

Beauchamps High School



GCSE Parent Information Session



**English Language
and
English Literature GCSEs**

Summer 2019/20

The new syllabus.

The current Year 10 cohort will sit their English Literature GCSE in the summer of 2019 – at the end of Year 10.




Overall, by the end of year 11, they will have sat 4 examinations for their English qualifications which will total 7.5 hours.

Exam pressure



- ▶ At the end of year 11, the majority of pupils at Beauchamps will sit an average of 30 hours of examinations across a variety of subjects – the 7.5 hours of English exams therefore comprise just a small proportion of this.
- ▶ It is partially for this reason that it has been decided that Year 10 should sit their English Literature GCSE at the end of Year 10 – in order to ease some of the pressure which they will face at the end of Year 11.

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- ▶ By sitting Literature in Year 10, pupils have been given the opportunity to focus on the many texts that they need to study without having to worry about the distraction of also thinking about their Language GCSE simultaneously.
 - ▶ This also means that they will have an entire year to study the English Language course (which they have already begun) when they reach Year 11, offering them the opportunity to achieve the highest possible grades they are capable of.

The importance of beginning early...

As teachers, we so often see pupils of all abilities realise the importance of their exams just that little bit too late – 2 months before the exams, 2 weeks or 2 days; sometimes, unfortunately, realisation only happens on the day the results are published.

Therefore, the sooner the pupils begin to revise, the more chance they have of reducing stress and pressure in the build up to the examination season next summer, leading to a more confident performance in the examination.

Success in the English examinations requires pupils to both demonstrate knowledge and to apply skills.

Effective revision, if begun now, will become ingrained knowledge, subsequently allowing pupils more time to practise the *skills* they require to succeed.

In English, there have been three significant changes which could potentially make these examinations extremely demanding:

- ▶ All exams are 'closed book' – this means the students will not be allowed to take texts into the exams with them.
- ▶ No tiers – all pupils sit the same examination.
- ▶ The qualifications are 100% examination – there is no longer a coursework or controlled assessment element – meaning that students are entirely at the mercy of the exam paper.



AQA English Literature – the syllabus

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel

What's assessed

- Shakespeare plays – Romeo & Juliet
- The 19th-century novel – Jekyll & Hyde or A Christmas Carol

How it's assessed

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

Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry

What's assessed

- Modern text - An Inspector Calls
- The poetry anthology
- Unseen poetry

How it's assessed

- written exam: 2 hour 15 minutes
- 96 marks
- 60% of GCSE

What texts will the pupils be expected to know, in depth?

- ▶ Romeo and Juliet
- ▶ An Inspector Calls
- ▶ Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde/A Christmas Carol
- ▶ 15 anthology poems
- ▶ They will also be expected to be able to compare poems and to analyse unseen poetry

What do they need to know about each of these texts?

- ▶ Details about characters
- ▶ Plot development
- ▶ The relevance of stage directions (for the plays)
- ▶ Key themes
- ▶ Contextual information
- ▶ Author's viewpoint

All of these will need to be evidenced through either quotations and paraphrasing (quoting which isn't necessarily completely accurate) whilst using a range of accurate literary terminology.

AQA English Language – the syllabus

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

Section A: Reading

- one literature fiction text 4 questions

Section B: Writing

- 1 descriptive or narrative writing task

Assessed

- written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 80 marks
- 50% of GCSE

Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

Section A: Reading

- one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text – 4 questions

Section B: Writing

- 1 writing to present a viewpoint task

Assessed

- written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 80 marks
- 50% of GCSE

When can your child attend revision?

English drop in sessions will be taking place one night a week after October half term. These sessions begin at 245pm and continue until 330pm every Tuesday. Your child's teacher will make the class aware of these sessions. In some cases, pupils will be asked to attend a particular session... This may be because we have identified that they need support or just a boost in a smaller group.

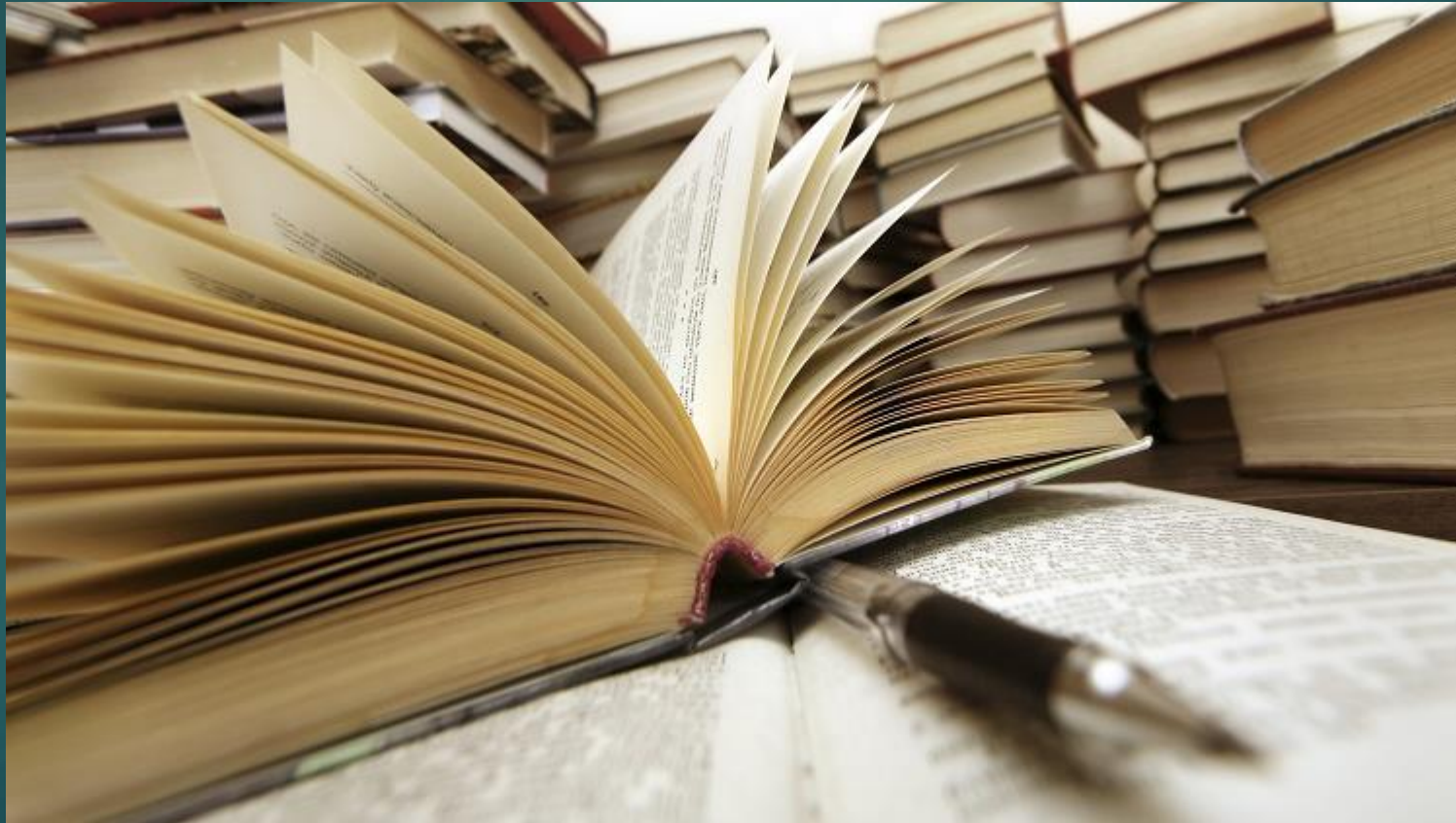
It is in the best interest of your child to attend when they need help.

Some students will have been asked to join a tutor group which is Literature focussed – again, this is because we have identified that they will benefit from the help and will help them in their revision for next year.

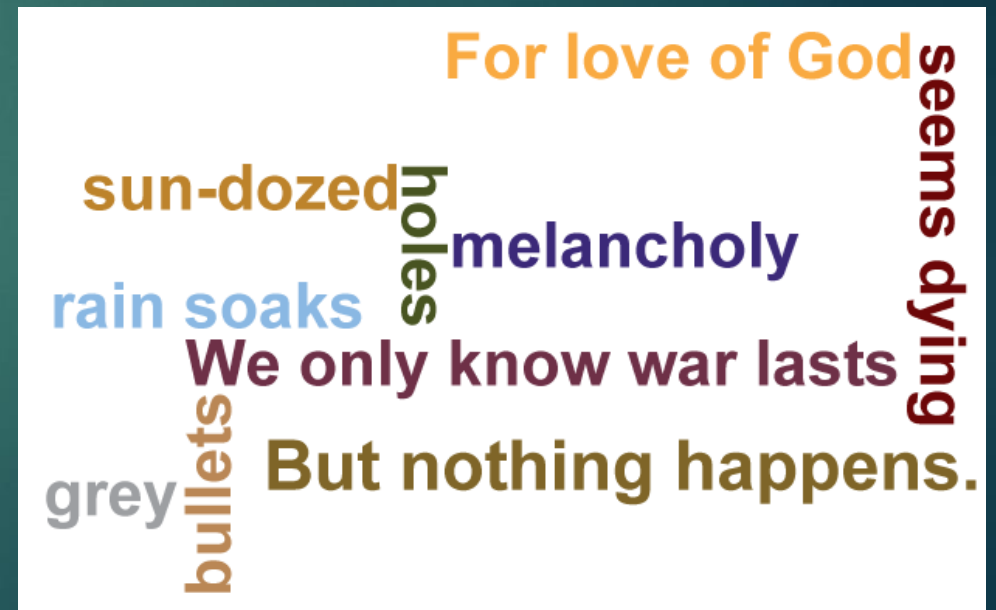
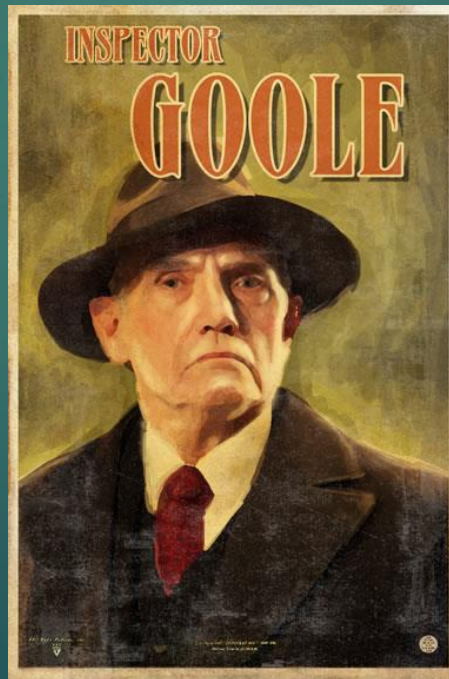
So, given the fact that all pupils here receive 4 hours of English teaching each week, alongside homework and the opportunity to attend drop in and intervention classes, why the importance of parental involvement?

The Department of Education has found that, “parental engagement has a large and positive impact on children’s learning. The more engaged parents are in the education of their children, the more likely their children are to succeed in the education system. School improvement and school effectiveness research consistently shows that parental engagement is one of the key factors in securing higher student achievement.”

Techniques for helping your child revise for English



Create flashcards with quotations and character names and quiz your child on the relevance of these at opportune moments – over dinner, as they come to get snacks, in the car on the way to football/hockey/the cinema etc....

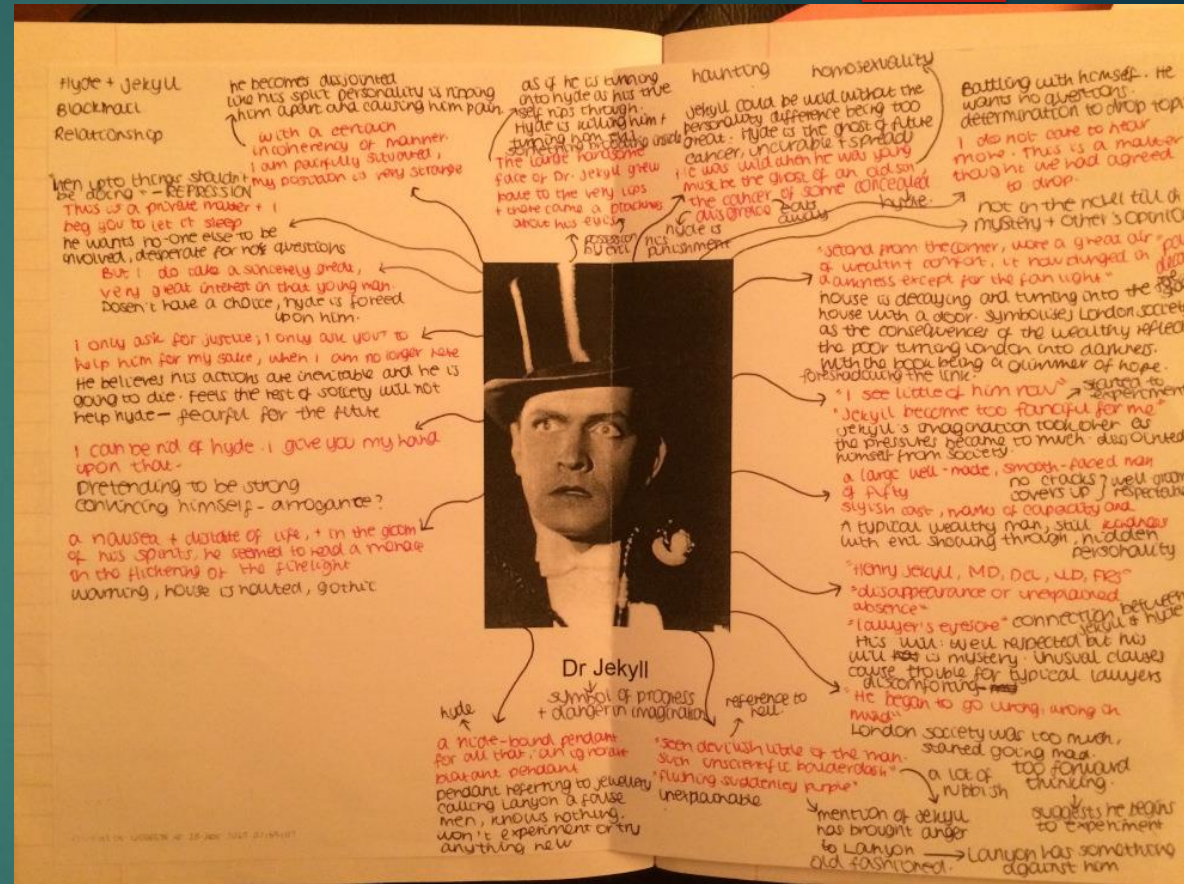


- ▶ Watch the films and plays or read the poems and quiz your child on characters/themes/plot and whether the films are a good representation of the original texts. Any discussion which encourages them to show their knowledge of the texts is a good discussion!
- ▶ Ask other family members to get involved- if grandparents, aunts and uncles or neighbours know which texts are being studied, they could also raise the topics and encourage casual conversation about them at opportune moments.

Ask your child to make connections between events in the news and the topics studied. This could be done over dinner; it is important to encourage your child to develop their thoughts and explain their ideas fully.



Create mindmaps with your child which encourage them to show you how much they know about individual poems, texts or characters – all you need to know is the name of the poem/text/character!





▶ Play pairs on the poetry anthology poems:

Write the name of each poem on the back of a card, ask your child to turn over any 2 and then challenge them to make a connection between those poems, supporting it with evidence.

Create a visual memory box

- ▶ Your child could fill a shoebox with visual clues to the themes and ideas presented within one of the plays/novels/poems studied. Weeks later, you can ask them the relevance of the objects that they have chosen.



Post-it notes...
Encourage your child to stick these around the house with useful quotations and terminology... on the fridge, on the bathroom mirror, by the tv, on the x-box – all of the places that they are constantly looking!



(Feel free to then ask them to explain the meaning of these words – you'll be amazed at how quickly they'll become an expert at these if they keep practising.)

Follow us on Twitter: @beauchampssch

Every few days, our Twitter feed will publish a question which you can use to 'quiz your kid' – sometimes English, sometimes Maths – you can use this as a prompt for a conversation starter for a 5 minute revision discussion at home!




Check their spelling, punctuation and grammar... on everything!



- ▶ Ask for accurate punctuation and correct spellings in text messages, request that even brief notes are written beginning with capital letters and ending with full stops, encourage a disciplined approach to their own literacy – at least until after the exams!
- ▶ The more this becomes habit, the better. If they do not use basic punctuation accurately in the Language exams, they can achieve no more than 10 out of a potential 32 marks and if they do not paragraph in their written response, they can achieve no more than 6 marks out of a potential 48, no matter how good the content.



Things you need to know
about the GCSE maths

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1. It is big – There is more content in the new GCSE than the old GCSE
 2. There are still 2 tiers in Maths – Foundation and higher
Foundation covers grades 1-5
Higher covers grades 4-9
 3. There is a greater emphasis on problem solving in the new GCSE exam
 4. There are more exams – Students now sit three 90 minute exams


5. There are new style questions that require students to explain their answers or justify the accuracy of their answer
6. There are questions which require students to identify mistakes in working out or methods used. This was highlighted as a general area of weakness of students in last year's exam
7. There will be more questions at the highest grade in each paper

The good news is that we are aware of all of these changes and have been planning for them for a number of years

- All our y7-11 exams are based on the new style GCSE
- We use the new exam style questions throughout the department
- We teach the skills needed to tackle the problem solving aspect

New content at foundation

- Compound Interest
- Standard Form
- Factorise quadratic expressions
- Simultaneous Equations
- Trigonometry
- Tree diagrams
- Gradients of straight lines



On the foundation paper 50% of the marks will target the upper half of grade 3 to grade 5

On the higher paper 50% of the marks will target grades 7-9

So half the exam is at A*-A grade



Students will now sit 3 papers in Maths

Paper 1 is a non-calculator exam

Papers 2 and 3 are calculator exam

All exams are 90 minutes long

All exams have equal weighting

Maths club



This is on a Friday after school in M4 and is open to all year groups

Students can come and get help with homework or areas of weakness or try extension work

Revision guides



There are a number of revision guides and workbooks you can purchase

These can also be purchased over the internet or from the high street

They need to be for the Edexcel exam board for the 9-1 GCSE Maths exam

Past papers



The new style exams are different from the old ones

Students would benefit by trying as many new style exam papers as they can

Packs of exams papers can easily be found on line

Problem solving



There is a greater emphasis on problem solving in the new exam

Encourage your child to practice this type of question (you can buy books of problem solving questions)

www.mathswatch.co.uk

Students should have their login and passwords already

If not ask your child's Maths teacher

This is a big improvement on previous programs
we have used

It actually works on phones, tablets, PCs etc

It allows teachers to provide individual feedback
to students on work set