



English

Curriculum Intent

The English curriculum across all Key Stages seeks to:

- challenge our students beyond what they, by themselves, can accomplish
- ensure students can engage critically with the Literary canon and recognise literature as an ongoing conversation that speaks across time and culture
- make students linguistically knowledgeable
- nurture and encourage the pleasures of reading and writing
- develop students to be confident in discussing, debating and presenting ideas
- provide students with the concepts and skills required to achieve their academic and personal potential

We use the following five concepts as the foundation for all that we study:

1. all texts are constructs
2. texts make use of patterns
3. texts are informed by contexts
4. readers actively construct meaning
5. all texts are arguments

Key Stage 3

The Key Stage 3 curriculum adopts a chronological approach in order for students to become aware of a traditional literary canon so that they can both understand and challenge it. They will be able to appreciate the intertextual nature of English Literature as a discipline, not only to later connect with their GCSEs but also to have the confidence to see how the stories we tell reflect, adapt and interrogate the literary canon so that they can do so themselves. A key aspect to this is our inclusion of a diverse range of texts across the curriculum, where students look outside of the canon and explore texts from a wider range of cultures and traditions.

Throughout Key Stage 3 students will develop their appreciation and understanding of how language works. Building on the grammar knowledge from Key Stage 2, our curriculum adopts a stylistics and “grammar for writing” approach to the understanding of language. This is reflected in how students are expected to interrogate the texts studied with the appropriate technical language. Creativity, experimentation and exploration of their own writing is interwoven into our

curriculum, as well as developing a more detailed appreciation of linguistics. The curriculum aims to introduce students to what types of English courses will be available to them post-GCSE.

Above all, our early curriculum aims to foster in our students a love for reading. We ensure this takes place through half

-termly reading sessions, where students are expected to either read for pleasure or discuss the books that mean something to them. These discussions then form part of our “Just Read” units, where reading a text is the dominant focus of the lesson, providing another opportunity at developing vital speaking and listening skills. At the end of Year 9 each student presents to the class on a text of their choice. This presentation becomes the assessed Spoken Language Endorsement section of their GCSE English Language exam.

Co-curricular opportunities are available throughout Key Stage 3, including Creative Writing Club, Book and Film Club, House Spelling Bee, public speaking competitions, theatre trips and other one-off events, all aimed at developing a love for the many different forms English can take.

Key Stage 4

The skills covered in KS3 form the basis of learning in Year 10 and Year 11 and are developed further as the focus shifts to specific set texts as required by the GCSE. Our choices here reflect the foundation created by the canon from Key Stage 3. Each intentionally challenges our students to ensure a clear link between GCSE and A Level Literature is made, but also to reflect the ability and skills that our students will have developed by this point. The curriculum at Key Stage 4 is tightly packed so we look for ways to condense, overlap and connect what is taught. This is evident in the choice of texts which share thematic links and “speak to” each other in order to ensure that students utilise their understanding of one text to inform their appreciation of another.

A stylistics approach is applied to their GCSE English Language requirements. Students will then have a limited opportunity to develop their creative and transactional writing skills by reflecting on texts studied in class and experimenting with their own output.

Key Stage 5

The texts selected from specifications for A Level Literature are both deliberately challenging and are ones that come from a wide range of different eras: Medieval, Renaissance, Victorian, Modernist and contemporary. We seek to ensure that those students who wish to further study English at the top universities have a foundation to engage and debate with others. We see it as our duty as English teachers that students appreciate the diversity of literature that is available to them, to open doors to worlds and ideas that they otherwise would not have come across or have deliberately chosen for themselves. It is through their Independent Assignment that we encourage students to explore a text of their own choice, with the option of using a foundation text studied in class, nurturing their personal interests through an opportunity to examine topics more deeply.

The choice of offering A Level Language reflects both the department’s desire to place the love of language centre stage but also the nature of the students at AHS who excel at analysis, enjoy technical aspects of the subject and appreciate a more “data-led” approach. The two areas of curriculum choice for this A Level are the sub-topic of Language and Gender and student completion of an Independent Assignment. As a single-sex school, the choice of exploring the role language plays in gender construction enables those studying the subject to reflect on their own

identity and perhaps more importantly, the challenges that will face them when they leave school. For their Independent Assignment we focus specifically on journalism, writing for different types of magazines, as it is a career choice students often wish to explore.

Throughout both A Levels, particularly in Year 12, we seek ways to extend our students' knowledge and skills. We dedicate curriculum time to reading critical material in order to again challenge and develop our students, and also provide an appreciation of what could be explored post A Level. Here, we believe it is important that our students are equipped for a world in which debate, discussion and argument are integral aspects to having your voice heard. Finally we continue to nurture the love of reading with curriculum time given to discussing texts beyond the specification.

Curriculum Implementation

Key Stage 3

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
Autumn 1: Ovid - Metamorphoses	Autumn 1: Sonnets	Autumn 1: History Play - The Empress
Autumn 2: Metaphor and Language Archetypes: Heroes and Epics	Autumn 2: Shakespeare - Romeo and Juliet	Autumn 2: History Play - The Empress
Spring 1: Just Read: Vick - Girl. Boy. Sea.	Spring 1: Just Read: Iridescent Adolescent	Spring 1: Political Writing
Spring 2: Art of Rhetoric	Spring 2: Place and Romanticism	Spring 2: Orwell - Animal Farm
Summer 1: Chaucer - The Canterbury Tales	Summer 1: Dickens - Great Expectations	Summer 1: Just Read: The Girl With The Louding Voice
Summer 2: Shakespeare - A Midsummer Night's Dream	Summer 2: Dickens - Great Expectations	Summer 2: Just Read: The Girl With The Louding Voice Individual presentations (GCSE Spoken Language Endorsement)

Key Stage 4: GCSE (Edexcel)

Year 10	Year 11
<p>Autumn 1: Narrative: Short Stories</p> <p>Autumn 2: Lord of the Flies</p> <p>Spring 1: Lord of the Flies Articles / Orwell Youth Prize / Language Paper 2</p> <p>Spring 2: Macbeth</p> <p>Summer 1: Macbeth Exam prep</p> <p>Summer 2: Macbeth</p>	<p>Autumn 1: Jekyll and Hyde</p> <p>Autumn 2: Poetry and Unseen Poetry Language Paper 2</p> <p>Spring 1: Poetry and Unseen Poetry</p> <p>Spring 2: Revision</p> <p>Summer 1: Revision</p>

Key Stage 5: A Level (Edexcel)

Year 12 English Literature	Year 13 English Literature
<p>Autumn 1: Narrative theory; Critical theory; The Bloody Chamber A Streetcar Named Desire; Frankenstein</p> <p>Autumn 2: A Streetcar Named Desire; Frankenstein</p> <p>Spring 1: A Streetcar Named Desire; Wuthering Heights NEA: Booker Prize texts</p> <p>Spring 2: Modern Poetry; Wife of Bath Prologue</p>	<p>Autumn 1: NEA; Hamlet; Wife of Bath</p> <p>Autumn 2: Hamlet; Wife of Bath; Never Let Me Go</p> <p>Spring 1: Hamlet; Never Let Me Go</p> <p>Spring 2: Exams; Revision</p> <p>Summer 1: Revision</p>

<p>Summer 1: NEA; Wife of Bath Prologue; Modern Poetry</p> <p>Summer 2: NEA; Exams</p>	
Year 12 English Language	Year 12 English Literature
<p>Autumn 1: Phonetics; Framework;</p> <p>Autumn 2: Spoken Discourse; Constructed Languages</p> <p>Spring 1: Individual Variation; Gender</p> <p>Spring 2: Individual Variation; Gender; NEA</p> <p>Summer 1: NEA; Mini-Language Investigation</p> <p>Summer 2: Exams; NEA</p>	<p>Autumn 1: NEA; Variation over Time; Child Language Acquisition</p> <p>Autumn 2: Variation over Time; Language Investigation</p> <p>Spring 1: Variation over Time; Language Investigation</p> <p>Spring 2: Exams; Revision</p> <p>Summer 1: Revision</p>

Impact

Across all Key Stages curriculum impact is identified through the following methods:

- **Monthly quizzes:** students are asked to recall key ideas, concepts and facts that are relevant to the content studied. For KS4/5 this will invariably be linked to exam content, whereas in KS3 it will be the core terminology and concepts that underpin English Language and Literature.
- **Half-termly exercises:** students are asked to replicate a taught skill (such as writing an introduction to an essay or the end of a short story) which are then considered on merit against a predefined criteria (such as exam criteria or model responses). For KS4 and 5, these exercises become more exam focused as they nearer the end of their courses.
- **Termly quizzes:** students complete an extended quiz, which includes both open and closed questions, in order to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the core English Language and/or Literature concepts and terminology.
- **Homework:** a range of homework tasks are used by classroom teachers to support the assessment of curriculum impact. These may include revision for quizzes, where classroom teachers can identify strengths and weaknesses before a quiz, or extended writing, where students produce longer responses that can be evaluated on idea, skills, or knowledge.
- **Twice yearly assessments:** At two different points across the year students complete summative assessments. For KS4 and 5 this will be a response to an exam-style question. KS3 are assessed on their writing development and their ability to use English related concepts when analysing or evaluating texts.