



**Higham Lane School
English Department**

*“It is not in the stars to hold our
destiny but in ourselves.”*

William Shakespeare

**GCSE English Language
and
GCSE English Literature**

English Language website:

<http://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/english-language/gcse/>

English Literature website:

<http://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/english-literature/gcse/>

THE FOUR GCSE ENGLISH EXAMS:

GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE

COMPONENT 1: Monday 11th May 2026 AM

2 hours:

- Section A: Macbeth (20 mins extract question, 40 mins essay): 1 hour
- Section B: Anthology Poetry (20 mins on one poem, 40 mins on comparison essay): 1 hour

COMPONENT 2: Tuesday 19th May 2026 AM

2.5 hours:

- Section A: A Christmas Carol: 45 minutes
- Section B: An Inspector Calls: 45 minutes
- Section C: Unseen Poetry (20 mins on one poem, 40 mins on comparison essay): 1 hour

GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Component 1: Thursday 21st May 2026 AM

1 hour 45 minutes:

- 20th Century Prose Reading Study (1 hour)
- Creative Prose Writing (45 mins)

Component 2: Friday 5th June 2026 AM

2 hours:

- 19th and 21st Century Non-fiction Reading Study: 1 hour
- Transactional/ Persuasive Writing: (2 x 30 minute tasks): 1 hour

SPRING TERM PRACTICE EXAMS:



January 2026 Trial Exam:

English Language Component 2 (2 hours):

- Section A: Non-fiction texts (6 questions)
- Section B: Transactional writing (2 tasks)

English Literature Component 1 (1 hour only):

- **Anthology poetry (2 tasks)**

Spring Term Orange Book Literature and Language Assessments:

Macbeth
Anthology poetry
An Inspector Calls
Macbeth
A Christmas Carol
Unseen poetry
Narrative Writing
Transactional Writing (formal letter, informal letter, article,
review, guide, report, speech)

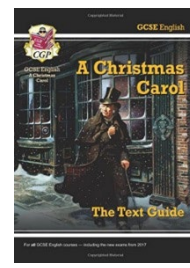
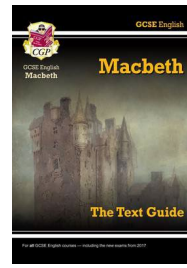
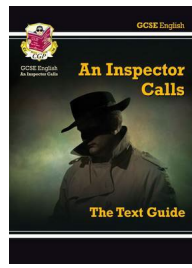
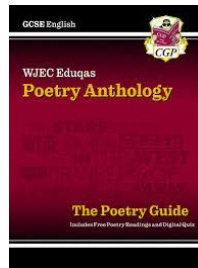
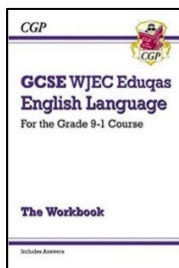
REVISION MATERIALS, CLASSES and ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

- **Students have been issued with revision booklets for ALL components** of the English Language and English Literature exams which include key quotations, Context information, exam questions, exemplar essays and Top Tips.
 - **Literature Revision Classes run on THURSDAYS after-school in EN3.**
- **Students who are underachieving are identified and offered extra help in Intervention lessons**

10 ways to identify whether YOU are on the road to GCSE success:



		YES	NO	SOMETIMES
1	Are you working 'flat-out' in EVERY English lesson (and Intervention lesson)?			
2	Have you used the Language and Literature Revision Packs independently to improve your notes/cue cards?			
3	Have you completed any of the practice papers from the Revision Packs independently?			
4	Have you been planning/writing an independent weekly response to the English Language Component B questions (the 30 minute 'transactional writing' tasks or 45 minute narrative/recount writing)?			
5	Have you spoken to your teacher about any gaps in your knowledge that you would like some additional help with?			
6	Do you follow the 15 Minute English Revision Planner (given out in class)?			
7	Are you using the CGP revision guides, online sites such as BBC Bitesize, Quizlit, Mr Bruff Youtube videos and the English resources on Google Classroom for ACTIVE revision? For example, by making detailed revision posters on the characters' journeys/ Anthology poems etc.			
8	Have you re-read the set Literature texts recently – perhaps even trying an audio version for variety?			
9	Are you revising/working every night for at least 15 minutes on some aspect of the English GCSEs?			
10	Have you been attending the after-school Revision Classes, Intervention classes or EN1 Lunchtime 'pop-in for help'?			



Reflections on the November Trial Exam

Why did my son/daughter not achieve a Grade 4?

The GCSE Language Grade 4 criteria:

- ✓ Answered **all** the questions
- ✓ **Good understanding of the reading** passage in timed conditions
- ✓ Remembered to **apply the TOP TIPS** for each question
- ✓ Write a **range of PEAs** to answer questions (5-6 points for 5 marks)
- ✓ **Analysis** that **zooms in** on key words, **explains** without repeating the point/quotation, **thoughtful points** about the impact on the reader
- ✓ **Accurate narrative writing with very few errors** in spellings, punctuation and grammar
- ✓ **Thoughtful vocabulary** choices
- ✓ **EVERY sentence makes sense**
- ✓ A narrative/recount that is **clearly structured** with an engaging beginning, middle and end

The GCSE Literature (Anthology Poetry) Grade 4 criteria:

- ✓ Answered **both** questions
- ✓ **Analysed the poems** by tracking the text with **multiple PEAs**
- ✓ **Memorized a range of quotations** which were used regularly to support points (at least 10)
- ✓ Produced a **detailed essay** in 40 minutes, **exploring** the question and showing **sound knowledge** of the poems.
- ✓ **Accurate writing** (5 extra marks for SPaG)

Why did my son/daughter not achieve a Grade 7?

The GCSE Language Grade 7 criteria:

- ✓ **Answered** all the questions **fully by tracking the text in detail**
- ✓ **Astute understanding of the reading** passage in timed conditions
- ✓ Remembered to **apply the TOP TIPS** for each question
- ✓ Write a **range of perceptive PEAs** to answer questions (7-8 points for 10 marks) that shows **deep understanding**
- ✓ **Precise analysis** that zooms in on key words, **insightful points** on writer's use of language, intentions and impact on the reader
- ✓ **Sophisticated and very accurate narrative writing** with **ambitious vocabulary** throughout that **engages the reader**
- ✓ Narrative has been **consciously crafted**

The GCSE Literature (Anthology Poetry) Grade 7 criteria:

- ✓ Answered **both questions fully**
- ✓ Analysed the extract by tracking the poems with **multiple PEAs** that **closely analyses** language, tone and punctuation.
- ✓ **Memorized a wide range of apt quotations** that illuminated the theme
- ✓ Produced a **detailed essay** in 40 minutes, exploring the question and showing **expert knowledge** of the poems.
- ✓ **Accurate writing** (5 extra marks for SPaG)

What do all successful students have in common?

THEY HAVE LISTENED TO THEIR TEACHER(S), APPLIED THE ADVICE GIVEN, COMPLETED practice PAPERS/QUESTIONS INDEPENDENTLY, are EXPERTS on their Literature texts and have memorized quotations.

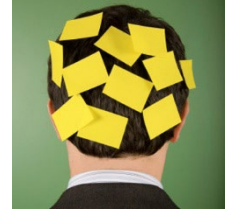
10 ways to support your child with English revision

Revision should be an active process and the more engaging it is the more embedded the learning will be – encourage your child to do more than just read their notes as this can be quite passive as an activity on its own.

1. Ask your child to **prepare a short presentation** which teaches you an aspect of their exams – e.g. the theme of ambition in 'Macbeth'; how to do well on 'impressions' questions in the English Language exam; the character Scrooge in 'A Christmas Carol'. They could **choose a topic which they feel they need to revise, then use you as an audience for this**. Ask questions if there is something you don't understand **and get them to find the answers** if they don't know them.
2. As part of their revision, students should **produce revision games and cards** to help them revise. One of the things they can do is **produce cards with key facts or quotations** on them and you could use these to test their understanding.
3. Check that your child **knows what the assessment objectives are** for the GCSE exams. Ask them what they would do to ensure they met these assessment objectives in their exam answers – **what skills do they need** to use to do this?
4. **Watch a film version** of 'An Inspector Calls', 'A Christmas Carol' or 'Macbeth'. If possible, go to the theatre and watch a live performance together. Afterwards **discuss how the presentation of the story** was different in the film version and how they feel about this.
5. Students have been given revision booklets for 'Macbeth', 'A Christmas Carol', Language Components 1 and 2. Unseen Poetry booklets will be issued in January. Most students have purchased **CPG revision guides** for the 4 Literature texts as well. **Check they are using these resources to produce revision materials** of their own and to improve their understanding of the GCSE content.
6. Encourage your child to **use the 15 Minutes a Day Revision Planner** to test their knowledge and improve written responses.
7. Students should **put poems and key quotations up around the house or in their bedroom** as a way to help them 'stick' in the mind. You **could ask them to tell you each day about a poem and what they know about it**. Can they **quote** 3 key areas of the poem, **explain what** devices are used by the poet and what **effects** are created by these devices?
8. Students should **produce mind maps of the topics/texts** covered which summarise the key information needed and top tips for doing well on this aspect of the exam. **Check that your child has produced these**. They can extend them further **using post-its and highlighters to add extra information, example responses, links between areas of the text, thematic links etc**.
9. **Download the BBC Bitesize revision app, Quizlit and BBC News onto mobile phones** to improve subject knowledge of the set texts and reading skills.
10. If your child is a kinaesthetic learner (someone who learns by doing) then **act out the quote or sing it to their favourite tune**. Alternatively, they could come up with **an action for each of the key words** in the quotation.



How to Memorise Quotations!



1. Don't try to remember too many at once

Pick out five quotes at a time to work on. Trying to memorise too many all at once is going to addle your brain. As your first five choose the ones you mostly likely to come back to and use time and again – basically the most important ones.

2. Choose quotes for the main characters and themes

Whatever text you are studying start by learning the quotes that you seem to use most often. Use the Top Quotations pages in the Revision Booklets to identify which quotes are useful for which themes and characters.

3. Make an index card for each quote

Write your quote on one side. On the other side, write the key words from your quote. When you first start trying to memorise the quote look at the side with the full quote on and read it out loud to yourself several times. Then, flip the card over and use the key words to prompt your memory. Finally, hide the card and see if you can still remember it. You can carry your index cards around with you for the quotes you are currently focusing on and if you get a quiet moment e.g. on the school bus or while you are waiting for a lesson to start you can quickly go over them.

4. Make sticky notes and stick them where you will see them

Stick them above your desk, on the back of the loo door, around the mirror where you do your hair and make-up or on the fridge door! Read over them whenever you see them. Just beware of becoming immune to your sticky notes because they have blended into your environment so move them around every week.

5. Draw cartoons or sketches to help you remember

If you are a visual learner drawing pictures, cartoons or dingbats to help you remember will probably help.

6. Act them out

If you are a kinaesthetic learner (someone who learns by doing) then act out the quote. Get into character and 'be' the person saying that quote. Alternatively, you could come up with an action for each of the key words.

7. Read, cover, say and write Reading the quotations aloud, covering up the information and then saying it as you write it out again and again and again.

GCSE Revision Planner for the 2026 Exams:

KEY



RE-READ and **ANNOTATE** a clean copy of the poem. *Spend 15 minutes.* Compare with your annotated anthology copy/ the revision guide and add notes as necessary. Poems can be found on SharePoint.



PLAN a detailed exam response to this question. *Spend 15 minutes* doing this. Use revision guides to assist you if you wish. Ensure you have a clear plan.



MINDMAP and **MEMORISE** the poem. *Spend 15 minutes* doing this. Use revision guides to assist you if you wish. Ensure you have a clear plan.



WRITE an answer to a Language question. *Spend 15 minutes* doing this. Use revision guides to assist you if you wish. Ensure you have a clear plan.

YOUR SON/DAUGHTER WILL BE ISSUED WITH THIS IN JANUARY