

English Language – Paper 1

Section A: Reading

one literature fiction text

Section B: Writing

Descriptive or narrative writing

Assessed:

Written exam: **1 hour 45 minutes**

80 marks

50% of overall GCSE English Language

Questions:

Reading (40 marks) (25%) – one single text

1 short form comprehension question

(1 x 4 marks)

2 longer form questions – Language and Structure

(2 x 8 marks)

1 extended question – evaluation of writer’s choices

(1 x 20 marks)

Writing (40 marks) (25%):

1 extended writing question

(24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy)

English Language – Paper 2

Section A: Reading

one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text

Section B: Writing

Writing to present a viewpoint (non-fiction)

Assessed:

Written exam: **1 hour 45 minutes**

80 marks

50% of overall GCSE English Language

Questions:

Reading (40 marks) (25%) – two linked texts

1 short form comprehension question

(1 x 4 marks)

2 longer form questions – Summary and Language

(1 x 8, 1 x 12 marks)

1 extended question – comparison of viewpoints

(1 x 16 marks)

Writing (40 marks) (25%):

1 extended writing question

(24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy)

In Summary:

- English Language is set across two papers.
- Completing both papers equates to one full GCSE.
- Both papers take 1 hour 45 minutes to complete.
- The papers are seen as a ‘Language Journey’, with the most accessible questions being found in Paper 1 (where students analyse just one text) and concluding with Paper 2 (where students compare and analyse across two texts).
- Students also undertake a ‘Spoken Language’ assessment, which is required to pass the course **but does not contribute to the final grade.**

‘What can I do at home to help?’

- Helping can be tricky, because each question has its own mark scheme and skill set to show.
- Note that on each individual paper, the writing questions are worth 50% of the overall mark.
- Descriptive writing inspired by an image/photography is one task that can replicated easily at home.
- For the non-fiction writing in Paper 2 (which may be about producing an article, newspaper or letter), ensure that students are aware of wider social issues, as the tasks are often topical. Watching the news, reading newspapers, engaging with wider issues in any way can ensure that students will be able to respond effectively.
- Continuing to read widely, both fiction and non-fiction will benefit students hugely with both reading stamina and familiarity with various types of text that they be called upon to analyse.

English Literature – Paper 1

What's assessed?

A Shakespeare Play (*Macbeth* - Autumn Term Y11)
A 19th-century novel (*A Christmas Carol* – Autumn Term Y10)

How it's assessed:

Written exam: **1 hour 45 minutes**

64 marks

40% of overall GCSE English Literature

Questions:

Section A Shakespeare: students will answer one question on their play of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole.

Section B The 19th-century novel: students will answer one question on their novel of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole.

English Literature – Paper 2

What's assessed?

Modern prose (*Anita and Me* – Spring Term Y10)
Poetry Anthology (Love & Relationships Spring Term Y10)
Unseen Poetry (Spring Term Y10)

How it's assessed:

Written exam: **2 hour 15 minutes**

96 marks

60% of overall GCSE Literature

Questions:

Section A Modern texts: students will answer one essay question from a choice of two on their studied modern prose or drama text.

Section B Poetry: students will answer one *comparative* question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster.

Section C Unseen poetry: Students will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question *comparing* this poem with a second unseen poem.

In Summary:

- English Literature is set across two papers.
- Completing both papers equates to one full GCSE.
- English Literature is seen as being more challenging than Language due to the nature of the subject material.
- Three texts are studied across the two year period.
- The exams are 'closed text' – students will not have access to a copy in the exam.
- Questions are extract based, except 'Anita and Me' which is a traditional-style essay question.
- Typically, students will spend 45 minutes on each question, with the unseen poetry being less.
- AQA provide the Poetry Anthology – there is no need to purchase a copy.

'What can I do at home to help?'

- Helping can be tricky, because each question has its own mark scheme and skill set to show.
- Note that the exams are 'closed text'. Students are not encouraged to revise *everything*, but rather unpick the texts and decide upon a set of quotations that can function across multiple themes and concepts. Creating diagrams and revision cards that can help to 'unpick' the texts can really help.
- Talking about the texts, reading them yourself can help you to understand the nature of the exams.
- Taking your child to see productions or experience the texts in some way can make a difference.
- Please note: the film version of *Anita and Me* contains several core differences, so approach this with caution.
- Revision guides for all texts are available from the school shop – but they are useful only in sitting alongside student interpretations and those of their teacher, rather than being a comprehensive guide.