



SUBJECT: English

YEAR: 8

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: Mrs Melville-Brown

GROUPING POLICY: Students are broadly streamed into upper and lower ability bands based on baseline testing and reading age

COURSE CONTENT

Curriculum Intent

To develop independent learners, with a love and appreciation of Language and Literature. We want students to have a broad understanding of how Literature is a response to what was happening at the time and how language can be used to effectively communicate ideas in a variety of different forms.

Implementation

Our curriculum is designed to return to key ideas, themes and skills and to embed this knowledge to develop students' extended pieces of writing. Links to what is also happening in our world presently are also discussed to make learning 'real'. Opportunities for extended writing are built into our schemes of work and whole class feedback is conducted on a weekly/fortnightly schedule so that lessons can be adapted for the needs of the students.

What will my child learn?

Across Year 8, your child will study a range of fiction and non-fiction texts across a wide number of themes. We start the year by studying a thematic module called 'Controversial Issues' exploring the novel 'The Bone Sparrow' alongside poetry and speeches linked to Human Rights. We use this to help students start to develop an argument in their writing, inviting them to write their own article exploring a topic which they are passionate about. The texts cover a wide range of themes and cultures. Students will then move on to study a range of non-fiction texts linked to travel. Students are introduced to the skill of comparison as we examine a range of viewpoints about a similar place.

Following this, we move onto a study of the Detective genre and a close reading of either 'The Speckled Band' or 'Hound of the Baskervilles'. Your child will explore characteristics of the genre, examine how writers use structure for effect and then craft their own opening to a detective story.

Finally, the year ends by introducing students to their first secondary school experience of Shakespeare through a study of the 'The Tempest'. We explore the origins of colonisation and hierarchies on the island, asking the question 'How can power be misused?'

What will homework look like?

Homework forms a vital part of the curriculum and encourages students to become independent, well organised and responsible learners. The department defines homework as any learning or preparation task undertaken outside the classroom. Some suggested homework tasks are listed below, but this is not exhaustive and teachers may set alternative work at their discretion:

- Discussing work with parents / carers and giving feedback;
- Responding to teacher feedback;
- Research tasks or preparation for forthcoming lessons – including reading of set texts;
- Learning and revision;
- Preparation for assessment tasks / tests;
- Drafting and editing of work;
- Resource gathering;
- Reading for pleasure.

What enrichment opportunities are available?

- Wider reading is encouraged through homework activities.



- Writing competitions are organised both within the department and on a wider scale in collaboration with other schools. We also have book clubs running across the year groups.

ASSESSMENT

How will my child's work be assessed?

At Key Stage 3, continuous assessment of student progress will take place through a combination of formative and summative assessment. Using Whole Class Feedback, a sample of students' work will be viewed each week to address misconceptions and aid the future planning of lessons. Students will complete a main marked piece of work three times a year. This piece of work will assess either reading or writing.

At Key Stage 3, the English department has identified nine reading skills and nine writing skills that need to be developed, in order to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum and ensure students are adequately prepared for the GCSE course. Students will revisit every skill at least once per academic year, throughout Key Stage 3.

Teachers will report progress to parents / carers, as per the whole school reporting cycle. Teachers will make a professional judgement about a student's progress based on class work, main marked piece and verbal contributions in class. Their judgement will be holistic and not based on one piece of work.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

How can I support my child in this subject?

Reading:

- Help them think about the writer behind the text, for example:
 - Why did they choose the language they did?
 - Why did they organise the text in that way?
 - What effect did they hope to have on the reader?
- When looking for information in print or on screen, encourage them to scan ahead and think about how helpful the text is, whether it is a biased or reliable source.
- When they talk about their reading, encourage them to refer to evidence in the text to support their views.
- Get them regular opportunities to make their own choices about what they read at home.

Writing:

- Help them to use their reading to support them as writers, for example ask them to look at how a writer they like uses varied sentences or organised paragraphs.
- Encourage their personal writing, for example writing a diary or a blog.
- Talk through their ideas with them before they start to write, for example prompt them to think about how they intend to tackle a subject.
- Help them reflect on their writing, particularly the effect they hoped to have on the reader.
- Encourage them to read through their work, shaping their sentences for clarity and effect and checking their accuracy.