

English  
Literature  
GCSE

# General Introduction

Welcome to your English Literature GCSE course! This introduction will serve as a guide to what you can expect from the course, and it will show you how to plan your study of this course effectively. So do not just jump straight on to Lesson One!

## Specification

This course is designed to match the AQA 8702 GCSE English Literature specification.

## Aims of the course

This GCSE English Literature course gives students the opportunity to explore their literary interests and to

- read a wide range of classic literature fluently and with good understanding, and make connections across their reading
- read in depth, critically and evaluatively, so that they are able to discuss and explain their understanding and ideas
- develop the habit of reading widely and often
- appreciate the depth and power of the English literary heritage
- write accurately, effectively and analytically about their reading, using Standard English
- acquire and use a wide vocabulary, including the grammatical terminology and other literary and linguistic terms they need to criticise and analyse what they read.



Oxford Open Learning

## The Course

The Oxford Open Learning English Literature GCSE course is divided into six modules and 22 lessons in all. It is set out as follows:

### Module One: Literary Analysis

Lesson One:	Writing about Yourself
Lesson Two:	Comparing Different Versions of an Event
<b>Tutor-marked Assignment A</b>	
Lesson Three:	Imagery and Setting
Lesson Four:	Character
Lesson Five:	Point of View
<b>Tutor-marked Assignment B</b>	

### Module Two: Essay Technique

Lesson Six:	Persuasion
Lesson Seven:	Paragraphing
Lesson Eight:	Planning Essays
<b>Tutor-marked Assignment C</b>	
Lesson Nine:	Argument

### Module Three: Shakespeare: *Romeo and Juliet*

Lesson Ten:	Studying Shakespeare
Lesson Eleven:	Acts I and II
Lesson Twelve:	Acts III, IV and V
<b>Tutor-marked Assignment D</b>	
Lesson Thirteen:	Characters and Themes
<b>Tutor-marked Assignment E</b>	

### Module Four: J.B. Priestley: *An Inspector Calls*

Lesson Fourteen:	Act One and Characters
Lesson Fifteen:	Act Two and Structure
Lesson Sixteen:	Act Three and Language
<b>Tutor-marked Assignment F</b>	
Lesson Seventeen:	Themes of the Play
<b>Tutor-marked Assignment G</b>	

### Module Five: Unseen Texts and Poetry Anthology

Lesson Eighteen:	Analysing Poems
<b>Tutor-marked Assignment H</b>	
Anthology Worksheets 1-15	
<b>Tutor-marked Assignment I</b>	

## Module Six: Mary Shelley: *Frankenstein*

Lesson Nineteen: The Plot of *Frankenstein*

Lesson Twenty: Mary Shelley and the Gothic Novel

### **Tutor-marked Assignment J**

Lesson Twenty-One: Characters and Themes

Lesson Twenty-Two: *Frankenstein* and Science Fiction

### **Tutor-marked Assignment K**

Revision

Glossary

AQA Anthology of Poems: Power and Conflict

The course is arranged in this way in order to make it easy to follow. The first two modules are general, introductory modules, designed to ease you gently into the course and to provide you with a solid foundation on which to base your textual studies. Modules Three, Four and Six are on the three examination texts, and each of these contains two tutor-marked assignments which should help you to check your progress. Module Five addresses each of the poems in the Poetry Anthology.

You do not *have* to follow the course in this order.

## Texts to be studied

There are two written examinations for the AQA English Literature GCSE and no compulsory coursework. The first examination is worth 40% of the total marks and the second 60%. (You will find further details about the AQA specification (syllabus) at the end of the General Introduction.)

You are required to study a Poetry Anthology and three further texts in detail. We have selected three texts which match the AQA criteria to study on this course. They are as follows. AQA do not nominate specific editions, but we recommend:

William Shakespeare: *Romeo and Juliet* (Cambridge School Shakespeare; CUP, ISBN-13: 978-0521618700)

Mary Shelley: *Frankenstein: The Modern Prometheus* (Wisehouse Classics; ISBN: 978-9176370698 (NB This is the original 1818 edition of the novel, which we recommend.)

J.B. Priestley: *An Inspector Calls* (Penguin Classics; ISBN: 978-0-14-118535-4)

In each case it is acceptable to use a different edition.

You will need to get hold of your own copy of all of these books. One easy way of buying textbooks is through Oxford Open Learning's website ([www.ool.co.uk](http://www.ool.co.uk)). **You are not allowed to take texts into the examinations unless the specification specifically indicates that you may.**

Apart from the literary texts, there is no need to buy any other textbooks. However, although the OOL course is self-contained, it is always a good idea to look at alternative approaches or to gain extra practice. Your local or college library may contain some helpful books.

## The Structure within each Lesson: How to Study

### Front Page

The front page of each lesson shows:

- The title.
- Aim(s) for the lesson. These set out the position that you should reach after working through the lesson; keep these in mind while reading the lesson material.
- Context. This gives a very brief summary and shows how the lesson fits in with the rest of the course.
- Note. This indicates specific reading or writing materials needed for the lesson.

### Lesson Notes

There then follow the notes; these present the subject material to be studied in the lesson. Read these through carefully several times until you feel that you have understood the broad outline of the theory involved, and then tackle any reading references.

### Activities

For most of this course the work that you will be doing will not be sent to your tutor; it will consist of Activities; these will aid your learning and allow you to check that you are taking in what you have been reading. The important thing to remember is that none of the work that you do in these activities is wasted: all of it will contribute to helping you develop skills, which will later be assessed both in your coursework assignments and in your examination. Your activities will give you necessary practice, and careful work on these will contribute more to your eventual performance and success than any other aspect of the course.

Activities are indicated like this:

**Activity 7**

Is the main speaker in this passage a detached, objective narrator of events?

In your answer, you should consider whether this speaker:

- Presents opinion as if it were fact
- Keeps his or her own opinions of people out of the account
- Could have witnessed everything that s/he tells
- Assumes that the listener will agree with his/her views
- Is more sympathetic to some of the people involved than to others.

Decide in what ways this teller is biased, and give examples from the passage. You may also use your knowledge of the first passage in your answer.



The pencil symbol indicates that you should make your own notes in the space provided (though, of course, you may prefer to make them separately).

**Where do I find the Answers to Activities?**

This varies. Some Activities do not have answers at all because they are too open-ended and their purpose is that you should produce a response which is personal to you.

However, most Activities do have 'specimen' answers. These are not the *only* 'correct' answers but they may help you to see how you could improve your own work. Some of these specimen answers are to be found at the end of the lesson and some immediately following the activity.

You may be tempted to peek at the answer to the activity before you have made a proper attempt at it. This is to be avoided at all costs. You must discipline yourself *not* to read the next section of a lesson until you have done the activity. To help you manage this we have put the activities in boxes. Think of these boxes as red lights; do not

approach them until you are ready to give the activity your best shot, and do not pass them until you have completed the activity.

Reading the answers too early will be fatal for a number of reasons. The specimen answer tackles the problem in a certain way, and if you have not made your own attempt yet, you will tend to think that that is the only way to do it. There will be other ways, and it is best if you can find one of your own. Remember that the answer is just a 'specimen' or 'suggested' answer.

## Self-Assessment Tests

When you feel that you have mastered the topics and completed the activities, tackle the Self-Assessment Test (there is one at the end of most lessons). The answers to these can be found at the end of each module. Again, do not be tempted to cheat by looking at the answers. This would give you less chance of doing well on the Tutor-marked Assignments and on the coursework.

## Tutor-marked Assignments

After every two or three lessons there is a Tutor-marked Assignment. These should be carried out under timed conditions to give you examination practice. These tests will thoroughly check your understanding of the previous few topics. You should send your answers to these tests to your tutor, who will return your marked script together with a set of suggested answers.

## You and Your Tutor

If sending TMAs in the post, you should write your name and other details very clearly on your test answers, and that you should ensure that all the sheets of your assignment are firmly attached together. Alternatively, by agreement with your tutor, you may send work in the form of e-mail attachments.

When your scripts for the Tutor-marked Assignments are returned, suggested answers will also be sent to you.

## The AQA Syllabus 8702

This course of lessons will prepare you for the English Literature GCSE specification (syllabus) 8702 examined by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA).

At some point in your study, it is advisable to check the syllabus for details of what will be required of you in your examination; you will naturally find that all lessons in this course are relevant to your examination needs. However, the AQA syllabus does contain a great

deal of information on the aims and assessment of the English Literature course.

It is a very good idea to get hold of your own copy of the syllabus for the year in which you expect to take the examination. Copies are available from AQA at the following address:

AQA Publications  
Unit 2, Wheel Forge Way,  
Trafford Park  
Manchester  
M17 1EH (tel: 0870-410-1036)

Copies can also be downloaded from the AQA website: [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk). Make sure you get the right year and the correct syllabus!

## The AQA Examinations

### Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19<sup>th</sup>-century novel

What's assessed

- Shakespeare
- The 19<sup>th</sup>-century novel

How it's assessed

- written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 64 marks
- 40% of GCSE

**Section A** Shakespeare: students will answer one question on their play of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole. We have selected William Shakespeare: *Romeo and Juliet* for detailed study.

**Section B** The 19<sup>th</sup>-century novel: students will answer one question on their novel of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole. We have selected Mary Shelley: *Frankenstein* for detailed study.

### Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry

What's assessed

- Modern texts
- Poetry
- Unseen poetry

How it's assessed

- written exam: 2 hour 15 minutes

- 96 marks
- 60% of GCSE

**Section A** Modern texts: students will answer one essay question from a choice of two on their studied modern prose or drama text. We have selected J.B. Priestley: *An Inspector Calls* for detailed study.

**Section B** Poetry: students will answer one comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster. We have selected *Power and Conflict* as our chosen anthology cluster. The worksheets in this course follow the sequence of poems as given in the Anthology which roughly corresponds to the sequence of their composition, with the oldest one first.

Please note that only the 'named' poem will be printed on the exam paper. The other poems in the Anthology will *not* be printed on the exam paper or available to you in any other way. While you may choose which poem you are going to compare the named one with, you will *not* have a copy of that second poem and you will need to memorise details and even quotations relating to it.

**Section C** Unseen poetry: students will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.

### Anthology Poems: Power and Conflict Cluster

Name of poem	poet
Ozymandias	P.B. Shelley
London	William Blake
The Prelude: Stealing the boat (extract)	William Wordsworth
My Last Duchess	Robert Browning
The Charge of the Light Brigade	Alfred Lord Tennyson
Exposure	Wilfred Owen
Storm on the Island	Seamus Heaney
Bayonet Charge	Ted Hughes
Remains	Simon Armitage
Poppies	Jane Weir
War Photographer	Carol Ann Duffy
Tissue	Imtiaz Dharker
The emigre	Carol Rumens
Kamikaze	Beatrice Garland
Checking out me History	John Agard



## Assessment objectives

Assessment objectives (AOs) are set by Ofqual and are the same across all GCSE English Literature specifications and all exam boards.

The exams will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives.

**AO1:** Read, understand and respond to texts. Students should be able to:

- maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response
- use textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations.

**AO2:** Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant subject terminology where appropriate.

**AO3:** Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.

**AO4:** Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

## Weighting of assessment objectives for GCSE English Literature

Assessment Objectives (AOs)	Component weightings (approx. %)		Overall weighting (approx. %)
	Component 1	Component 2	
AO1	15	22.5	37.5
AO2	15	27.5	42.5
AO3	7.5	7.5	15
AO4	2.5	2.5	5
Overall weighting of components	40	60	100

## Using the Internet

All students would benefit from access to the Internet. You will find a wealth of information on all the topics in your course. As well as the AQA website ([www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)), you should get into the habit of checking the Oxford Open Learning site ([www.ool.co.uk](http://www.ool.co.uk)) where you may find news, additional resources and interactive features as time goes by.

**And finally...**

Good Luck!

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