

Subject: GCSE English Language & GCSE English Literature

Exam Board: AQA

Date of exams 2026:

Thursday 21st May – Language Paper 1

Friday 5th June – Language Paper 2

Monday 11th May – Literature Paper 1

Tuesday 19th May – Literature Paper 2

Revision Strategies:

- Ensure you have a comprehensive revision notebook so you can track and log every topic you go over, past paper completed, revision tasks done etc. so you are aware of where misconceptions and gaps are and can revisit material.
- Complete questions and papers in timed conditions. Students can find past papers online <https://www.aqa.org.uk/find-past-papers-and-mark-schemes>; through the additional revision workbooks provided every term; in the AQA revision guides available for loan through the library; and on Microsoft Teams. If they would like something specific, they need only ask their teacher who can provide this.
- Practice annotating extracts for English Language – focusing on reading in timed conditions.
- Reading fiction and non-fiction and summarising the content, identifying literary methods, and evaluating the purpose of the extracts for non-fiction.
- Read and annotate model example essays – use the mark scheme to indicate where students have met the Assessment Criteria.
- Write timed essays to any extract from the workbooks. Hand it in and receive feedback from your teacher.
- Complete all the additional revision exercises in the Knowledge Organiser including listening to all relevant Massolit lectures and making detailed notes on the topics.
- Create flashcards for key terminology; characters; themes; quotations; and big ideas in the Literature texts. Test yourself regularly on topics or use them to revise and then write an essay in timed conditions.
- Write thesis statements for as many of the exam questions and topics as you can – spend time thinking about your responses to the texts and the arguments you want to present in an essay. Get your teacher to check your thesis statements and provide feedback.
- Practice planning essays for Literature. Learn and revise the plans.
- Practice creative and transactional writing tasks regularly using different tasks and stimuli.
- Reading Unseen Poems and writing responses to these – use your workbooks or the additional material/ material online to support with this.
- Complete all the extended knowledge quizzes on Microsoft Teams.
- Produce detailed plot maps and timelines (examples are in the knowledge organisers).
- Attend all revision sessions and complete the extended tasks provided in the workbook after the session.
- Use the recommended YouTube to recap key poems, texts, ideas, themes, characters, and questions.
- Re-read the texts on Sparx Reader and complete the comprehension exercises alongside this.
- Read the examiners reports and feedback – this will help you understand what the examiners are looking for. <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-8700/assessment-resources?secondaryResourceType=Examiner+reports>

- Revisit material from your class workbooks including feedback and put post-it notes on anything you feel less confident with and use these to structure your revision focus – starting with topics you find the most difficult.

Useful websites and resources:

- Class workbooks and revision workbooks provided additionally to the curriculum.
- School Library to borrow revision guides.
- Knowledge Organisers
- Maths and Physics Tutor – English Page for past papers
<https://www.physicsandmathstutor.com/english-revision/gcse-aqa/>
- AQA Website – past papers, examiners reports, mark schemes, additional material etc.
<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-8700/specification>
- Massolit: https://massolit.io/users/sign_in
- Sparx Reader

Useful and recommended YouTube Channels/ material:

- Mr Bruff <https://www.youtube.com/@mrbruff>
- Stacey Reay <https://www.youtube.com/@staceyreay>
- Mr Salles <https://www.youtube.com/@MrSallesTeachesEnglish>
- Lightbulb Revision <https://www.youtube.com/@lightbulbrevision9661>

Avoid using accounts from social media – these can often encourage you to overcomplicate your work e.g. by using complex terminology to gain marks. This is not the case; clarity is everything and your personal response to the texts is what will gain marks in an exam. Knowing the set texts and question focus and how to answer these is the most important thing.

Be aware that for 2026 the GCSE English Language exams have changed slightly. See below the link to AQA that details the changes as this won't be reflected in any past papers – you will need to adapt the questions. Please do speak to your English teacher if you need support with this.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/news/gcse-english-language-updates-to-our-assessments-for-summer-2026>