

ST MARY'S COLLEGE



INTRODUCTION

If you choose English Language at St. Mary's, you will study spoken and written English in the modern world, in your own life and from a historical perspective. The course covers diverse topics and activities, including discussion of the influences on the language we use today, from Viking gangs to Nokia mobs!

English Language is complimented well by a wide variety of subjects, including Psychology, Sociology, History and Media Studies. And, as well as providing an important complimentary qualification, English Language A-level is very useful if you want to pursue a career in journalism, speech therapy or teaching. For example, Sarah Johnson, who is currently studying at St. Mary's, says: "English Language will definitely help when I become a teacher, as it's given me the ability to write with confidence and the courage to speak out in class."

So, if you think that the most interesting thing about language is the people who use it, then English Language is for you!

AS LEVEL

Content

There are two units at AS, which combine analytical and creative content. One focuses on language and specific social contexts and the other the production of texts for different audiences and purposes.

How is the course delivered?

You will be taught using a variety of methods and will gradually take increasing responsibility for your own learning. As well as experiencing "traditional" lessons you will find yourself being asked to undertake individual research assignments, to work in groups at editing or analysing texts and to give presentations to the rest of the class.

Entry requirements

GCSE passes at Grade C must include English Language and, if taken, English Literature. It should also be noted that you might find English Language very challenging if you did not achieve a grade C at the higher tier. If this is the case extra support will be available.

What skills and interests do I need?

The ability to write essays and take part in discussions is essential if you wish to study English Language at this level. As well as having these strong written and oral abilities, you must also demonstrate the following:

- A good knowledge of current affairs, you will be expected to watch/listen to the news on a regular basis.
- An investigative, analytical mind
- An enjoyment of creative writing
- An ability to work independently and to deadlines

How does it build upon studies in Key Stage 4?

English Language at St Mary's is VERY different from the way you will have studied it at school, in fact so different it will feel as though you have chosen a completely different subject! The major difference lies in the theoretical areas and grammatical vocabulary. You **must** be willing to get to grips with this, but don't worry – most students find it a welcome change.

How is the course assessed?

At AS level the course is assessed by one exam and one coursework module.

Special Equipment

No special equipment is needed, but preparedness for work is essential. To this end you will be expected to bring pens and paper to all lessons, and provide a file in which to keep your class notes and handouts.

A2 LEVEL

Content

There are two units at A2, one focusing on child language acquisition and language change, and the other on investigating language by applying linguistic methods and concepts. These modules are assessed by examination and coursework, respectively.

How is the course delivered?

The teaching and learning at A2 follows a similar pattern to AS, however there is much greater emphasis on independent learning and individual research projects.

Entry requirements

You must have achieved a grade E or above in order to move on to A2 English Language. It is possible to transfer your AS grade from another institution if you have followed the same specification.

What skills and interests do I need?

In addition to the skills required at AS level, you will need to have a genuine and developed interest in the relationship between language and its users. Because English Language at A2 focuses much more heavily on theoretical perspectives you should have an equally developed ability to analyse.

How is the course assessed?

As at AS level, assessment is by one exam and one coursework module.

Progression routes

Because English Language at this level focuses on language as part of social interaction you will develop a variety of communication skills that would be invaluable in any career. There are, however, more specifically English-related careers and these include:

- Teaching
- Journalism
- Speech Therapy
- Public Relations

Please note, for some universities A-level English Literature is a requirement for students wishing to study English Language at degree level.

Further Information

If you are not sure if this is the course for you and would like to discuss it further please contact Kathryn Johnson.

Full specifications can be found at www.aqa.org.uk

NOTES:

**St Mary's College
Saltersgill Avenue
Middlesbrough
TS4 3JP**

Tel: (01642) 814680

www.stmarys-sfc.ac.uk

Fax: (01642) 819624