

Subject Overview

KS3 English



English forms the basis for our development, relationships and our understanding of the world around us. The study of English is key to our personal growth and, through the development of effective written and spoken communication, it is the foundation for all our learning. The ability to communicate competently, confidently and with clarity is crucial in school, but also in becoming an effective participant in our wider society with skills of communication being key to accessing the world of work and in navigating adult life. In a fast paced, global world the importance of fluent written and spoken English is crucial and it is essential that we develop these skills through an effective English curriculum.

As our students progress through the English curriculum, they are continually developing their close reading skills through exposure to increasingly challenging fiction and non-fiction, which include works by 19th, 20th and 21st century writers. We want our students to be able to engage with a range of texts with confidence and to develop their skills in decoding difficult texts, gathering carefully selected evidence, evaluating texts in detail and possessing the ability to explore multiple texts simultaneously to formulate and articulate personal viewpoints. The development of these skills feeds directly into their study of spoken language and the importance of verbal communication in accessing the world around them. Opportunities have been created for students to debate and discuss their ideas through a range of individual and group presentations, speeches, performing plays and reading aloud. We firmly believe that exposure to a range of opportunities builds a confidence in students and allows them to develop their life-long skills in verbal communication.

As our students progress through the English curriculum, they are continually developing their close reading skills through exposure to increasingly challenging fiction and non-fiction, which include works by 19th, 20th and 21st century writers. We want our students to be able to engage with a range of texts with confidence and to develop their skills in decoding difficult texts, gathering carefully selected evidence, evaluating texts in detail and possessing the ability to explore multiple texts simultaneously to formulate and articulate personal viewpoints. The development of these skills feeds directly into their construction of writing and the importance of written communication in accessing the world around them. Opportunities have been created for students to debate and discuss their ideas through a range of individual and group presentations, speeches, performing plays and reading aloud. We firmly believe that exposure to a range of opportunities builds a confidence in students and allows them to develop their life-long skills in verbal communication.

At A Level, the curriculum offer is carefully guided by our commitment to offering a diet of texts which we believe students will enjoy, engage with and form strong, well-informed opinions on. The course aims to inspire a lifelong love of reading and critical inquiry. By developing key academic and personal skills, students will be well-prepared for both further study and a wide range of careers, equipped to navigate and contribute to a complex and ever-changing world.

Term		Year 7 English underpins all themes in L4L	Year 8	Year 9
Autumn	Core themes and texts	Fairytales A Midsummer Night's Dream	Journeys Beyond: Exploring adventure, disaster and the art of exploration.	The Changing World: Exploring society through dystopian literature.
	Overview	The intention of this theme is to complete an in-depth study of Shakespeare's <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> , linking to their later study of <i>Hamlet</i> , <i>Julius Ceasar</i> , <i>Macbeth</i> and <i>Othello</i> . Students will complete character and language analysis with a focus on being able to cite specific textual evidence. Furthermore, students will need to use their creative skills to create fairy tale settings and perform to an audience. Students will then need to use this knowledge to explore fairy tales around the world and assess their relevance today.	In this scheme of work students are immersed in the rich and varied themes of adventure, disaster, and exploration through a range of literary texts and writing exercises. This unit aims to inspire a love of reading and writing, while simultaneously equipping students with the analytical, interpretative, and creative skills needed to explore complex ideas and express themselves with confidence. Students explore texts such as 'The Odyssey', 'The Wizard of Oz', <i>Alice in Wonderland</i> , and 'The Hunger Games', and from non-fiction including 'Into Thin Air', 'The Journals of Lewis and Clark', 'Between a Rock and a Hard Place', and 'In the Heart of the Sea', and detailing events such as the sinking of the Titanic, the Indonesian Tsunami and Hurricane Katrina.	In this scheme of work students are immersed in the rich and challenging themes of dystopia, rebellion, and social change through a range of literary texts and thought-provoking writing tasks. This unit encourages students to question the world around them and to consider how literature reflects society's fears, hopes, and struggles. (Linking to key themes within KS4 Literature texts such as social injustice and inequality within <i>An Inspector Calls</i> and <i>A Christmas Carol</i>). Students engage with texts such as <i>The Hunger Games</i> , William Blake's <i>London</i> , Shirley Jackson's <i>The Lottery</i> , and Samuel Butler's <i>Erewhon</i> , alongside extracts from Orwell's <i>1984</i> and other dystopian works. Through these, they explore how writers use language, form, and structure to critique inequality, control, and injustice. The scheme also draws connections to wider contexts and modern concerns, developing students' ability to read critically, write analytically, and respond creatively to the enduring question of how literature shapes and reflects "the spirit of the age."
	Reading	Students build on learning in KS2 and develop the following reading skills as part of this theme: Textual Analysis Close Reading Evidence Citation	Students build on their learning in Year 7 and develop the following reading skills as part of this unit of work: Comprehension and Interpretation	Students deepen and extend the skills introduced in Year 7 and 8, focusing on more sophisticated literary concepts and critical perspectives:

		Understanding cultural contexts Creative Interpretation and Performance	Analytical Reading Critical Thinking Contextual Understanding	Inference and Interpretation Close Analytical Reading Evaluative and Critical Thinking Contextual understand and application
	Writing	Students build on learning in KS2 and develop the following writing skills as part of this theme: Analytical Writing Creative Writing Persuasive and Evaluative Writing	Students build on their learning in Year 7 and develop the following writing skills as part of this unit of work: Descriptive Writing Expository Writing Transactional Writing	Students develop greater control over written expression, applying techniques to both analytical and creative tasks: Descriptive writing Analytical Essay Writing Transactional and Persuasive Writing Creative and poetic writing
	Spoken Language	Students build on learning in KS2 and develop the following spoken language skills as part of this theme: Performance and Dramatic Expression Group Discussion and Collaboration Listening and Responding	Students build on their learning in Year 7 and develop the following spoken language skills as part of this unit of work: Discussion and Debate Listening and Feedback Presentation Skills	Students refine their spoken communication skills, practising articulation, persuasion, and collaboration in increasingly complex contexts: Reasoned Debate Active Listening and Response Formal Presentation
Spring	Core themes and texts	Journeys Canterbury Tales	Voices Princess and the Hustler	Gothic and the Macabre
	Overview	This intention of this theme is to enable students to consider a range of reasons as to why people undertake journeys, and the effects that embarking on these journeys may have on them, linking to their later study in the Y8 unit 'Adventure and Disaster'. We begin the theme by looking at the map skills that enable travellers successfully to get from one place to another. Building on these skills, students are able both to plan a journey and to write about a journey they have previously undertaken. The theme enables students to demonstrate their place knowledge of the Middle East, and the importance of this region to many of	In this unit of work, pupils explore literature and the spoken word as platform for change (linking to their later study of ACC – a text which was written to raise awareness of the plight of the poor in Victorian England, and AIC – a text constructed as a political manifesto). Pupils study a range of extracts/poems championing issues such as social, political, and environmental change, and study 'Princess and the Hustler', a play set during the Bristol bus boycott.	In this scheme of work, students trace the evolution of the gothic genre, encountering texts that probe human fears, the supernatural, and the unsettling aspects of society. They explore how gothic literature reflects cultural anxieties and moral questions, while also developing an appreciation of the enduring appeal of horror and suspense. Students engage with extracts from Stevenson's Jekyll and Hyde, Shelley's Frankenstein, Susan Hill's The Woman in Black, and selected works of Edgar Allan Poe, alongside gothic poetry and short fiction. Across these texts, they examine the

	<p>today's major world religions. Taking Christianity, Sikhism and Islam in turn, students explore religious pilgrimages that followers of these religions undertake, the reasons they take these journeys and what the lasting effects of these journeys may be. Students can contrast religious pilgrimages and poetry of today with those from the medieval period: have pilgrims' reasons for undertaking these journeys changed over the centuries?</p>		<p>conventions of gothic writing — including setting, pathetic fallacy, heightened vocabulary, and the interplay between rationality and the supernatural — to understand how writers create atmosphere, explore morality, and critique social tensions. Alongside analytical reading, students develop their own writing, crafting creative gothic descriptions and narratives inspired by classic conventions, as well as transactional texts that echo the concerns of the period, such as newspaper articles reflecting Victorian fears around Jack the Ripper. The unit also emphasises the cultural context of crime, punishment, and religious morality, providing key thematic foundations for KS4 texts including A Christmas Carol and An Inspector Calls.</p>
Reading	<p>Students build on learning in KS2 and develop the following reading skills as part of this theme: Analytical Reading - theme and motif Comparative Reading</p>	<p>Students build on their learning in Year 7 and develop the following reading skills as part of this unit of work: Empathy and Perspective-taking Comparative Reading Analysis of structure, dialogue and tone</p>	<p>Students deepen and extend the skills introduced in Year 7 and 8, focusing on more sophisticated literary concepts and critical perspectives: Interpretation and Meaning-Making Detailed Textual Analysis Critical Reflection and Judgement Applying Contextual Perspectives</p>
Writing	<p>Students build on learning in KS2 and develop the following writing skills as part of this theme: Creative Techniques Expository Writing</p>	<p>Students build on their learning in Year 7 and develop the following writing skills as part of this unit of work: Argumentative Writing Creative Writing - imitation Expository Writing</p>	<p>Students develop greater control over written expression, applying techniques to both analytical and creative tasks: Atmospheric and Descriptive Writing Structured Analytical Essays Transactional and Rhetorical Writing Imaginative and Creative Composition</p>

	Spoken Language	Students build on learning in KS2 and develop the following spoken language skills as part of this theme: Debate Group Communication Expressing Perspectives	Students build on their learning in Year 7 and develop the following spoken language skills as part of this unit of work: Performance and role-play Speech Writing and delivery Collaborative Communication	Students refine their spoken communication skills, practising articulation, persuasion, and collaboration in increasingly complex contexts: Debate and Discussion Listening and Constructive Response Presentation and Performance
Summer	Core themes and texts	Silent Movies	The Supernatural, Madness and Revenge Hamlet [Shakespeare]	Power and Rhetoric
	Overview	<p>The intention of this theme is to explore how perspectives in history and society are represented and communicated through the medium of film, notably the cultural phenomenon of the Silent Movie Industry. By celebrating the art of mime and slapstick comedy, students explore the origins of cinema, the lifestyles of influential people and technological advances that shaped attitudes throughout the early 20th century. Students use the biography of Charlie Chaplin to see how society was reflected in silent movies.</p> <p>Studies in drama, art, and music challenge students to prepare for their own Silent Movie Showcase where they will work collaboratively to invent, record, edit and present a silent movie in anticipation of an 'Oscars Ceremony'. Nominations will compete for prestigious awards to celebrate achievements as actors, directors, editors, advertisers, writers and historians. Students learn how to manipulate video editing software to interpret silent movie techniques and communicate their very own narrative.</p>	<p>In this scheme of work, students study Shakespeare's <i>Hamlet</i> in full, engaging with one of the most significant plays in the literary canon. They explore the central theme of appearance versus reality, examining how deception, power, and inner conflict drive the tragedy. This exploration not only provides a solid foundation for their KS4 study of Shakespeare's <i>Macbeth</i> but also introduces them to the conventions of gothic literature — mystery, the supernatural, and psychological tension — in preparation for their Year 9 study of <i>Gothic and the Macabre</i>.</p> <p>Students consider Hamlet's struggles with morality, revenge, and identity, and analyse how Shakespeare's language, structure, and characterisation present complex ideas about truth, perception, and justice. They also reflect on the enduring relevance of these themes, connecting Shakespeare's world with contemporary issues around leadership, morality, and human behaviour.</p>	<p>In this scheme of work, students examine how literature represents power, corruption, and the struggle for justice. Beginning with Shakespeare's <i>Julius Caesar</i>, they explore the consequences of ambition, betrayal, and political manipulation — providing a bridge to their later study of <i>Macbeth</i> at KS4. Alongside this, students study a range of poetry on social injustice, which introduces them to the critical analysis of verse in preparation for the Power and Conflict anthology.</p> <p>The scheme also places a strong emphasis on the power of rhetoric. Students analyse a selection of famous speeches addressing social inequality, protest, and justice, before crafting and delivering their own persuasive speech. This provides them with the opportunity to complete their GCSE Speaking and Listening assessment in a meaningful context, while also developing their ability to articulate complex ideas with clarity and conviction.</p>
	Reading	Students build on learning in KS2 and Y7 to develop the	Students build on their learning in Year 7 and	Students deepen and extend the skills

		<p>following reading skills as part of this theme:</p> <p>Historical Context Analysis Media Literacy</p>	<p>develop the following reading skills as part of this unit of work:</p> <p>Conventions of gothic literature Analytical Reading of figurative language and symbolism Comparative Reading</p>	<p>introduced in Year 7 and 8, focusing on more sophisticated literary concepts and critical perspectives:</p> <p>Exploring Ideas and Perspectives Analysing Language and Structure Evaluating Authorial Intentions Connecting Texts to Contexts</p>
	Writing	<p>Students build on learning in KS2 and Y7 to develop the following writing skills as part of this theme:</p> <p>Biographical Writing Script Writing Technical Writing - storyboards, director's notes, production schedules</p>	<p>Students build on their learning in Year 7 and develop the following writing skills as part of this unit of work:</p> <p>Analytical Essay Writing Reflective Writing Descriptive Writing</p>	<p>Students develop greater control over written expression, applying techniques to both analytical and creative tasks:</p> <p>Persuasive and Rhetorical Writing Comparative Essay Writing Exploratory Poetry Analysis Creative and Reflective Composition</p>
	Spoken Language	<p>Students build on learning in KS2 and Y7 to develop the following spoken language skills as part of this theme:</p> <p>Performance Public Speaking</p>	<p>Students build on their learning in Year 7 and develop the following spoken language skills as part of this unit of work:</p> <p>Presentation Narration and storytelling</p>	<p>Students refine their spoken communication skills, practising articulation, persuasion, and collaboration in increasingly complex contexts:</p> <p>Oracy and Public Speaking Critical Debate and Discussion Formal Presentation and Performance</p>

Our curriculum is designed to harness the natural interplay between Music, English Language, and English Literature, cultivating a rich and dynamic learning experience that enables students to develop a deeper understanding of the human experience. By interweaving these disciplines, we aim to inspire creativity, enhance critical thinking, and empower students to express themselves with clarity and confidence.

At the heart of all three disciplines lies the need to communicate and connect with others. Whether through the written word, spoken language, or musical composition, students explore how ideas, emotions, and stories are shared across time, cultures, and mediums.