

SHOWING CHILDREN THE WORLD AS IT WAS AND AS IT IS, IN ORDER FOR THEM TO FIND THEIR PLACE WITHIN THE WORLD AS IT WILL BE.

In his seminal work, *The Great Tradition*, F.R. Leavis contends that great writers, 'are significant in terms of the human awareness that they promote; awareness of the possibilities of life'.

At Shirebrook Academy, it is our belief that an empowering English curriculum furnishes all pupils with the chance to read and understand the stories, poems and plays that best do this. Our aim is to offer a broad, knowledge-rich, and intellectually challenging curriculum that provides our students with the knowledge, language, and grammatical skills to converse intelligently on a wide range of literature with the widest range of people possible. We instil students with a love of reading and writing, as well as the disciplinary knowledge required to be fluent and confident readers, writers and speakers.

We do this through an unashamedly academic literary focus, reading and watching performances of whole, canonical texts, and using these to access fiction and non-fiction that spans genres and eras. We teach students the substantive and conceptual knowledge required to understand the literary periods that they study, but also to develop their ability to link these to significant national and international issues that are relevant to today's society. Students are given opportunities to present, debate and discuss their opinions and beliefs based on the themes and topics brought about by the range of texts that we study.

By doing this, we create confident and knowledgeable students, regardless of their starting points, who are able to adapt to whatever environments and circumstances they find themselves in in the future. At KS4, all students follow the AQA syllabus for English Language and Literature, from the start of Y10 to Christmas of Y11, with the period after this bespoke to students' needs as identified through analysis of mock examinations.

Assessment of student learning is a blend of low-stakes knowledge tests, multiple choice tests, and formal, extended writing designed to challenge their literary and linguistic knowledge. Knowledge and skills accumulation is assessed using formative and summative assessment at regular points, ensuring that knowledge retention and recall, with the ability to apply this knowledge in more than one way, is understood to be the most important aspect of our curriculum.

Our curriculum provides the opportunity for all students to read and experience texts that best promote a broad understanding of humanity, the world and history. We choose our texts carefully from the 'the best that has been thought and said'- from Chaucer to Duffy. As a result, students develop a rich and powerful knowledge of a text's domain, its plots, themes and characters, as well as the cultural and social context which is relevant to its core. Students, therefore, gain a sense of the past, and of their own place within the modern world and are confident to articulate this due to the number of opportunities that they are given to do so, within English lessons.

In addition, we deliberately break down the complexity of English grammar into cumulative items of knowledge, for students to develop a knowledge of high-utility tier two vocabulary, grammar, form and structure, supporting students at all levels to reach curriculum goals and beyond with teachers having the autonomy to adapt and scaffold according to the needs of their individual classes, as identified in formative assessment. This allows for all students have access to 'the best that has been thought and said' which has stood 'the test of time'. Our focus on academic language, and effective writing through accurate and effective use of language, including redrafting work and refining written skills, allows our students to use their own words as power, much like the authors/playwrights/poets that they study.

By experiencing high-quality teaching, along with ongoing formative assessment, our students are encouraged to explore English and master the concepts that they encounter within our 'curriculum

journey' and – in doing so- feel empowered to explore this via reading for pleasure, also. These experiences are designed to secure a deeper understanding of English, and secure long-term retention of their learning. Students will move from shallow learning where knowledge is generally short-term and need a high level of prompt and support, through to mastery where the high levels of understanding result in students applying their knowledge and skills to a range of different situations across the curriculum and in life, with confidence.