

GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature

For BOTH these subjects, students must be able to:

- read independently an extensive range of texts with different contexts
- understand and analyse texts NOT studied with their teacher
- compare texts – some of which are not seen until the exam
- develop and sustain an **independent** point of view about texts (NOT an AI-generated one!)
- use appropriate contextual information to inform their view
- use textual references and quotations to support ideas
- write extended essays in an academic style
- write accurately to develop an argument in the correct style for Type, Audience and Purpose
- use relevant subject terms appropriately
- use an extensive range of precise vocabulary

Practical Information

Examining Board: **AQA**

English Language:

Paper 1 skills: understand and analyse a short story extract; produce one piece of narrative or descriptive writing

Paper 2 skills: understand and compare two non-fiction texts; write an argument matching Type and Audience

English Literature:

Paper 1 texts: *Macbeth* and *A Christmas Carol*

Paper 2 texts: *Animal Farm*, previously studied poetry and two poems not seen before

We expect students to buy their own copies of *Macbeth* and optional revision materials for all their texts through Arbor Pay. All other texts are provided free of charge by the school.

Ensuring success at GCSE

Developing good learning habits is essential. Students need to:

- bring correct books and equipment to each lesson
- build on speaking, reading and writing skills from Years 7 and 8
- read for pleasure, increasing the challenge of books
- create orderly, legible notes that can be revised in Years 10 and 11
- undertake additional study beyond the lessons and set homework
- maintain a positive 'can find a way to do' mind-set
- **put most effort into the aspects that seem hardest**

Useful FREE online resources

- the student library on SharePoint (for all subjects), constantly being updated
- [Macbeth Study Guide | Course Hero](#);
- [A Christmas Carol - Course Hero](#);
- [Animal Farm Study Guide | Course Hero](#)
- [AQA GCSE English Section B: Power and Conflict Poetry Anthology - PMT](#) (provides notes on all the poems we study)
- [GCSE / IGCSE English Language Past Papers - PMT](#) - choose AQA
- [GCSE / IGCSE English Literature Past Papers - PMT](#) - choose AQA
- www.rsc.org.uk
- BBC Bitesize GCSE - ensure you select AQA English Language and English Literature

Tips from other students for learning quotations, subject terms and key moments in texts:

- group together 2 or 3 moments that illustrate a character or theme and learn your points with quotations
- focus on short quotations - ones that rhyme are easier to learn
- keep them in a small set of index cards per text
- sing quotations
- walk or dance around the room as you say them
- group quotations and stick them around your room
- imagine them in different places in your house or on a journey
- record them and play them through headphones whilst doing the washing up
- create mind maps to link key moments
- find multi-purpose quotations that fit several questions
- put them together with images
- start as soon as you begin studying a text and keep revisiting them every two weeks
- test each other

Key Notes:

1. Everyone learns best when their brain is stretched by a slightly more difficult challenge
2. English needs your brain to be thinking, not passively soaking up information
3. Practice (and even more practice!) makes perfect