

English Literature

Subject Leader: Mr. P. Lynch
Exam Board: AQA Specification 'B'
A Level

This course provides students with an introduction to the discipline of advanced literary studies and presents opportunities for reading widely and for making creative and informed responses to each of the major literary genres of poetry, prose and drama. The course covers eight literary texts in total from these three areas. The course requires students to show knowledge and understanding of:

- The concepts and terminology used when discussing literature at an advanced level.
- The ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts
- The significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received
- The connections across literary texts
- The ways in which literary texts are informed by different interpretations.

The course was taught for the first time in 2015, though the department has a wealth of A-Level experience and boasts some of the best grades attained at this level of study. The department is keen that our students experience as broad a range of literature as possible, and for this reason we have selected the new course very carefully so that we can balance both classical and modern texts. Throughout the course we teach independent study to our students, and introduce them to critical sources so that they are fully prepared for the rigour of higher education. Literature is a subject that requires students to consider individual, moral, ethical, social, cultural and contemporary issues. The specification followed by the department at St Mary's provides a framework for exploration of such issues.

Options:

- Aspects of tragedy
- Elements of political and social protest writing

Method of Assessment

Paper 1: Tragedy:

- Study of three texts: one Shakespeare text; a second drama text and one further text, of which one must be written pre-1900
- Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes; closed book; 40% of A-level

Paper 2: Texts & Genres:

- Option 2B: Elements of political and social protest writing
- Study of three texts: one post-2000 prose text; one poetry and one further text, one of which must be written pre-1900. Examination will include an unseen passage.
- Written exam: 3 hours; open book; 40% of A-level

Non-Exam Assessment (NEA):

- Study of two texts: one poetry and one prose text, informed by study of the Critical Anthology
- Two essays of 1250–1500 words, each responding to a different text and linking to a different aspect of the Critical anthology.