St Benedict's Sixth Form

A Level English Literature

Course Description

In studying English Literature, you will explore novels, plays and poetry examining the psychology of characters, the significance of settings, the motivations of writers, and the political, social and historical contexts within which texts have been written and read. You will develop your own interpretations standing on the shoulders of readers and critics who have gone before you as you grapple with what it is to be human. In doing so you will explore themes of love, power, loss, how we manage adversity, and how hope and the creative imagination fuels us when all else has failed. Studying literature is the journey across time, place, class and nationality to deeper understand people and our place in society. The world-class authors we study include Shakespeare, Margaret Atwood, Christina Rossetti, Henrik Ibsen and Tennessee Williams – brilliant writers and some of whose work will resonate with you all your life.

Skills Attained

You will become a critical reader becoming expert at decoding structure, language and dramatic devices both on the page and at the theatre. (There will be trips!) In class, you will develop your oral communication skills through listening to others, contributing to debate, and giving presentations. Over time and after study and research, you will develop keen insights about character and representation and be able to argue your perspective with conviction. With practice you will become adept at writing clear, concise analysis with developed arguments.

Assessment

1. Exam = 40% 2 hours 30 minutes - Shakespeare, Poetry and Modern Drama.
2. Exam = 40% 2 hours 30 minutes - Dystopian Fiction.
3. Coursework = 20%



Progression

English Literature combines well with almost any other set of A Levels. English Literature is a facilitating subject when applying to Russell Group universities and highly respected. Beyond college, the intellectual exactitude of English, and the ability to read critically and communicate effectively creates a set of very marketable job skills. Employers tend to believe that a degree in English is 'a good thing', reflecting a creative and rigorous mind, an ability to communicate effectively and self-discipline. Past students are to be found in TV and journalism, commerce and finance, politics and law. Some have become teachers, actors and writers.

Student Voice

"Dystopia is relevant to our times with its critique of environmental catastrophes, nuclear disasters and power imbalances." - Eleanor

"English Lit is a great indicator of how society has changed." - Sara

"It opens your mind." - Elianna

Entry Requirements

Grade 5 in GCSE English Literature

Exam Board: OCR

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