Guided practice in critical reading, analysis, and clear, effective writing can help students hone skills that will serve them throughout life. During all four years of English, students engage in class discussion, complete frequent and varied writing assignments, and read literature of every genre. A review of grammar and mechanics, and a study of vocabulary in the context of works read, especially in the first two years, strengthen the foundations of future practice and may help students to prepare for standardized tests. Classes of 10-13 students allow for close interaction between student and teacher. Writing assignments are geared to help students reason logically, to think independently and creatively, to deploy evidence persuasively and to understand the power of language used effectively.

The third-form course allows students to make connections between classical literature and contemporary texts; the fourth-form course introduces students to a larger range of literary voices; the fifth-form course surveys American literature. There is an honors-level option in both fourth- and fifth-forms available by application. American Studies is available by application to fifth-form students, which also serves as Advanced Placement English Language and Composition, while Advanced Placement English Literature is available by application to sixth-form students.

Journeys through Literature: English 100

Open to third-formers

An introductory course to the study of literature, English 1: Journeys through Literature equips students with the skills necessary to engage thoughtfully and critically with a variety of texts — written and visual, ancient and contemporary — and thus with the world around them. Through the conceptual framework of the journey, students explore both the internal and external aspects of identity, and practice fundamental literary analysis skills through a variety of core texts. Students develop essential writing skills of creative thought, critical reflection, and skillful revision through processed-based writing assignments. On their journey into the nature of identity, students make connections across texts and experiences, both academic and personal, striving to make the texts and skills their own and, like the characters they encounter, to find their way to a new understanding of themselves and their world.

Expanding Horizons: English 200

Open to fourth-formers

English 200 Expanding Horizons develops the student’s maturing skills in critical reading and expository writing through the exploration of new worlds in literature. Students will read novels, plays, short stories and poetry by international writers who address universal human themes: love and loyalty; coming-of-age; and societies and individuals in conflict. Works may include Ibsen’s A Doll’s House; Fugard’s Master Harold . . . and the Boys; Lahiri’s The Interpreter of Maladies; and Shakespeare’s Macbeth. In addition to developing formal essay writing skills, students learn how to approach texts from multiple perspectives through varying exercises: critical response discussion and debate; staging dramatic readings; creative writing that mimics the author’s style; and journal entries. In this way students earn a respect for the craft of writing, understand the responses literature evokes from its readers, and appreciate the impact of literature on society.

Classic and Contemporary World Literature Honors: English 240/H

Open by invitation to fourth-formers

Students who are able readers, independent thinkers, and curious about the world may apply for this honors course, covering a range of great works of Western and non-Western world literature, from The Epic of Gilgamesh to Majmudar’s Partitions. Each trimester focuses on a theme: the quest; the tension between individual and society; and perceptions of illusion and reality. Discussion and close reading encourage identification of the human constants and cultural differences reflected in these works. Assignments provide students with opportunities to
hone their skills as analytical readers and persuasive writers. Among works recently studied: Richard III; The Burial at Thebes; The Assault; The Reluctant Fundamentalist; Siddhartha; The Guide; The Wild Duck; Twelfth Night; short stories, and poems from A Book of Luminous Things.

**American Literature: English 300**

*Open to fifth-formers*

A full-year course that focuses upon American literature, the class presents texts from both traditional and contemporary sources. Coursework frequently intersects with the U.S. History curriculum. By addressing the texts themselves and their intellectual, cultural, and historical contexts, students gain a better understanding of the nature of the nation as a whole. The skills of textual analysis come to the forefront as students build upon the lessons introduced in the third- and fourth-forms and gain familiarity with the exercise of close reading, argument formulation, and persuasive writing. Students who show a particular affinity and aptitude for language analysis may be invited to sit for the AP language and composition exam in May. The final project for the year is a literary research paper on a novel of the students’ own choice, an essay that requires they put into practice the skills gained during the year and models the kind of independently driven scholarship that they will be asked to perform during the sixth-form year and beyond in college.

**Advanced English/American Studies: English 450/A**

*(Required co-enrollment in History 450/A: AP U.S./American Studies)*

*Open by invitation to fifth- and sixth-formers*

Students who enroll in English 450 also enroll in History 450/A: Advanced Placement United States History/American Studies, offered by the history department. A chronological survey of American literature and culture, the course will cover the full sweep of American literary/cultural history from the Puritans to the present. Readings will be designed to complement and enrich topics being covered in history. English and history teachers will collaborate in developing assignments. Texts will be chosen based on interdisciplinary interest and intrinsic literary merit. While literary study will be at the heart of the course, we will enhance our investigation of American cultural life by exploring American art history and a variety of visual media - from film and television to photography. Students will learn how to be critical readers of texts both written and visual in order to be thoughtful analysts and consumers of American culture, ideology, and history. The reading pace will be brisk in this honors course. There will be, on average, a test or essay once a week. On most days, students will be asked to offer a ten minute analysis of a selected theme or quotation from the daily reading. Works to be covered include: The Crucible, The Autobiography of Ben Franklin, Walden, poetry by Whitman and Dickinson, Emerson essays, Hawthorne short stories, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, The Great Gatsby, Old School, White Noise, The Plot Against America; we will also view selections from “American Visions,” Robert Hughes’ PBS series on American art; the film “The Searchers.”

**Global Writing: English 510**

*Open to sixth-formers*

This is a yearlong course for seniors that, within the context of global contemporary writing, emphasizes multi-staged, processed-based writing assignments that cultivate independence, critical thinking, collaboration and research. The readings are selected for their relevance to issues current in the 21st century, especially those related to global culture. Such subjects may include technology, economic globalization, environmental issues, and cultural hybridization. Readings will include fiction, creative nonfiction, and long-form journalism — printed and digital — all written since 2000. A portion of the readings will be selected by each student using concepts and skills designed to develop cultural literacy and literary culture. These “choice reading” units will require independent reading and
research, as well as writing and oral presentation. As a final project for the course, each student will develop, research, refine, write, and submit a final project on which they work for a significant portion of the final third of the year.

**Currents in Maritime Literature: English 520**

*Open to sixth-formers*

This is a yearlong course for seniors that, within the context of maritime issues, literature, and culture, draws on St. George’s unique setting and history through multi-staged, processed-based writing assignments that cultivate independence, critical thinking, collaboration, and research. In addition to classic readings in the literature of the sea, texts are selected for their relevance to issues current in maritime studies. Such subjects may include: the meaning and consequences of adventure and discovery; climate change and weather patterns; the sea as a creator, connector, and a divider of cultures; the sea as an agent of change; human interaction with the sea; and the sea as refuge. Readings will include fiction, creative nonfiction, and long-form journalism — printed and digital. A portion of the course will focus on fieldwork as inspiration for student writing, drawing on St. George’s place in the Atlantic world. As a final project, each student will develop, research, refine, write, and submit a final project on which they work for a significant portion of the final third of the year.

**Advanced Placement Literature and Composition: English 610/A**

*Open by invitation to sixth-formers*

Exploring rich and challenging literary works can increase students’ skill and pleasure as readers. This college-level course requires participants to examine the ways that writers construct meaning in various genres (novel, drama, story, poetry). In discussion and in written analysis, students improve their ability to deploy the vocabulary and analytical tools that unlock theme, style, tone, imagery, and other literary devices. Students requesting this course should be enthusiastic about reading poetry, and prepared to write frequently and participate energetically in discussion. They are also required to take the AP exam. Among longer works studied in recent years: Barker, *Regeneration*; Russo, *Straight Man*; McEwan, *Atonement*; Shakespeare, *Hamlet, King Lear*; Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest*; Stoppard, *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*; Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*; Bronte, *Jane Eyre*; Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*; Cunningham, *The Hours*.