

English Literature A –Level

Contents:

1. Why study English Literature at A-Level?
2. Why study English Literature at Bootham School?
3. What is the layout of the course?
4. What makes a successful student?
5. The opinions of current students.



BOOTHAM
SCHOOL
AGES 3-18

Why study English Literature at A-Level?

1. What you read in class and for pleasure will fuel you as a reader and as a person for the rest of your life.
2. It's about creativity – not just in the texts you read but about how you respond and change in relation to them.
3. Universities love English Literature students because the course develops communication, collaboration, critical thinking, independence and adaptability.
6. The ability to think creatively and adapt is also a key skill that many employers say they are looking for.
7. You'll read a rich range of wonderful novels, poems, plays and texts that can't easily be categorised. Plus works of history, philosophy, sociology and much more.
8. Our world is shaped by language, so studying its use and significance is exciting and important.

It's 'learning from the past, in the present, for the future.'
(Professor Katy Shaw)



Why study English Literature at Bootham School?

1. Smaller, seminar-style classes (ideally around 8 – 12).
2. One-to-one support, both inside and outside of the classroom.
3. A wide ranging curriculum that explores a fantastic range of places, voices and experiences.
4. A foundation in Literary theory, such as Feminism, Marxism, Freudianism.
5. A wide range of trips.
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7. It's assessed in different ways: creative responses, analytical coursework responses and traditional exams.
8. It's sociable: an English A-Level relies on talking, debating and communicating.
9. Other subjects may study 'what' you know: but we also look at 'who' you are.



What is the layout of the course? What texts are studied?

What is the structure of the course?

- A linear course with two examined components and one coursework component. All of which are assessed at the end of the course.
- The study of Shakespeare is mandatory
- A minimum of eight texts will be studied

Component 1	Component 2	Component 3
Exam 40 % of total A-Level grade Shakespeare Drama and Poetry Pre 1900	Exam 40 % of total A Level grade Comparative and contextual study American Literature 1880 – 1940	Coursework Two separate essays (1000 and 2000 words respectively) Three literary texts which must include poetry, prose and drama

What texts will I study?

- Hamlet (1599): William Shakespeare
- A Doll's House (1879): Henrik Ibsen
- The Great Gatsby (1925): F. Scott. Fitzgerald
- The Age of Innocence (1920): Edith Wharton
- A collection of poetry by Christina Rossetti (1830 – 1894) or The Merchant's Prologue and Tale (1387 – 1400): Geoffrey Chaucer
- The History Boys (2004): Alan Bennett
- Atonement (2001): Ian McEwan
- A Collection of poetry by W. H. Auden (1914 – 1939)



What makes a successful student of English Literature?

1. Enjoys the process of reading, thinking and writing about texts.
2. Likes to discuss and share ideas or keen to develop this skill.
3. Enjoys the chance to work both independently and with others.
4. Open minded and keen to build on the important skill of reflection, whether directly from the teacher or through discussion and wider research.
5. Thinks about the bigger picture and interested in reading more around texts, topics, authors, time periods.
6. Able to have a go at thinking on your feet.
7. Enthusiastic to develop a wider understanding of poetry, fiction or other kinds of literature yourself and even have a go at writing some of your own.
8. Willing to have a go at opportunities beyond school.
9. Keen build on your note taking ability and learn how to consolidate and extend your understanding.



The opinions of current students.

What are the A-level combinations for some of our current students?

Student	A	B	C	D	E	F
Subjects	History English Classics	English Business Psychology	English R.S. Geography	DT Business English	English R.S. Psychology	English German History Politics

'You will become more confident in discussions, especially as you're in smaller groups.'

'We have been on trips to Ireland and London to see the texts on stage and get to know writers better.'

Writing essays in English has helped me in other subjects.'

'There is a lot more reading than at GCSE and the texts are a lot harder.'

'Read your texts in advance and make sure you reread them before the exam.'

'The wider reading really does help.'

'It'll be hard if you don't like reading and discussion.'

'I enjoyed the texts more than I thought I would, particularly the poetry, which I've always struggled with'

'The feel of the lessons is different from GCSE: I found my voice at A level as I gained confidence in my ideas'

'Having an interesting range of texts has made me enjoy reading more than I ever have before'