

English at BWS: Year 9 into Year 10

Dear Parents

I'm writing to keep you informed about choices that we have recently made in terms of your son's English Language and Literature GCSE courses next year.

You may or may not be aware that the AQA iGCSE course that we have followed for the last four years will no longer be available to teach from the next academic year. Consequently, we have decided to move to the brand new mainstream GCSEs that all four exam boards are offering from that September 2015. All of these specifications are linear exam-based courses, with no coursework or controlled assessments at all. Instead of receiving a grade at the end of the course, pupils will receive a number, from zero (being the lowest), through to 9 being the highest. As a rule of thumb, '4' will be the new 'C' grade; and it will be more difficult to get a '9' than it has been to get an 'A*'. We have looked at all of the boards' specifications, and have decided that our pupils will be best served by the AQA specifications in English Language and Literature. These are outlined below:

AQA English Language from September 2015

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing – 1h 45 m (50%)

Section A: Answering questions on a fiction extract

Section B: Descriptive or narrative writing

Paper 2: Writers Viewpoints and Perspectives – 1h 45 m (50%)

Section A: Answering questions on linked a non-fiction and a literary non-fiction text

Section B: Writing to present a viewpoint

AQA English Literature from September 2015

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the C19th Novel – 1h 45 m (40%)

Section A: Shakespeare essay, from starting point of an extract(1)

Section B: C19th novel essay, from starting point of an extract(2)

Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry – 2h 15 m (50%)

Section A: An essay from a choice of two on a modern prose or drama text (3)

Section B: A comparative essay on poems pre-studied from an anthology

Section C: A question on an unseen poem

Choices of text (to be made by Year 10 English teachers)

(1)	(2)	(3)
<i>Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet, The Tempest, Merchant of Venice, Much Ado About Nothing, Julius Caesar</i>	<i>Jekyll and Hyde, A Christmas Carol, Great Expectations, Jane Eyre, Frankenstein, Pride and Prejudice, The Sign of Four</i>	<i>An Inspector Calls, Blood Brothers, The History Boys, DNA, The Curious Incident (play) A Taste of Honey, Lord of the Flies, Telling Tales, Animal Farm, Never Let Me Go, Anita and Me, Pigeon English</i>

Setting

From September 2015, boys going into Year 10 will be placed into one of five sets. Four of these sets will be mixed ability sets. The fifth set, smaller in number, will be primarily for pupils who are in need of more specialised help in the subject, in the hope that they can fulfil their potential by the end of the course. Setting is based on performance in key assessments throughout Key Stage 3, as well as internal exam results at the ends of Years 7, 8 and 9. The English Department meets to discuss and plan setting following on from the internal exams in the Summer Term. If you have any more questions at this stage, please do not hesitate to contact me through the School, and I will get back to you as soon as possible. More details will be made available very shortly on the English Department section of the school website.

Many thanks,

Craig Ennew
Head of English, BWS