How can I support my daughter in Year 11?

Some general strategies:

- Share reading widely and often with her. Try to cover the entire range: newspapers, non-fiction, short stories, poetry, novels and plays... anything! Read with her and discuss what you have read. This is a great way for your daughter to learn to question her own views on issues she encounters while reading.


- Encourage writing of any kind to build resilience and experience of writing for extended periods of time. The IGCSE exam is 2 hours, and the Literature exams are 1 hour and 45 minutes each. Some children will never have written for so long before their exam, and this puts them at a disadvantage.

- Make a quiet space in your home where your daughter will not be over-stimulated. Many children say they fear exams because they’re just not used to sitting in silence for up to 2 hours, and at that point, their head goes down. Remove phone, tablets and other distracting electronic devices; even if she says she studies better with music, she needs to get used to the silence of the exam hall.

- As simple as it sounds, check she has done her homework. She will be set 2 pieces a week; some may be spellings, reading or annotations rather than extended writing, but these are just as important.

- Buy her 3 different coloured highlighters for the IGCSE exam

- The British Library has some amazing resources on its website: [http://www.bl.uk/learning/online-resources](http://www.bl.uk/learning/online-resources). You could explore this together, or even plan a trip there.

The topics she studies are:

- **Of Mice and Men.** To secure and extend knowledge, your daughter could:
  - Re-read the book independently – at least once!
  - Read *To Kill and Mockingbird* to support her understanding of and develop an appreciation for literature about and from this era.
  - Research the Great Depression, the Civil Rights Movement, and America in the 20s/30s.
  - Read anything else by John Steinbeck; *The Pearl* is quite short and explores some interesting themes.
  - Mind-map all the characters and themes, including quotations, analysing the language, linking to contexts, and linking to other themes and characters.

There is one essay question on this text: there are **24 marks** available for how well your daughter writes about the theme or character, another **16 marks** for how she links her ideas to the social and historical context of the novel, and **7 marks** for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

- **Jekyll and Hyde.** To secure and extend knowledge, your daughter could:
  - Re-read the book independently – at least once!
  - Make sure she knows the subject terminology: you could make flash cards with her
  - Prepare 3 extracts from the novella that she could use for question C in any exam.
There are 3 questions on this text: one on a character in a short extract worth 8 marks, one on a theme in the same extract worth 12 marks, and one on an extract of her choice about a specific theme for 16 marks.

- **Unseen Poetry**
  ✓ Read the poem published in *The Guardian* newspaper every Saturday; you can find them online at: [http://www.theguardian.com/books/series/saturdaypoem+poetry](http://www.theguardian.com/books/series/saturdaypoem+poetry)
  ✓ Learn the terminology

There is one question worth 20 marks on an unseen poem, where your daughter has to explore why the writer has made different language choices.

- **Anthology Poetry (Clashes and Collisions)** To secure and extend knowledge, your daughter could:
  ✓ Group the poems together in as many ways as she can think of, then explain how and why she has made these choices
  ✓ Again, learn the subject terminology
  ✓ Recap the poems in her own words

There is one comparative question on these poems: she will be given one poem and theme, and asked to compare and contrast it with another of her choice. This is work 30 marks.

- **IGCSE English Language: reading passages paper** Question 1. To secure and extend her skills, your daughter could:
  ✓ Read a lot of non-fiction and compare/contrast the language and style used. Any newspaper website can offer a range of stories; one is bound to catch her interest.
  ✓ Write letters to newspapers expressing her views on a current topic
  ✓ Highlight the main points of any piece of text – perhaps from a newspaper
  ✓ Learn the spellings supplied
  ✓ Develop her vocabulary by reading widely and finding synonyms for both familiar and unfamiliar words

In this question, there are 15 marks available for your daughter finding 5 pieces of evidence per bullet point and rephrasing them in her own words, and 5 marks for the quality of her writing.

- **IGCSE English Language: reading passages paper** Question 2. To secure and extend her skills, your daughter could:
  ✓ Practise picking out powerful words and phrases from pieces of writing, defining the powerful words, and explaining how/why the writer has used them. Tabloid newspapers are often good sources for this type of emotive language

In this question, there are 10 marks available for your daughter spotting 8 powerful words and phrases from 2 paragraphs of the text, and commenting on why the writer has chosen these particular words.

- **IGCSE English Language: reading passages paper** Question 3. To secure and extend her skills, your daughter could:
  ✓ Develop her skimming and scanning skills by speed-reading
  ✓ Practise summarising any text into as few words as possible

In this question, there are 15 marks available to your daughter for finding and copying down 15 bits of evidence, and 5 marks for turning those 15 points into continuous prose very concisely and in her own words.