

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## English Department

**Q 1. What is the difference between A level English Language and A level English Literature?**

*The two courses are entirely different. In Literature, students will study a range of genres – novels, poetry and drama – and will also be required to analyse unseen texts. In Language, students will study a wider range of texts – both fiction and non-fiction. They will also study spoken language in action – for example how children acquire language, political discourse and everyday conversations.*

**Q 2. What are the topics you study on the English Language A level?**

*There are a variety of topics covered on the A level including, Language and Power, Child Language Acquisition, Standard and Non-Standard English and Language and Gender. We study texts from Early Modern English (1600-1800) up to English in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century mainly focusing on language use and changes that have occurred post-2000. For the coursework component, students may choose an area of the course in which they want to specialise for their investigation.*

**Q 3. What does the combined A level in Language and Literature entail?**

*You study literature: A Streetcar Named Desire (Tennessee Williams), The Great Gatsby (F Scott Fitzgerald) and The Whitsun Weddings (Philip Larkin)*

*Also*

*An anthology of non-fiction texts which includes newspaper articles and opinion columns, famous speeches, and transcripts of TV interviews e.g. there is one with former President Obama.*

*Coursework: you will write a piece of fiction and non-fiction e.g. a dystopian short story and an article on a subject of your choice.*



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**Q 4. What are the set texts for A level English Literature?**

*Drama: A Streetcar Named Desire, (Tennessee Williams) The Duchess of Malfi (John Webster) and either King Lear or The Tempest (Shakespeare)*

*Poetry: The Whitsun Weddings by Philip Larkin, and Meantime by Carol Ann Duffy and The Merchant's Tale by Geoffrey Chaucer*

*Coursework is a comparative essay on two novels. This year they are A Room with a View and either The Reluctant Fundamentalist (Mohsin Hamid) or Girl Meets Boy (Ali Smith)*

**Q 5. How are the 3 A levels assessed?**

*Both Literature and Language have 3 exams at the end of the 2-year courses. They are worth a total of 80% of the marks. Each A level also has a coursework component worth 20% of the course.*

**Q 6. Is there coursework for the English A Levels?**

*Yes, each A Level has a coursework component, which is introduced in the first year.*

**Q 7. Does the combined A level count as 1 subject?**

*Yes. It would be 1 of the 3 subjects you would choose to study at Loreto.*

**Q 8. Are English A levels well-regarded by universities?**

*Yes! All three A levels help students to develop their spoken and written communication skills. They involve analysis, research and independence. These are essential preparation for undergraduate study and they also combine well with a whole variety of other subjects.*

**Q 9. I want to be a journalist. Which English A level would be best for me?**

*Any of the English A levels will give you the confidence in written and spoken expression and a wide cultural knowledge.*



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Q 10. I want to be a lawyer. Which English A level should I choose?

*English Literature is typically regarded as the best option here.*

Q 11. I really like creative writing. Which of the 3 A levels should I choose?

*There are opportunities for creative writing in both English Language and the combined A level throughout the two years. Even if you do not choose to study English you can opt into a creative writing enrichment class which is one period a week and completed alongside your other subjects. Check out our [Manchester Muse](#) blog for some examples of the work that these students have produced.*

