

Year 11 countdown

Twelve weeks of focused revision for AQA GCSE English Literature and English Language

How it works

Start twelve weeks before your first English exam and count down. Each week has one focus. Aim for about 30 minutes a day, five days a week:

Days 1 and 2: retrieve	Write down everything you remember about the focus, then check your notes and fill the gaps in a different colour. Test yourself on quotations.
Days 3 and 4: practise	Plan an answer to an exam-style question in ten minutes, then write two What-How-Why paragraphs from your plan.
Day 5: time yourself	Write one full answer in exam time, then mark it against the level descriptors or ask your teacher for feedback.

Your twelve weeks

Week	Focus	This week	Done
12	Macbeth: plot and characters	Retell the play act by act from memory; one character profile a day.	☐
11	Macbeth: themes, context and quotations	Learn ten quotations; link each one to a theme and to Jacobean context.	☐
10	A Christmas Carol: plot, characters and context	Retell the five staves; revise the Poor Law, Malthus and Dickens's purpose.	☐
9	A Christmas Carol: themes and quotations	Learn ten quotations; write one timed extract-to-whole essay.	☐
8	An Inspector Calls: plot, characters and context	Retell the play; revise 1912 and 1945, class, age and gender.	☐
7	An Inspector Calls: themes and quotations	Learn ten quotations; write one timed essay.	☐
6	Power and Conflict: the first eight poems	One poem a day: its context, three quotations and one method each.	☐
5	Power and Conflict: the last seven poems and comparison	Finish the anthology; plan three comparisons that pair poems by theme.	☐
4	Unseen poetry	Practise the single-poem question and the comparison question on new poems.	☐
3	Language Paper 1	Reading questions 1 to 4 on a fiction extract; one descriptive or narrative piece.	☐
2	Language Paper 2	Reading questions 1 to 4 on two non-fiction sources; one viewpoint piece.	☐
1	Final week	Read through your notes and quotation lists, do short timed tasks only, and get plenty of sleep.	☐

The night before an English exam

- Read through your quotation lists once. Leave new material alone.
- Pack black pens, a spare, a highlighter and a watch you are allowed to take in.
- Remind yourself of the timings for each question on the paper.
- Go to bed at your usual time.

My exam timings

Paper	Question	Minutes

© 2026. Free to use and print in your school.