



**Bloxham School**

# English Literature

A Level

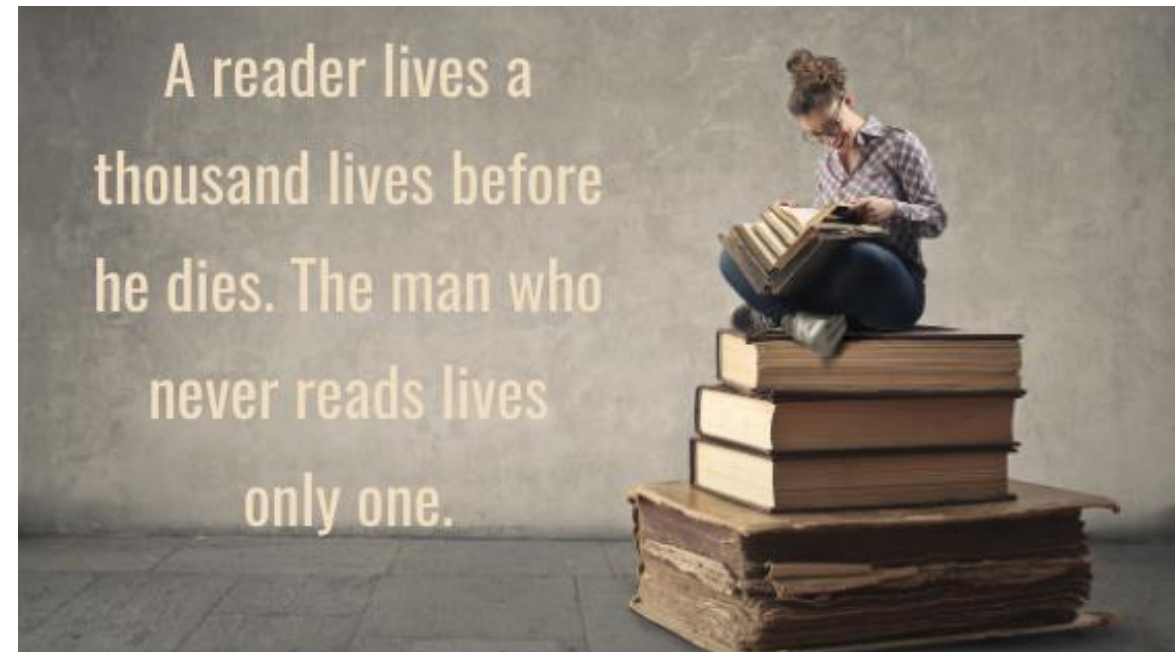


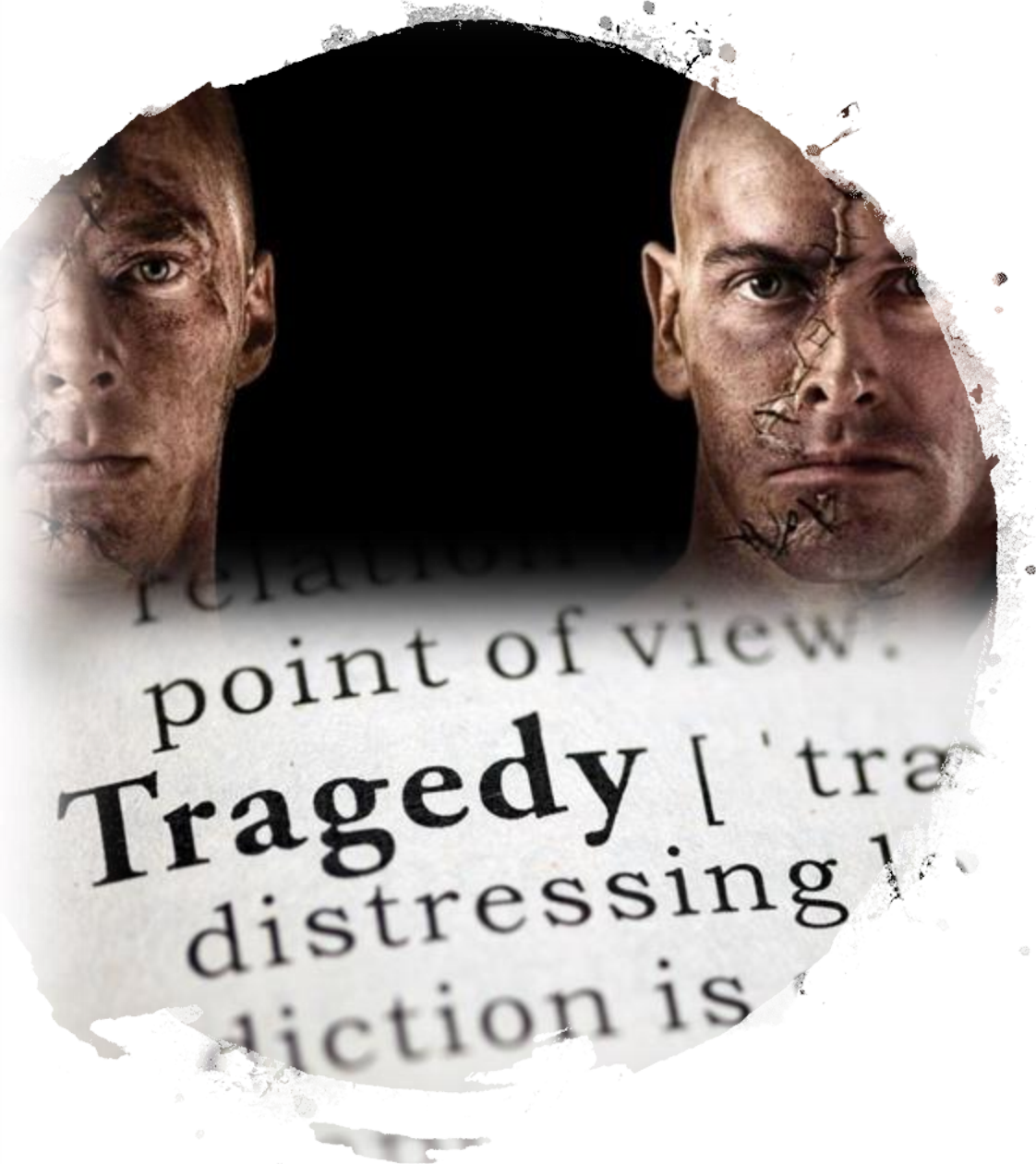
# Why choose English as a subject?

**As C. S. Lewis said:  
'We read to know we're not alone.'**

The study of literature allows us:

- to see the world differently;
- to connect with the experiences of others, exploring characters perhaps far removed from our everyday lives;
- to form and shape arguments;
- to gain an excellent grounding in our written work as it demands that we think carefully about the way language is used to shape meaning and the reader's response;
- to understand the manipulation of language – how to spot it and how to use it.





# The nature of the course

- **Examination board:** Edexcel
- **Course content:** We cover a wide range of texts, from Shakespeare's tragedies to 21st century poetry, exploring Gothic panoramas and dystopian visions of the future as well as groundbreaking theatre. You will also choose your own texts for an independent extended essay.
- You will be required to write essays, prepare presentations and discuss your ideas in class.
- We supplement the classroom study of texts, wherever possible, with theatre productions, student conferences, library sessions and opportunities for further extension in evening lectures and a Sixth Form literary society.

# Examination structure



Component	Detail
<b>Paper 1</b> Drama, 30% (2 hr 15 mins)	<b>Section A: Shakespeare.</b> One essay response on chosen Shakespeare text (currently <i>King Lear</i> ), including critical reading (35 marks). <b>Section B: Other drama.</b> One essay response on other drama text (currently <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> ) (25 marks).
<b>Paper 2</b> Prose, 20% (1 hr 15 mins)	A comparative essay on two prose texts on the theme of Science and Society (currently <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> and <i>Frankenstein</i> ) (40 marks).
<b>Paper 3</b> Poetry, 30% (2 hr 15 mins)	<b>Section A (post-2000 poetry):</b> Comparative response on an unseen poem and a set poem from <i>Poems of the Decade</i> (30 marks). <b>Section B (pre-2000 poetry):</b> An explorative essay on a studied poet or literary movement (currently <i>The Romantics</i> ) (30 marks).
<b>Coursework</b> 3000 word essay comparing two texts of your choice, 20%	There are no prescribed texts here; students are offered a free choice of two texts (including literary non-fiction), with guidance from their teacher. The focus is on independent study and research. This is an exceptionally open and exciting unit which enables freedom of exploration and depth of personal engagement.





# What do we expect from candidates?

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We expect you:

- to do a great deal of reading, going beyond the set texts
- to painstakingly plan and prepare essays
- to establish critical viewpoints, immerse yourselves in language and articulate arguments
- to question the world around you
- to be open-minded
- to have the capacity to view experience through different critical lenses
- to be willing to engage in lively (and sometimes controversial) debate
- to have independent interests, perspectives and passions in literature and non-fiction

# With which subjects can it be combined?

Subjects which are particularly compatible with English include:

- **History**, which can inform our awareness of the context in which texts were written,
- **Theology**, which complements aspects of critical thinking and philosophy,
- **Theatre Studies**, which reminds students that plays are texts for performance, and
- **Modern Languages**, which can benefit from the training which we provide in literary criticism.
- **Art** and **Music** also remain firm companions.
- **Psychology** works well as we explore psychoanalytical interpretations of texts.
- **Politics** is also a strong companion as we explore how language is used to manipulate social and global issues. Additionally, the essay training helps with formulating clear lines of argument.

However, the richness and diversity which characterise English Literature make it compatible with any number of combinations. In the past two years students studying **STEM** subject such as **Biology** and **Maths** have achieved top grades, commenting how it complements these subjects and allows for different patterns of thinking. It also provides a strong complement to those interested in studying **Engineering, Medicine** and other sciences at university, where dissertations and writing skills will be relied upon.



Language is power, life and the  
instrument of culture, the  
instrument of domination and  
liberation.

— Angela Carter —

# Higher Education and Careers



Approximately half of the graduates of Britain's universities have Arts degrees, and such people are readily employed in all walks of business and professional life.

**A Level English is suitable for many professions: Law, Business, Journalism, Teaching, Advertising, Public Relations, Marketing, Events, Media, Publishing, Management, HR & Recruitment, Travel, etc.**

The transferable skills that English provides are not always directly quantifiable, but are arguably some of the most important: empathy, critical thinking, communication, argument construction, ability to identify language construction, understanding of wider social, economic and international perspectives, planning, articulation, critical reasoning to name a few... all skills which are highly sought after in multiple managerial and leadership roles.



# Teaching Staff

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- Mrs C. Summers (Head of Department)
- Mr C. Saunders
- Mrs E. Exelby
- Mr G. Gamble

