



Vyners School

Striving for  
Excellence

# Welcome to the English Department



A Level English Literature  
Our Key Stage 5 Curriculum

[Watch our Loom here.](#)



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## What do our students study in A Level English Literature?



At A Level, students have the opportunity to study towards qualifications with the exam board OCR. Students complete three units.

There are two exam papers:

**Drama and Poetry pre-1900** (Paper One);

**American Literature** (Paper Two);

Students must also put together a **coursework portfolio** for their final unit.

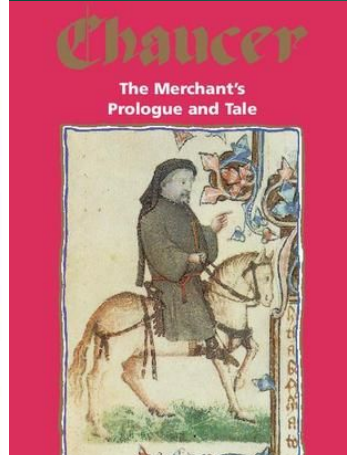
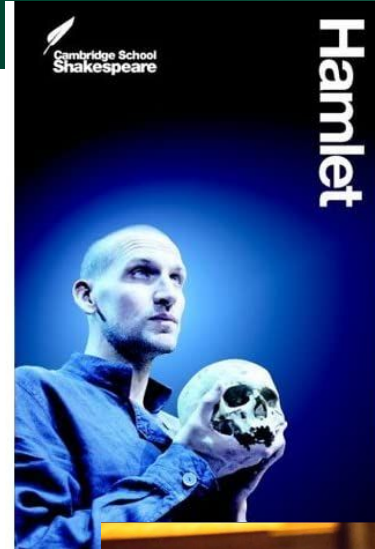


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## What do students study for **pre-1900 literature** (Paper One)?

- ★ **‘Hamlet’ by William Shakespeare**  
Students complete *two tasks*: a *close analysis* of a passage from the play and an essay exploring key *critical arguments*.
- ★ **‘The Merchant’s Tale’ by Geoffrey Chaucer and ‘The Duchess of Malfi’ by John Webster**  
Students write an essay *comparing* this epic poem and play.



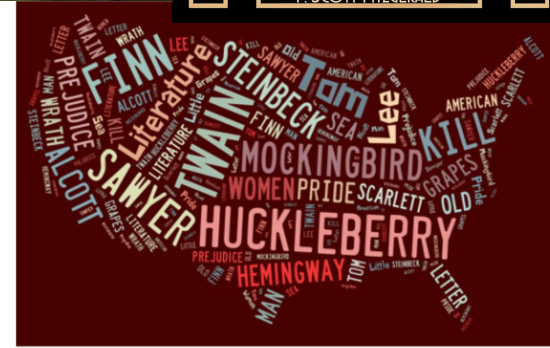
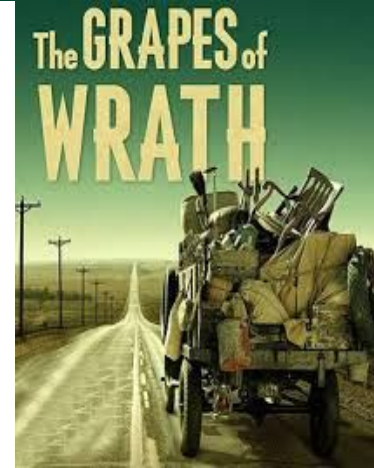


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## What do students study for **American Literature** (Paper Two)?

- ★ Students become experts on **American Literature written between 1880 and 1940**, reading a wide range of novels and short stories from this era. Their first exam task is to analyse an '*unseen*' piece of American *prose*.
- ★ '**The Great Gatsby**' by F Scott Fitzgerald and '**Grapes of Wrath**' by John Steinbeck  
Students write an essay *comparing* these novels.







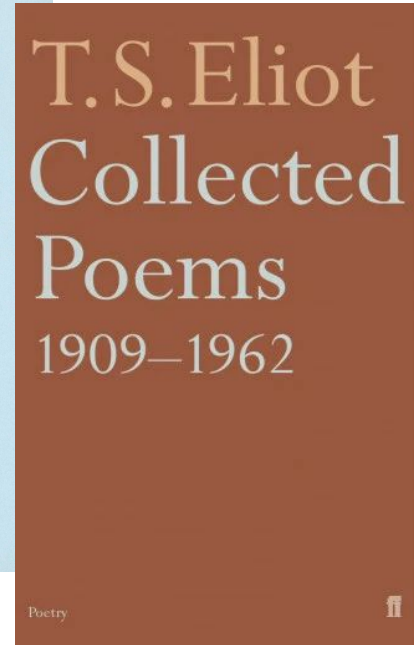
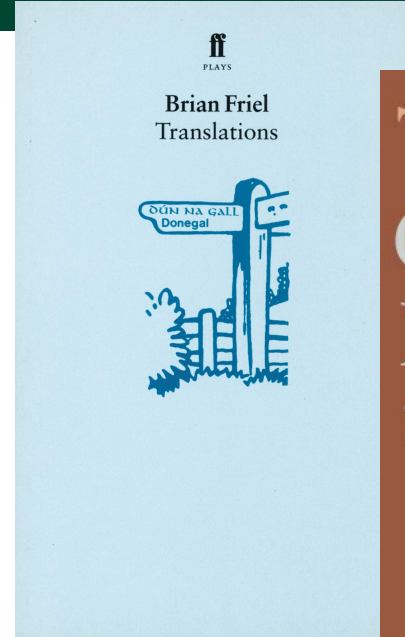
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## What do students study for their coursework portfolio?

Students complete two tasks:

- ★ *critical analysis of **poetry** by **TS Eliot**;*
- ★ *an extended essay comparing themes of **conflict** in a 20th century play ('Translations' by Brian Friel) and a 21st century novel (individual **student's own choice**).*





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## What do our students say? Our Year 13 students share their experiences of A Level English Literature:

“A Level English Literature is very different from GCSE English. It’s not just about being good at the subject at GCSE; you have to **enjoy reading**”. *Jess*

“English Lit is a blend of lots of different subjects. It covers such a **breadth of knowledge**: in lessons we have explored so many ideas from history, geography, ethics, psychology, even science.” *Emily*



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“When you get to the next stage and are exploring university options, English Literature **opens up a broad range of choices** for you”. *Grace*

“You have to be willing to **get involved in class discussions**. Taking part in discussions is the main thing we do in lessons”. *Mattie*

“This is a **really diverse subject**. I have become an expert in everything from Medieval Middle English, to modern American literature. I have found this a really enjoyable challenge”. *Darshi*



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“English Literature enables you to develop the **ability to consider multiple perspectives and viewpoints**. It really challenges you to think critically”.

*Helen*

“In studying English Literature, you will be able to master many **transferable skills**. This is especially true of the **essay skills** you develop. This has really helped me in my other subjects, like Geography. It has even helped me to write my UCAS personal statement!” *Kathryn*

“From studying English I have developed **time management skills** and the ability to prioritise my work”. *Rozafa*





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“This is a demanding A Level. You have to do a lot of reading outside of lessons: you have to be **self-disciplined and well organised**. It is very different from GCSE English in that your A Level teachers expect you to be self-reliant and motivated.” *Tara*

“There is such a **variety** of critical approaches and wider research - this is a **wealth of material** that you just don't get a chance to explore at GCSE”. *Kathryn*

“In studying English Literature, I have developed my **own writing style**. I have enjoyed being pushed **out of my comfort zone!**” *Rinesa*



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## What does the super curriculum look like in A Level English Literature?

We encourage our students to develop a **life-long love of the arts and literature**, aiming to provide them with a **wide range of experiences**.

In the last two years our A Level students have visited Stratford-upon-Avon; gone on theatre trips to central London; attended Shakespeare workshops at Harrow School; attended lectures by an Oxford University professor; participated in an American Literature Conference; taken part in a Dystopia Project with Oxford University and had a behind-the-scenes Q&A session with an actor at the National Theatre.

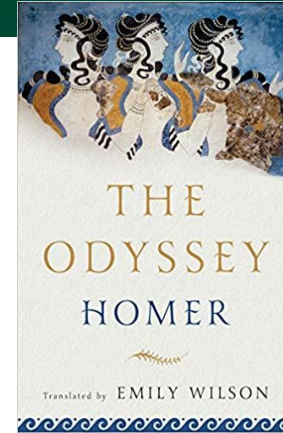


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## How do we challenge our students and extend their learning?

In addition to the syllabus content, we require our students to complete an **Extended Project** each term. Students work collaboratively to create podcasts, artwork, musical interpretations, write speeches and make films in response to literature. Project topics undertaken include: the classic novel, modernism and naturalism, renaissance literature and classics.





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**So if you enjoy reading, relish a challenge,  
love discussions and want a subject that will  
open doors, A Level English Literature is for  
you.**



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## Ready to get started?

Watch this [loom](#) to access your induction lesson for Paper One.

Watch this [loom](#) to access your induction lesson for Paper Two.

