English Language and Literature A Level

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

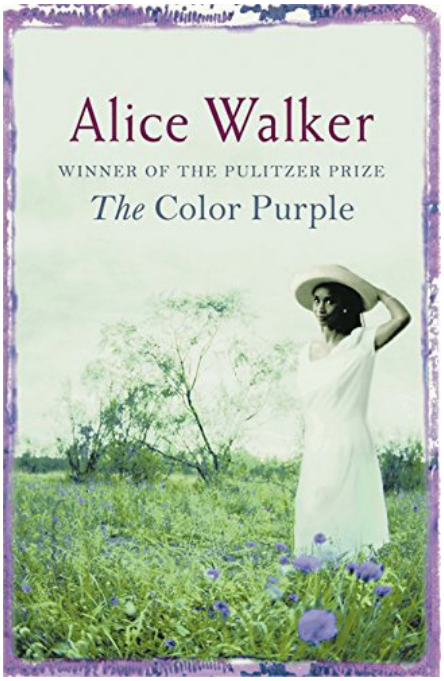
Jane Anthony

EXAM BOARD

EDUQUAS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A Level English Language and Literature has been introduced at The Grey Coat Hospital to provide an opportunity to study aspects of English beyond Literature. This course would appeal to students who enjoyed the creative aspect of GCSE English and who are also interested in spoken English. However, there are overlaps between the two A Level courses. Both A Levels include the study of a Shakespeare play, twentieth century drama and poetry. However, A Level Language and Literature contains a much smaller unseen element and also provides the opportunity to study non-fiction in a variety of forms.



SKILLS REQUIRED

- A history and enjoyment of reading widely
- Enjoyment of language in all its forms
- Ability to analyse a range of fictional and non-fictional texts
- Interest in the links between writing, speaking and society
- Ability to use a range of robust evidence to support interpretations
- Participation in critical debates about different genres Ability to engage enthusiastically with new ideas
- Readiness to transfer learning between the different aspects of the course
- Ability to evaluate the way in which context shapes written and spoken language

TEXTS STUDIED INCLUDE

Othello - William Shakespeare
The Colour Purple - Alice Walker
Homage to Catalonia – George Orwell

Greycoat Place
Westminster
London SW1P 2DY
www.gch.org.uk

PROGRAMME OF STUDY

Poetry and Prose
Comparison between poems from a pre-1914 Anthology and an unseen post-1914 text
Novel *The Colour Purple* by Alice Walker

Exam paper
2 hours
30% of total A Level

Drama
Othello by Shakespeare
Translations by Brian Friel

Exam paper
2 hours
30% of total A Level

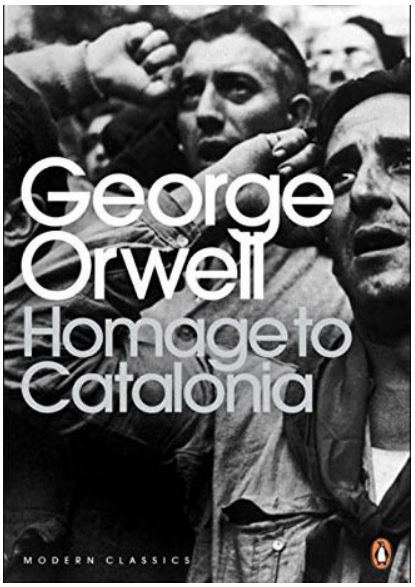
Non Literary Texts
Study of Spoken Language
Homage to Catalonia by George Orwell

Exam paper
2 hours
20% of total A Level

Critical and Creative Genre Study
Analysis of a selected genre e.g. crime writing
Two creative pieces linked to the genre (fiction and non-fiction)

Coursework of
3200-3500 words
20% of the A Level

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES



Enrichment activities take place in and outside school. Throughout the year we run a programme of theatre trips. In the past these have included trips to Twelfth Night, King Lear, Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead (Stoppard), while more recently we saw Brian Friel's Translations, Cush Jumbo's Hamlet and the recent National production of Small Island. In 2023 -2024 we visited the Black Cultural Archives to support our study of Andrea Levy's Small Island as well as two trips to the Globe in February for performances of The Duchess of Malfi and Othello. In the summer, as part of our Shakespeare Summer School we took Year 12 to see Richard III. We like to keep our finger on the cultural pulse of London so that our students can benefit from the central location of our school. We also run a Sixth Form book club with a view to exploring different genres or styles of writing. In recent years this is a club which has been run by students for students. We also organise creative writing trips to venues such as the Queen's Gallery. We end the year with two-day Shakespeare Summer School which involves guest speakers and gives students opportunities to study texts outside the curriculum. Many of our Year 12 students also participate in a Paired Reading scheme with Year 7 students in which they support the development of less confident readers.

FUTURE CAREERS

A Level English Language and Literature offers a pathway for students to a wide range of degrees and careers. Students can still pursue degrees in English Literature including at Russell Group universities. However, this course encourages an interest in the links between society and language and so students may wish to pursue this in the form of Linguistics, Humanities subjects or Social Sciences. The creative element will encourage students to consider Creative Writing or Journalism courses while the non-fiction element may invite them to think about Politics or History. Students enjoy the breadth of the course and appreciate that the transferable skills they acquire prepare them for careers in a wide range of industries.

We offer a range of support for students studying this subject. As well as the Shakespeare Summer School, designed and delivered by members of the department, we also organised external speakers and online lectures. We work hard to take students to see the plays they are studying in performance – we have already seen the recent National Theatre production of Hamlet this academic year and will be attending a production of Othello before Christmas – as well as to relevant exhibitions and sites of interest. Each year, to complement our study of the novel Small Island by Andrea Levy we take Year 12 to visit the Black Cultural Archive in Brixton to deepen our understanding of the experiences of the Windrush generation. Teachers are approachable and keen to support students in one-to-one settings where appropriate. We also offer tailored support for students applying to study English at Oxford and Cambridge by offering support with the personal statement along with regular interview practice.

EXAMINATION RESULTS

English Language and Literature results in 2026: A*-A 21.4% A*-B 50% A*-C 92.9%

Every year many students go on to study English related courses at university, in 2025 students enrolled onto the following courses: English Literature and History - Edinburgh University, English - Exeter University, English - Bristol University and in 2026 English Language and Literature - Swansea University, English - Queen Mary, University of London