

Curriculum intent and rationale

Key Stage 3

Overview

The English mastery programme is delivered throughout Key Stage 3, with a key focus on developing a deep appreciation and passion for reading and writing. Whilst studying key texts, students have the opportunity to respond to them culturally, emotionally, intellectually, and socially, through the activities they engage in. A wide-range of texts are studied, such as pre and post 1914 novels, various poems and Shakespeare plays. Each text and activity supports students in writing accurately, fluently, effectively and at length; developing on what they have already learnt in Key Stage 2.

Reading

Throughout the Key Stage 3 journey, students read a variety of texts, allowing them to formulate a stronger understanding of a text's contextual factors (Jacobean, Elizabethan and Victorian), narrative, purpose, as well as making connections between the text and the author. They explore how attitudes and ideas have changed over time and how this can shape the meaning in a text.

Another key aim is to create and develop confident and eager readers, which plays a crucial part in their academic successes. Therefore, we aim to expose students to a wide-range of texts and encourage reading for pleasure.

During this process, students are exposed to new vocabulary, allowing them to become even better readers. Each lesson focuses on strongly correlated vocabulary, again, allowing them to access challenging literary heritage texts and how explore how it is used to aid meaning.

In Year 7, students read *Oliver Twist*, with a focus on whether Bill Sikes is a good or bad character. They also read *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and conclude on whether love potions are good or bad and finally read an anthology of poetry and aim to explain how the poet uses language to describe.

In Year 8, students read *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* and decide what kind of character he is. In addition, students read *The Tempest* and assess how the character of Caliban is presented. Finally, students examine why the farm failed in *Animal Farm*.

In Year 9, students explore childhood experiences in *Jane Eyre*, whether Juliet is a tragic hero in *Romeo and Juliet* and compare the presentation of themes in anthology poetry.

The structure of the course content reflects the traditional study of the English literary canon, whereby students learn the foundation texts of literature. This supports them as they continue to study similar texts in the future for their

GCSE. Simpler and more familiar texts are studied in Year 7, as opposed to Years 8 and 9, so that students are eased into these areas of literature. This encourages students to be experts in its domain, as they build a strong understanding of the text's context, plot, purpose, and author; enabling them to make connections and solidify their understanding.

Writing

Students have the opportunity to explore their imagination, creativity and originality whilst studying grammar, and in particular, their writing skills. They not only explore various devices; they also learn how to convey ideas accurately, through the use of extensive vocabulary, grammar and punctuation. They gain a deeper understanding of various text forms and begin to compose multi-faceted narratives; allowing them to use these skills to succeed in all subjects.

By the end of Key Stage 3, students should be able to write about texts and ideas accurately; using revisited knowledge continually so that it remains within their long-term memory. An example of this is the re-cap element of each lesson, which revisits a term or concept from the lesson before, enabling students to continue revising information. The way this is achieved is ensuring that knowledge is cumulative, to ensure students know more and remember more. Each strand within a unit is built on what has been taught previously and students revise key elements continually; this allows their knowledge to increase and remain. An example of this is moving from the idea of a metaphor in Year 7 and developing this idea by learning about extended metaphors in Year 8 and analogies in Year 9.

Key Stage 4

Overview

The Edexcel specification is delivered throughout Key Stage 4. Students study both language and literature. We provide content to give students the confidence, skills, knowledge, and understanding that they will require in their future lives, whether it be in work or further education, as well as an in-depth culture awareness of the world they live in.

English language

Whilst studying English language, students read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts fluently and with good understanding, read critically and use knowledge gained from wider reading. These skills help to inform and improve their own writing, writing effectively and coherently using Standard English, grammar and punctuation appropriately, acquire and apply a wide vocabulary alongside knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology, and linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.

The approach behind component one (fiction and imaginative writing), is that students study selections from a range of prose fiction, develop skills to analyse and evaluate pre-19th century fiction extracts, develop imaginative writing skills to engage the reader, and use spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately.

The learning behind this component enables students to consider how to decode a text, how to retrieve factual information, how writer's use language to create meaning, how and why writers' structure their texts, writing about methods writers' use to create meaning and how to evaluate effectively. They are able to use these skills when writing

their own imaginative pieces; learning specifically how to write language rich descriptive writing, how to develop a text coherently with a range of discourse markers to support the text's cohesion, and how to use punctuation for effect and precision, not just for accuracy.

Likewise, the approach behind component two (non-fiction and transactional writing), is that students will study a range of 20th and 21st century non-fiction texts (including literary non-fiction). They also develop skills to analyse, evaluate and compare non-fiction extracts, develop transactional writing skills for a variety of forms, purposes and audiences. Finally, using spelling, punctuation, and grammar accurately.

The learning behind this component enables students to consider how we can decode difficult texts, how and why we compare texts on similar content, how to further build skills on retrieving facts, how to synthesise information, and how to show understanding of how a writer creates a viewpoint or perspective. They are able to use these skills when writing their own transactional pieces; learning to specifically write various text forms, consider the rules of debate and argument, and how to develop a text coherently with a range of discourse markers to support the text's cohesion.

Students in Year 10 have ample opportunities to read a variety of extracts taken from pre and post 1914 texts, allowing them to immerse themselves fully whilst understanding the demands of their GCSE exams in the following year. Equally, they are able to experiment creatively and imaginatively, again, familiarising themselves with the written element of the exam. In addition, they

are able to experiment with transactional writing and develop ways to write purposefully, with an intended audience in mind, whilst familiarising themselves with the written element of the exam. The core content covered includes: being able to communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, being able to select and adapt tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences, having the ability to organise information and ideas, and using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts.

English literature

Whilst studying English literature, students read a wide range of classic literature and make connections across their reading. They read critically and evaluatively, so that they are able to discuss and explain their understanding and ideas. Students develop the habit of reading widely and often, appreciate the depth and power of the English literary heritage, write accurately, effectively and analytically about their reading, and acquire and use a wide vocabulary, including grammatical terminology, and other literary and linguistic terms they need to criticise and analyse.

Component one (Shakespeare and post-1914 literature) allows students to study a Shakespeare play and a post-1914 British play or novel. They develop skills to analyse how the language, form, structure and context of texts can create meanings and effects. Equally, they cultivate skills to maintain a critical style and informed personal response.

The learning behind this component enables students to consider how to understand a word, phrase, sentence or whole text in context, explore aspects of plot, characterisation, events and settings,

distinguish between what is stated explicitly and what is implied; explain motivation, sequence of events, and the relationship between actions or events. Furthermore, students learn to identify the theme and distinguish between themes, support a point of view by referring to evidence in the text, recognise the possibility of and evaluate different responses to a text, use understanding of writer's social, historical and cultural contexts to inform evaluation, make an informed personal response that derives from analysis and evaluation of the text.

The approach behind component two (19th-century novel and poetry since 1789) is to develop skills to analyse how the language, form, structure and context of texts can create meanings and effects. Students develop skills to maintain a critical style and informed personal response as well as improve comparison skills.

The learning behind this component enables students to analyse and evaluate how language (including figurative language), structure, form and presentation contribute to quality and impact, use linguistic and literary terminology for such evaluation, compare and contrast texts studied, refer where relevant to theme, characterisation, context, style and literary quality and compare two texts critically with respect to the above.

Those in Year 10 study all of the elements through the academic year, before revisiting them in Year 11. In Year 10, students study *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Christmas Carol* and *Blood Brothers*. Students explore GCSE set texts and familiarise themselves with exam style questions, key skills required to answer the questions, and how to respond

critically to them. Although these are set texts, they are different from those studied in Year 11. Similarly, students will read the conflict cluster of the anthology, so that they are familiar with the voice and context behind each poem. Whereas in Year 11, students go on to study *Macbeth*, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Hyde* and *An Inspector Calls*. Students revisit the conflict cluster of the anthology, with a deeper focus on how language, form and structure aid meaning.

The structure of the course content reflects a traditional study of the English literary canon, whereby students learn the foundation texts of literature, this supports them as they continue to study similar texts in Year 11 and for their final GCSE exams. Again, simpler and more familiar texts will be studied in Year 10 as opposed to Year 11, so that students are eased into these areas of literature. This encourages students to be experts in its domain, as they gain a strong understanding of the text's context, plot, purpose, and author, enabling them to make connections and solidify their understanding.

Key Stage transition

To ensure that the transition between the key stages runs smoothly, both summative and formative assessments take a similar format. Key Stage 3 assessment questions look similar to those that appear in Key Stage 4. Likewise, the feedback style is similar. This enables students to reflect on their progress in the same way as they would approaching Years 10 and 11. The terminology and contextual factors learnt in Years 7-9 continue to be developed in Years 10 and 11.