

A LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Exam Board: AQA



What's my starting point?

Words, a love of language and an interest in the development of the English Language.

Be warned: the A level course is not a continuation of GCSE English. Rather, it is akin to a sociolinguistics course. This two year course is designed so you can explore the acquisition, use and development of the English Language. The texts you will study will focus on written language, as found in letters and journals, and the spoken language found in transcripts and speeches. We'll build on your knowledge of lexis, semantics, grammar and pragmatics. Although you may not have encountered these terms before, we will work with you to develop an appreciation of how language is used. You must be prepared to read widely, learn technical terms and develop a grasp of grammar. In addition, you must be willing to contribute to class discussions based on your wider reading.

You will need to meet the School's minimum entry requirements. Please also refer to the Sixth Form Minimum Entry Requirements information sheet. For this subject you need to attain a Grade 6 or higher in both GCSE English Language and English Literature and Mathematics at Grade 5.

What will I study?

The A level course explores variations in different texts. You will analyse the way that texts are constructed depending on a wide range of factors and frameworks relating to audience, purpose and context. We investigate varieties of both accent and dialect. We look at how identity is constructed, how audiences are addressed and positioned and how different people are represented.

The A level course also includes the study of the way language has changed over time, and how children acquire language. You will also undertake an investigation into an aspect of language study and produce a piece of original writing on your topic.

How will I be assessed?

There will be termly assessments and internal examinations throughout the course. At the end of Year 13 there are 3 parts to the A level qualification.

Component 1 – Language and the Individual (40%)

Component 2 – Language Varieties (40%)

Component 3 – Non-Examined Assessment (NEA) (20%)

The following topics will be covered throughout the two year course:

- Textual variations and representations
- Children's language development
- Language diversity and change
- Language Discourses
- Language Investigation
- Original writing

Skills for Success:

You must be prepared to study independently, research, collect data, draft and edit your own work.

How will I study?

To develop your interest in the English Language and its complexities, you'll need to: read around each topic; prepare topics for class discussion and analysis; and draft and edit sustained analytical essays. You'll be annotating a range of texts, learning new technical vocabulary and developing your linguistic approaches to language analysis.

English Language combines well with...

Anything! As long as you are open to exploring language and its uses, you will find that English Language develops academic skills which will help you with a very wide range of subjects. Warning: don't expect a journalism course or a creative writing course – even when you are creating pieces of original writing, you are doing so linguistically.