

# WGSB6 A Level Options

## English Literature FAQ Information Sheet



### **Which exam board and courses are studied at A Level?**

AQA A Level English Literature Specification B.

### **What skills will studying English Literature equip me with?**

English Literature is a valuable foundation for any degree or career requiring excellent written communication, research and analytical skills. It brings history to life and engages with ideas and concepts that are central to human life and experience. You will learn how to express informed and independent opinions and gain insight into key literary influences on our culture and society.

### **Do I need a specific grade at GCSE to access A level?**

We recommend that students achieve a minimum of a grade 6 at GCSE but we welcome all enthusiastic students keen to study English Literature.

### **How is the course structured and how will it be taught?**

English Literature A level is split into three parts:

- Elements of Crime explore themes of guilt, remorse, retribution and violence. We read classic poetry by Wilde, Crabbe and Browning. Our novels are Brighton Rock, the classic 1930s story of gang warfare in the dark underworld of Brighton, and When Will There Be Good News – a gripping and atmospheric modern detective thriller published in 2008.
- Elements of Tragedy reading Othello (with key themes of love, jealousy, revenge and death) and Death of a Salesman, a powerful play about dreams, reality and loss of identity. We also look at some classic narrative poems by John Keats.
- Theory and Independence allows you to choose your own texts for study. We explore different ways of reading that include narrative theory, post-colonialism, Marxism, feminism and eco-criticism.

### **Is there a coursework component?**

Yes. Theory and Independence allows you to choose your own texts for study. We explore different ways of reading that include narrative theory, post-colonialism, Marxism, feminism and eco-criticism and you will produce two essays of 1200-1500 words.

### **Who teaches the course?**

Mrs Abernethy, Dr Warren and Miss Watkins.

### **How is the course resourced?**

The department provides all copies of set texts as well as its very own 'Crime Library.'

### **How well do students achieve in English Literature?**

English Literature is a consistently high-achieving department which has seen 3 of its students attain places at Oxbridge in the past 4 years. The majority of our students gain a B or above – regardless of performance at GCSE. In Summer 2024 the department scored the highest progress score across all A level subjects.



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### **Will I need to do a lot of independent study?**

Wider reading is crucial to success in English Literature, and we recommend you read for pleasure around the subject, such as crime novels as well as non-fiction texts which explore the development of the crime genre. Suggestions will be provided for wider reading.

### **What are typical A level subject choices alongside English Literature?**

History, Psychology, Law, Modern Foreign Languages.

### **Do I need to take another subject to support my study of English Literature?**

No.

### **What subject related extracurricular opportunities are offered at A level?**

The department regularly participates in theatre trips. In the last twelve months, students have visited The Globe Theatre in London.

### **How might English Literature help me in my next steps / university / career planning?**

The Russell Group Informed Choices guide recommends Literature as a facilitating subject for degrees as diverse as Law, History, Classics, Politics, and Business & Finance. Recent WGSB students of Literature have gone on to study: Architecture, Business Management, Classics, Economics, English Language, English Literature, History, Law, and Politics. Studying Literature not only widens your appreciation of literature but helps you build valuable transferable skills. It will develop your independent and critical thinking – you will be able to analyse sophisticated ideas and how they are presented. You will develop the ability to build convincing arguments. You will also develop an effective formal communication style – essential for further study and any career that relies on effective communication.

### **Other helpful information about studying English Literature**

The department is friendly and supportive towards students. Please feel free to see Mrs Abernethy if you have any questions.

