GCSE (9-1) English Language

Key features

The 19th century requirement will always be met via one stand-alone fiction text.

- This provides additional exposure to the sorts of literary heritage texts students will encounter in English Literature.
- It will be straightforward for you to find similar texts for teaching and learning.

Comparison of modern non-fiction texts.

- This ensures comparison is not limited to differences in language between older and more contemporary texts.
- Students will be able to develop the skills required to analyse real-world, relevant non-fiction texts of a sort they will encounter in their lives (e.g. newspaper and magazine articles, book reviews, obituaries, speeches, letters, biographies).
- Again, it will be straightforward for you to find similar texts for teaching and learning.

Clear, straightforward paper structure.

- Both papers have a clear identity (Paper 1 = fiction/creative; Paper 2 = non-fiction/transactional), so it is clear to students what to expect in each case.
- The higher weighting for Paper 2 reflects the additional work (comparison, two reading texts) expected of learners in this paper.

All writing is supported by a stimulus, with the reading as a model.

- Each of our papers is linked by a theme, which means the reading provides students with a stimulus and a model for their own writing.
- There is a choice of writing tasks per paper.
- There is an optional set of images to provide an additional stimulus for learners in the creative writing section.

Support for the key challenges.

- Our digital English Language Unseen Preparation Anthology will provide exemplar texts for you to use in the classroom.
- We will provide exclusive sets of Grammar for Writing lesson plans to support progress in writing, and Let’s Think in English materials to build confidence with unseen texts.

Assessment at a glance

Paper 1 1hr 45 mins (40%)

Section A:
Unseen 19th century fiction
- Extract will be approximately 650 words in length.
- Shorter response questions will focus on close reading of the text; longer response questions will ask students to show their understanding of the whole text.

Section B:
Creative writing
- Choice of two tasks linked to the theme of the 19th century fiction.
- One task will include images as an optional stimulus for learners.
- Assessing writing for audience and purpose, tone, style and register as well as grammatical and structural features, vocabulary, sentence structure, spelling and punctuation.

Spoken Language endorsement

- Presenting, listening to questions and responding, and the use of standard English.
- Teacher set and assessed.
- Separate endorsement reported as a separate line on the certificate.

Paper 2 2hrs 5 mins (60%)

Section A:
Comparison of two unseen texts from the 20th and 21st century
- One will be non-fiction; the other literary non-fiction.
- Extracts will be up to 1000 words in total.
- Shorter response questions will focus on the close reading of the individual texts; a longer response question will ask students to compare the writers’ use of language.

Section B:
Transactional writing
- Choice of two tasks linked to the theme of the comparison texts.
- Newspaper articles, letters etc.
- Assessing writing for audience and purpose, tone, style and register as well as grammatical and structural features, vocabulary, sentence structure, spelling and punctuation.

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To help make the transition from your current exam board as easy and straightforward as possible, we have created three mapping documents for you to download:

- AQA mapping chart
- OCR mapping chart
- Eduqas mapping chart

You said, we did

Since 2015 we have continually listened to feedback on our GCSE (9-1) English Language qualification and have made a number of improvements based on your feedback.

Take a look

Past exam papers and mark schemes

We know how important it is to see examples of exam papers, questions and mark schemes when looking at switching exam boards.

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- November 2018 Paper 1
- November 2018 Mark Scheme
- November 2018 Paper 2
- November 2018 Mark Scheme

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