

How much homework will there be?

Every week class novel reading and note taking/personal study preparation – ask to see notes/chat through issues; and essays.

What about a tutor – would it help?

It will certainly do no harm some are very good; but remember the pupil has to do the work not the tutor – don't waste money on a tutor if the commitment is lacking!

What about dyslexia?

By this stage, if your child has been given support in previous exams, then the same support will continue. Encourage your child to speak to his/her English teacher and to Learning Support to work out a joint/shared plan for Prelims, NABs etc. Encouraging self-reliance from now on will help ensure the correct support is in place over the coming years of study.

Sounds cheesy but . . . remember you are your child's greatest resource!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Textual Analysis: Assessed just before the October Holiday.

Close Reading: Assessed just before the Christmas Holiday.

Personal Study: Book to be read by end of October; plan to be worked on in November; assessed in December.


Prelim: Late January/early February.

2nd Prelim: March.

Final Exam: May.



RESOURCES WORTH LOOKING AT

- **Past Papers** published around now
- **How to Pass Higher English**
Colin Eckford and Ann Bridges (published by Hodder)
- **How to Pass Close Reading**
Colin Eckford and Ann Bridges (published by Hodder)
- **The Sunday Herald Essay**
every Sunday in the Sunday Herald 
- Most **broadsheet newspapers:** The Times, The Herald, The Scotsman, The Telegraph, The Independent, The Guardian . . . and the Sundays



www.sqa.org
there is a section for Learners

www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/learning/bitesize/higher
lots of advice and practical help

www.netcomuk.co.uk/~media/hrc_dofs.html
advice on writing a critical essay with exemplars

- TV to watch . . . Panorama
Cutting Edge
Dispatches
Tonight
Newsnight
Mock the Week



- Not forgetting some listening too . . . of course it's Radio 4

MADRAS COLLEGE



Higher Still English

How can I support my child?



Here is a brief fragrant nosegay . . . hopefully you will, by reading this, know:

- The basic structure of the Higher
- The terminology involved
- Some ways in which you can help
- Some dates for your diary

So what is Higher English nowadays?

Well it has not changed that much – it still tests the basics of Reading and Writing.

But first the science bit . . .

GLOSSARY

Technical Accuracy

Candidates have to write accurately under exam conditions.

Close Reading

Answering questions on a non fiction passage.

Critical Essays

Writing about the books taught.

Textual Analysis

Answering more questions on a piece of fiction.

Personal Study

Writing about a text your ward has chosen and read.

And . . . the dreaded . . .

NABs

An exam that tests most of the above . . .

THE STRUCTURE

With Higher there are basically 3 units:

- 1 Language Study
- 2 Literary Study
- 3 Personal Study

Each unit is assessed by 1 or 2 NABs.

NABs

This an exam from the SQA's **National Assessment Bank**, done in class, timed.

Here's what's involved:

Language Study (2 NABs)

An imaginative/reflective/persuasive/discursive essay and a close reading test.

Literary Study (1 NAB)

Textual analysis test.

Personal Study (1 NAB)

Planning and writing about a text chosen by the candidate (not previously taught).

Once these hurdles are cleared then the focus is on the exam . . . closed book – no notes, no texts.



THE FINAL EXAMINATION

Paper 1 - Close Reading (1 hour 45 minutes)

2 non-fiction passages with questions.

Paper 2 - Critical Essay (1 hour 30 minutes)

2 critical essays from different genres.

It is the exam which determines the final grade: the NABs are merely pass/fail, en route to the examination.

FAQ

What if my son/daughter fails a NAB?

Generally only one resit is allowed, unless there are special circumstances.

What if my son/daughter fails the resit too?

Then coursing is an issue – without all NABs passed then a final grade cannot be awarded – so Intermediate 2.

But is Intermediate 2 not just the same as a Standard Grade?

No – it is a very good preparation for Higher – it mimics the Higher exactly in terms of structure and skills . . . and is worth more UCAS points than a Credit Standard Grade.

Is it not better to fail the Higher and then resit next year?

Again, no. From the point of view of preparation and self-confidence Intermediate 2 is the best option. Always better a B at Intermediate 2 than a No Award at Higher.

What can I do to help them with Paper 1?

Help them clear space to: read quality newspapers, watch documentary type TV, discuss issues, listen to Radio 4 . . . read books.

What can I do to help my son/daughter with Paper 2?

Help them get to know the texts studied in class backwards . . . help them memorise quotations and analyse and discuss things like: plot, characters, themes, setting style, structure, language . . .