GCSE English Literature (AQA)

This GCSE course focuses on the study of a variety of fiction texts: poetry, plays, novels. We study five components for this course:
- Macbeth (20%)
- A Christmas Carol (20%)
- An Inspector Calls (20%)
- Power & Conflict poetry (20%)
- Unseen poetry (20%)

How is the Literature GCSE examined?

The English Literature GCSE is split into two exam papers, as outlined below:

English Literature Paper 1 – 1 hour 45 minutes	English Literature Paper 2 – 2 hours 15 minutes
Macbeth (30 marks plus 4 for SPaG) • One question • Given an extract to respond to • Must also analyse the whole text • 45 minutes Write: 2 PETAL paragraphs about the extract, 2 PETAL paragraphs about the whole text.	**An Inspector Calls (30 marks plus 4 for SPaG)** • A choice of two questions; only answer one • No extract given • You will need to remember key moments and quotes from across the text • 45 minutes Write: 4 PETAL paragraphs answering the question
A Christmas Carol (30 marks) • One question • Given an extract to respond to • Must also analyse the whole text • 45 minutes Write: 2 PETAL paragraphs about the extract, 2 PETAL paragraphs about the whole text.	**Power & Conflict poetry (30 marks)** • One of the 15 poems will be re-printed for you • You will write an essay comparing that poem to another, focusing on the idea/theme in the question • 45 minutes Write 2-3 comparisons between the poem, using PETAL.
	Unseen Poetry (32 marks) • Question 27.1 asks you to analyse a poem you have not studied before. • Write 2-3 PETALs about this. • Question 27.2 asks you to compare the methods used between two unseen poems. • Use TQI x 4 for this question.

How to revise for English Literature

You must know the plot, characters and key moments of each text really well (Macbeth, An Inspector Calls, A Christmas Carol). Visit BBC Bitesize and Sparknotes online for excellent summaries.

Once you know the plot, characters and moments, focus your revision on learning key quotes, checking your knowledge, planning essays and writing practice paragraphs.

Revision method one: look-cover-write-check

Using your knowledge navigator for a specific topic, look a it and then turn it over or cover it up. Now that you cannot see the information, try to re-create it from memory by writing it down. Once you have written everything you can remember, look at your knowledge navigator and then, in a different colour, fill in any gaps. Repeat this multiple times to try and remember more. Leave it for a few days and then do it again to see if you've remembered it.

Revision method two: 'brain dumps' or mindmaps

Select the topic you wish to revise. On a blank piece of paper, note down everything you can remember about that topic. Then, check your answers against your notes and the knowledge navigator.

Did you remember everything? If you missed something, add it in in a different colour and then focus on remembering that when you do it all again.

Revision method three: flashcards

You can either use flashcards that you have been given from school or create your own. A good flashcard contains key knowledge and information on one side and then a prompt on the other. For example, for *Macbeth* you might have a picture of a horse jumping over an obstacle on one side. On the other you would have the quote 'my vaulting ambition' with annotations and reminders about who said it, what it suggests, what context and ideas it links to and so on.

You can self-test using the flashcards or get someone to quiz you and give you support.

Revision method four: model answers and exam questions

The first three methods are focused on revising the powerful knowledge you need to pass your exams. However, you need to be able to answer the exam questions in the way that will get you the most marks. Instead of doing full papers for hours at a time, focus on specific questions.

Look at a model answer – what makes it good? What do you need to include in the answer? What was the process for answering the question?

Now you have looked at a model answer, try a question yourself in timed conditions. When you finish your answer to the question, annotate it: how does your answer look similar to the model? What did you include? Check back to the model answer and see what you missed.