

# English Literature



## Sixth Form Head of Learning

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## Exam Board

AQA A Level English Literature

## Where are they now?

Recent students of English Literature at CRGS have gone on to study:

- American and Canadian Studies and English Lit. (Birmingham)
- English and Classics (Nottingham)
- English Language (Birmingham, Durham, Leeds)
- English Literature and Creative Writing (Newcastle)
- English Literature and Sociology (Newcastle)
- French and Linguistics (Oxford)
- International Business Studies (Liverpool)
- Law (Cambridge, York)
- Liberal Arts (Warwick)
- Medicine (Glasgow)
- Modern and Medieval Languages (Cambridge)
- Psychology (Liverpool)

## Why study English Literature?

Stories are at the heart and soul of society. Through literature, we learn how to make society more equitable, fair and just. A Level English Literature will develop your enjoyment of literary study through reading texts critically and analytically. The study of English Literature will offer you the opportunity to develop your essay and argument writing skills. You will build on your ability to debate with others logically and eloquently, as well as learn how to work through the intricacies of texts independently and with others. If you enjoy reading, watching plays or films which seek to change a person's world view, or love to explore poetry, this subject will further expand your skillset. You will become conversant with seeing the world through different critical viewpoints and understand the craft of the writer.

## Course Outline

You will learn about writer's craft through the genre of Comedy, exploring the ways authors have commented on the strengths and flaws of society. We study Jane Austen's *Emma*, the Shakespearean comedy *Twelfth Night* and Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*. We will also explore how writers use Crime Writing to explore the issues which face society. In addition to learning the skills needed to analyse the significance of unseen crime extracts we will study *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* by Coleridge, the modern novel *Atonement* by Ian McEwan, and the 1930s novel *Brighton Rock* by Graham Greene. We shall explore themes such as guilt, retribution, revenge, oppression, conflict, romantic relationships, friendship and immorality.

20% of the course is the NEA (non-examined assessment or coursework) in which you will choose a novel and a collection of poetry to study. Through a series of lessons on Marxism, Feminism and Post Colonial theory, you will evaluate the extent to which a writer challenges a political viewpoint such as masculinity, anti-slavery sentiments or how a writer conforms to social expectations of women.

## Assessment

**Literature 1B – Aspects of Comedy** (2hrs 30 mins, closed book, 40% of A Level)

- Section A: Analysis an extract from *Twelfth Night*, making links across the play
- Section B: Analytical question on *Twelfth Night* (usually based on a theme, an aspect of comedy or character)
- Section C: An essay linking *Emma* and *The Importance of Being Earnest* through comedy

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**Literature 2A – Elements of Crime Writing** (3 hours, open book, 40% of A Level)

- Section A: one compulsory question on an unseen passage
- Sections B and C are essay questions on (1) *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, Coleridge (2) Post-2000 Prose: *Atonement*, McEwan and (3) *Brighton Rock*, Greene

**Non-Exam Assessment:**

Two 1250-1500 word essays, 20% of A Level

Analytical essays on (1) novel and (2) a collection of poetry, linked to Marxism, Feminism or Post Colonial theory

**Frequently Asked Questions**

***Is any previous knowledge required to study this subject?***

You should have GCSE English Literature and English Language at Grade 5 or above. For any English A Level, a love of writing and a commitment to undertaking extensive, independent and challenging reading is imperative. Students are required to meet the General Entry Requirement of a minimum of 4 GCSEs at grade 6 with at least GCSE grade 4 in English Language and Maths.

***How will you support my studies?***

The department has a library of study guides, journals and resources which students can use. We use a wide variety of teaching methods and expect you to engage actively in lesson discussion. Pre reading enables you to access key knowledge before lessons so you can use the time in lessons to ask questions, develop your skills and crucially, debate with other students to develop your understanding of a writer's craft. Teachers are incredibly knowledgeable and experienced. We encourage you to read widely and to make use of the library and online platforms to further embed and develop a deeper understanding of the texts you will be taught. You will be assessed at least once every half term, being given detailed feedback and the time and skills to further develop your essay writing.

***What are lessons like?***

Lessons are paced effectively with lots of discussion and a range of activities. While we read plays and poetry in class, we expect you to read novels outside lesson time – this means your learning is focused on being an active learner through either written work or paired discussion. You will be given lots of opportunity to debate!

***What could I study alongside this subject?***

Literature is a core subject which is well respected by all employers and universities. Students often study language or MFL but others also choose maths or sciences. History and any of the social sciences are also popular choices.

***For the NEA, how will you help me to achieve the best grades?***

You will be taught the basics of three different political approaches – Marxism, Feminism and Post-Colonial theory. You will then be able to choose a question based on a novel and a collection of poetry; we will guide you through this process by helping you to structure your essay, give you the opportunity for feedback on how to improve and also provide you with additional material to research your topic.

Exam Board Specification

AQA A Level English Literature B (7717) [www.aqa.co.uk](http://www.aqa.co.uk)

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