



# Gordon's School

## English Department

### Introduction

The English Department consists of nine members of staff, including the Head of Department and the three Key Stage Coordinators. The English Department teaches in its own building (Egypt Block), across six dedicated classrooms. All students are entered for English Language and English Literature at GCSE with many students opting to continue these subjects post-16.

### GCSE/ A-level Courses

We use the exam board AQA at GCSE, teaching English Language (8700) and English Literature (8702). Our set texts for English Literature are: *Macbeth*, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, *An Inspector Calls* and 'Power and Conflict' Poetry.

At A-level, we follow AQA's Specification A for English Literature ('Love through the Ages' and 'Literature of the First World War'). Our set texts include: *Othello*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Regeneration*, *Scars upon my Heart: Women's Poetry from the First World War* and AQA's 'Pre-1900 Love Poetry' Anthology. Students produce an 'Independent Study' for coursework, based on their own wider reading of two texts.

We teach AQA's A-level English Language specification, and Media Studies (also AQA).

### Examination results

Exam results in the English Department have been consistently high for a number of years. In 2018, 94% of GCSE English Language grades were 9-4 with 30% of students being awarded 9-7, while 92% obtained grades 9-4 for GCSE English Literature with 37% of students being awarded 9-7. In 2019 (prior to remarks), over 94% of GCSE English Language grades were 9-4 with 29% of students being awarded grades 9-7, while over 93% obtained grades 9-4 for GCSE English Literature with 32% of students being awarded grades 9-7.

In 2018, at A-level, 71% gained A\*-B grades in English Literature, with 60% achieving A\*-B grades in English Language. In 2019, for A-level English Literature, 67% obtained A\*-B grades, with 59% achieving A\*-B grades in English Language. These results reflect the academic nature of the Department and the high expectations placed upon both our staff and students.

## Extra-curricular activities

Each year, the English Department runs a wide range of enrichment activities. To support A-level English Literature, students have participated in a residential trip to Dorset as part of their study of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Students visited Thomas Hardy's Birthplace Cottage and Max Gate, alongside sites in the novel such as: the New Forest, Shaftesbury and Stonehenge. We have organized other literary visits like a *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* trip to London.

The English Department organizes regular theatre trips for texts on our courses, including recently *Macbeth* and *An Inspector Calls*, while visiting theatre companies have performed *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* for our GCSE students and have run drama workshops during 'Enrichment Week' for our Year 8 students on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. We have organized author visits like on World Book Day when teenage fiction writer William Hussey was in school, exploring the Gothic genre, while we have arranged a day of journalism at *The Guardian* newspaper's Education Centre in Central London. Members of the English Department run a wide range of public speaking and debating activities, which include entry to high-profile national competitions. The school participates in Mock Trial competitions and Model United Nations activities, amongst numerous speaking events.

The English Department is an associate member of The Prince's Teaching Institute and a member of the department is currently working on a research project in collaboration with this body.