pandemic precautions, but we hope to make it available again soon.

Where can A-level English Lang/Lit take you?

You will be well-prepared for numerous university courses.

These include various English degrees [including Literature, Language, Linguistics] and numerous related courses such as Creative Writing & Journalism, Film & Media, Drama & Theatre, History, Law, Sociology, Psychology, Philosophy and any other subject where reading, writing and communication is involved.

It's a great subject to study whatever you want to do in the future.

Many employers will look very favourably on an A-level in English, because it indicates an ability to study and communicate effectively. These include: Social Work, Teaching, Management Training, Psychology, Health professions, Business and Finance, Creative Industries... and many more.



**All of the King Charles I Open
Evening resources can be found
by visiting the [school website](#)**



**We look forward to welcoming
you to our classrooms in
September 2026**

