

English Curriculum Booklet 2025-26

Subject Lead:
Mrs Gregory



St Dunstan's School
GLASTONBURY

English Curriculum Intent:

“Language exerts hidden power, like the moon on the tides.” - Rita Mae Brown

Our English curriculum is rich and rewarding and allows all our students to foster a life-long love of the subject and of reading for pleasure. As many of our students enter with below chronological reading ages and are predominantly white British, we ensure we explore a wide range of texts in order that they secure a better understanding of different societies, cultures and history, discovering characters, plots and scenes to help shape their own writing to be imaginative and engaging. We do this initially through low access, high interest reading material and gradually, as reading ages improve, make use of canonical works and more abstract writers. We have an ambitious curriculum that enables our students to progress to A levels for post 16 study at our link colleges but this ambition is for all and takes into account those who exceeded KS2 expectations as well as those with SEND and emotional needs. In short, the Literature and Language journey builds upon and values prior experiences and progresses towards our students' future.

We believe that students deserve a broad and ambitious English curriculum. Our curriculum exceeds the National Curriculum requirements and is rich in skills and knowledge, which ignites curiosity and prepares them well for future learning and employment. We also place a great emphasis on reading and our library is stocked with a wide variety of fiction texts, many of which are linked with Accelerated Reader. National events such as World Book Day are celebrated and we work with as many authors as possible to inspire readers and writers alike as well as to inform about careers.

Students come to St Dunstan's from around 12 different feeder primary schools, so we ensure all make the required transition to access the KS3 curriculum. Our curriculum takes students on a journey looking at literature through time and a wide range of purposes for the written word. This gradually builds up the skills and knowledge needed to fully access the topics and texts studied by students as they move through their key stage three curriculum. The expectation is that our students take great pride in the content and presentation of their work and can celebrate their creativity, originality and individualism through their writing and the spoken word.

Our curriculum map in English reflects our high expectations for every child and implements our key curriculum intents, central to this is the desire to inspire a love of, and passion for, English Language and Literature and the drive and confidence to succeed at every single stage. It is extremely important to us at St Dunstan's that we build up the confidence and maturity of our students, as readers, who can engage with and enjoy ever more challenging texts as they progress through the years.

We aim to build and secure the core literacy skills and confidence necessary for our students to flourish within the classroom and life beyond our school. They gain the skills necessary to develop detailed ideas in writing and to understand the importance of being able to write clearly, fluently and accurately in standard English. The knowledge to adapt their language to suit audience and purpose and, within that, build and use a wide range of appropriate and ambitious vocabulary employed with precision and thought. When our students leave to go onto the next stage of their educational journey and/or enter the world of work they are equipped to communicate their ideas, views and opinions over a wide range of topics clearly, confidently, respectfully and in a measured and considered manner.

We have students from a diverse socio-economic background, and we develop all students' cultural capital in English to remove any barriers to achievement in school, future learning and the world of work. This includes taking account of the rich resources available to us in Glastonbury such as the significance of Glastonbury Abbey, which we visit each year for creative writing. We are very much focussed on ensuring all of our students can at least achieve a Grade 4 in English so that they can achieve meaningful qualifications that will allow them to move to the next stage in their educational careers with great confidence and vigour.

It is a privilege to guide our students through the exciting adventure that is English language and literature. Our ultimate aim is to guide students and open their eyes, minds and hearts to the rich world that is poetry, prose and drama that surrounds them and to unlock the creativity that lies within us all. We seek to instil a lasting love of literature and language that will stay with our students for the rest of their lives.

English Curriculum Implementation:

Key Stage 3

As students come to St Dunstan's from over 12 different feeder schools, we use SATS and teacher assessment data to place students in sets immediately so there is no loss in learning on transition to secondary education. The curriculum is constructed by alternating between key components of English, such as reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Year 7 begins with an introduction to the roots of the English Language and an exploration of the development of language over time. This allows students to understand how language constantly evolves and become more confident in decoding language in the texts they later cover. Students will also explore a Shakespeare comedy, the novel 'Lark' or 'October October' which both raise a range of issues as well as being award winning texts and some work on poetry, non fiction and myths and legends. All of the work in Year 7 builds upon prior knowledge which students bring with them and is preparation for their continuing journey through English.

In Year 8, we begin with a study of Dickens' Great Expectations building our students' cultural capital, introducing unfamiliar vocabulary, as a gateway for them into the world of 'classical' or canonical literature and as a way of deepening their understanding of authorial craft by watching a master at work. They will develop this knowledge as they work with the gothic genre's texts and conventions and consider their importance as a literary genre. All of these skills of analysis have been in development throughout Y7. Crime Writing and Noughts and Crosses extend students' knowledge about our diverse society and the people we live amongst and also about text conventions such as crime writing, editorials and playscripts. The themes and ideas introduced within these units allow students to consider their own prejudices and the impact that they can make in our world. Students study a poetry unit which centres on poetry of the First World War, allowing them to evaluate the significance of both pro and anti war poetry where they will consider the poets' intentions and perspectives. This unit links to poetry studied in Year 10 in the Power and Conflict anthology for English Literature.

In Year 9 students study Lord of the Flies or Animal Farm, both classics of significant complexity, which represents the most challenging novel students encounter in KS3. With its focus on human nature, clear connections with historical context and its heavy use of symbolism and allegory, students will develop their understanding of novels as constructs, often with explicit goals and messages determining the writers' choices. We see this as a foundation text on which students are able to build upon prior knowledge about novels and it also becomes a text which

we refer to later so many times when discussing aspects of structure, character, motif and symbolism, as it is a text rich in examples which are accessible for all. The Year 9 journey also develops written skills in both fiction and non fiction writing, with the art of rhetoric where students will analyse a range of excellent speakers and their techniques and have the opportunity to create their own performance utilising these devices. The skills and knowledge about oracy link to the Spoken Language Endorsement which is assessed at KS4. We want our students to be confident orators for the future, as well as learning how to listen to others and respond appropriately and with empathy. Students will also study a modern play, which explores the historical context of Jamaican immigrants arriving in post-World War II Britain, particularly focusing on the Empire Windrush generation. This study will extend their knowledge of stagecraft and proxemics which will ensure that they can fully appreciate the power of one of Shakespeare's tragedies which is their final text in key stage 3.

The Library is stocked with a wide variety of fiction texts, many of which are linked to the Accelerated Reader programme. Students in Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9 have one reading lesson a fortnight, during their English timetable, where they are expected to independently read books of their chosen genre through guided choice. We ensure that students' reading ages are used to inform their choice of text so that all students are making progress with their reading. Students' reading ages are checked twice a year and students who are making less progress than expected are provided with opportunities to secure improvement. In addition, initial testing indicates which children need to follow intensive reading intervention such as the reciprocal reading programme or Reading Wise.

Students have regular low stakes tests to inform the next steps of learning and regular formative assessments so that students who are not making the required levels of progress are identified and further supported.

Key Stage 4

Students remain set in English classes at KS4 so that the pace of learning and choice of texts are at the right level of challenge to sustain our students' level of interest and engagement. We do not simply teach to test in KS4. We have a rich and rewarding curriculum that builds on KS3 and prepares students for further study at KS5, where many choose to continue with their English studies.

Within our curriculum, we have taken the opportunity to interleave some units so that students are able to see thematic links across fiction, non-fiction and poetry as well as using a variety of writers to influence their own creative and transactional writing.

Our Key Stage 4 curriculum aligns with other schools in the MNSP at timely intervals, which allows for robust moderation across schools. Our teachers are also able to work with many others in the Trust to ensure we provide the highest quality of teaching.

Allocated Curriculum Time:

Year Group	7	8	9	10	11
Fortnightly lesson allocation in hours	7 Plus 1 reading lesson		8	8	8

Curriculum Plan: Year 7

Term	Curriculum Foci Areas	Assessment Criteria
1	<p>Roots of English</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Discovery of the history of the English Language from the Anglo Saxons, to the Norman French and the Renaissance.● Exploration of the roots of language and etymology of words.● Discover English became a worldwide language and links to the British Empire.● Widen understanding of vocabulary and relationships between words.● Be able to change and adapt register in different situations and speak with confidence.	<p>Baseline Assessment: Autobiographical Writing</p> <p>Assessment 1: Speaking task assessing clarity, use of body language and facial expression, Standard English and organisation.</p>

2	<p>Myths and Legends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Key foundational myths such as Pandora’s box, Persephone and Hades, Freyja’s wedding, Arthurian legends ● Using models of excellent writing to inspire students’ own descriptive and narrative work. ● Understanding and crafting sensory description, figurative language, narrative hooks and a range of other devices. 	<p>Assessment 2: Narrative writing continuing the story of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</p>
3	<p>Lark / October, October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate their understanding of plot development. ● Exploration of the development of characters and key themes. ● Use the thematic concerns of the text to discuss current issues. ● Begin to identify linguistic conventions used by a writer to create imagery. ● Use the text as a stimulus for their own writing, 	<p>Assessment 3: Analytical paragraphs about character and theme.</p>
4	<p>An Introduction to Poetry through Nature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Read a diverse selection of poetry from the literary canon to modern texts ● Begin to understand how to identify rhyme, rhythm and other aural effects in poetry. ● Understand poetry as a distinct form, including the importance of line endings and extended figurative devices. ● Writing their own poetry and analysing the effects of their choices as a writer. 	<p>Assessment 4: Students write their own poem and an analysis of the choices they have made as a writer</p>
5	<p>Your Planet Needs You</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Building on the knowledge of natural themes from earlier units ● Students read models of excellent non-fiction writing and create their own ● Persuasive and rhetorical techniques are studied in detail ● Students gain the ability to speak and write fluently about a core cultural issue 	<p>Assessment 5: Students write to persuade the reader on an environmental issue.</p>
6	<p>A Midsummer Night’s Dream</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explore Shakespeare’s life and the context of the play. ● Understand key symbols used throughout the play ● Students will understand the specific form of a play by focusing on key dramatic devices ● Learn to explore the devices used by Shakespeare through close textual analysis of key extracts. 	<p>Assessment 6: Analysis of an extract from the play</p> <p>Assessment 7: Year 7 Exam</p>

Curriculum Plan: Year 8

Term	Curriculum Foci Areas	Assessment Criteria
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1	<p>Great Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students apply their knowledge of characterisation, setting and structure taught in Year 7. ● Analyse fiction's relationship with its contexts ● Identify and analyse important vocabulary choices with independence, successfully identifying word classes. ● Analyse how writers use figurative language to describe settings, characters and emotions, analysing metaphors and extended metaphors with multiple meanings. ● Meet and evaluate a range of unfamiliar vocabulary and its suitability 	<p>Assessment 1: Reading - Reading - How does Dickens present Pip's thoughts and feelings about the characters he encounters and the experiences he has?</p>
2	<p>Crime and Non-Fiction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Builds upon skills and knowledge about creative writing taught in Year 7 ● Develop understanding of rhetorical devices and gain awareness of the conventions of editorials ● Develop ability to compare and contrast texts and ideas ● Create a clear, coherent piece of non-fiction writing within established forms. ● Learn how structure can intrigue and interest a reader, using focus shifts and other methods. ● Conduct research into a variety of viewpoints on an issue, synthesising that effectively into non-fiction writing. 	<p>Assessment 2: Writing - Writing - Write an editorial for a newspaper exploring an aspect of crime from the last 200 years.</p>
3	<p>Poetry of the First World War</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reviewing Year 7 skills and key techniques associated with poetry ● Study a collection of First World War poems comparing their styles and approaches. ● Develop an understanding of poems' perspectives and their meaning, including how meanings can be shaped by the context of the poem. ● Compare poems' perspectives, using context to explain similarities and differences. ● Analysing how a particular choice of form (e.g. sonnet) may enhance the poem's meaning. ● Analysing shifts in tone and form in poems as they progress, and the relationship between these moments, beginnings and endings. 	<p>Assessment 3: Reading - Reading - Compare and contrast the presentation of conflict in two given poems</p>
4	<p>Gothic Literature: Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students apply their knowledge of the Gothic from last term, to craft their own Gothic tales. ● Characterisation and the control of atmosphere are key new skills which extend students beyond their Y7 work ● Writing within the conventions of a genre offers a new way to express creativity ● Students revise all of the key skills from their Y7 creative writing 	<p>Assessment 4: Writing - Writing - opening of a Gothic tale</p>

5	<p>Drama: Noughts and Crosses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students revise their knowledge of dramatic conventions from Y7 and apply them to a very different, modern production Students consider the Gothic elements of this drama, building on their learning in terms three and four Students begin to understand thematic and structural features. 	<p>Assessment 4: Reading and Speaking and Listening - Analysing the presentation of a character throughout the play</p>
6	<p>Futuristic Fiction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generic study, exploring the conventions of dystopian texts Considering different types of futuristic fiction including technological, environmental and political Introduction to the idea of character archetypes Introduction to the idea of literature as social commentary Students create their own dystopian fiction, using key conventions and archetypes, aiming for social comment Introduction to structural techniques for writing 	<p>Assessment 5: Writing - Creative writing narrative / description</p> <p>Assessment 6: Year 8 Exam</p>

Curriculum Plan: Year 9

Term	Curriculum Foci Areas	Assessment Criteria
1	<p>Lord of the Flies / Animal Farm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn about novels which are not just character driven but has a clearly defined ideological framework Understand the conscious purpose of authors in commenting on their social and cultural contexts Understand that novels and stories may be received by different audiences in different ways, including at different time periods Analyse how themes and ideas are communicated in a novel through the use of characters, events and symbolism. Analyse how the conclusion and resolution of a story or novel can help to clarify a writer's perspective on key themes and characters and create cohesion. Analyse how the beginning and ending of a story or novel work together, exploring the techniques (foreshadowing, cyclical structures etc) used in both moments. 	<p>Assessment 1: Reading - How does Golding present ideas about human nature in Lord of the Flies? Or How does Orwell use the character of Old Major to highlight ideas about inequality in Animal Farm?</p>
2	<p>Rights and Rhetoric: Language to Change the World</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are introduced to different elements of rhetoric: ethos, pathos and logos Students consider the appropriate tone, emotive content etc for different types of writing. A wide range of excellent speeches on social issues provide models for students' own writing Specific language devices such as inclusive pronouns, anaphora, imperatives and modal verbs are analysed and practised. Drawing connections between rhetoric and literary social commentary 	<p>Assessment 2: Writing - Students write and deliver a speech on a topic of their choice, intending to improve the world.</p>

3	<p>Small Island</p> <p>Combining knowledge of dramatic conventions and social commentary to study an emerging classic</p> <p>Understand the ways playwrights use characters as vehicles for communicating ideologies and perspectives</p> <p>Understand that plays may be received by different audiences in different ways, including at different time periods</p> <p>Understand the use of space and exits and entrances on the stage</p> <p>Analysing how dialogue between characters is used to affect the audience's perceptions</p>	<p>Assessment 3: Reading -</p> <p>How does Andrea Levy present the relationship between Hortense and Gilbert in <i>Small Island</i>?</p>
4	<p>Poetry of Identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students apply their knowledge of poetry to begin to respond independently to a range of poetic texts. • Explicit strategies for successful independent analysis are taught throughout the term, including a focus on semantic fields • Analyse a range of poetic endings, reflecting on different purposes and tones at the ends of poems. • Analyse how poets can break and subvert metrical and formal rules and the relationship between this choice and meaning. • Analysing the interplay between sound and rhythm: euphony, cacophony and caesura. • Analysing how writers create patterns, shifts and juxtapositions in their poetry through discussion of word choices. 	<p>Assessment 4: Reading -</p> <p>Comparison of how poets present ideas about a chosen topic.</p>
5+6	<p>Romeo and Juliet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students revise their knowledge of drama from Y7 (especially the function of the Shakespearean theatre) and term 4. • The dramatic form of tragedy is introduced, and students learn its conventions. • Shakespeare's use of sonnet form is linked to their work in term three, allowing students to apply this knowledge in a new context. • Applying knowledge of themes and analysing thematic concerns 	<p>Assessment 5:</p> <p>Analysing the development of a character through the play</p> <p>Assessment 6: Year 9 Exam</p>

Curriculum Plan: Year 10

Exam Board: AQA

Specification: Language 8700 and Literature 8702

Term	Curriculum Foci	Areas Assessment Criteria
1	<p>Poetry Cluster and Explorations in The World of Fiction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word-level analysis and figurative language a focus on pattern, detail, juxtaposition and engaging with multiple meanings • Structure, avoiding narrative retelling and including references to help discuss key structural moments and how parts of the text work together and how a reader's journey alters over time in the text • Succinct and effective thesis statements • A focus on selecting the 'very best' evidence from the text to analyse, with a focus on figurative language, applying concepts and knowledge from the wider world e.g. family, love, trauma to the texts to help build a critical argument • Study of anthology poetry cluster 	<p>Assessment 1: Reading -</p> <p>Section A of AQA English Language Paper 1</p>

2	<p>19th Century Text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students learn how to write an essay based on an extract. ● They widen the response to the text as a whole. ● They learn how to plan quickly and effectively. ● Evaluate the relationship between the writers' intention and how the text was received. ● Trace development of theme, character, plot across the novella. ● Consider contextual influences upon the text / writer. 	<p>Assessment 2: Literature - Read the following extract from <i>Stave One</i> and then answer the question that follows. At this point in the novel, two charity collectors have just entered Scrooge's office to ask him for a donation at Christmas.</p>
3	<p>Exploration In Creative Writing and Poetry Cluster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communicate ideas convincingly and with purpose. ● Use a tone, style, and register that suit the audience and task. ● Employ ambitious vocabulary and carefully crafted language devices for effect. ● Structure narrative and descriptive writing with variety and creativity. ● Develop complex, engaging ideas throughout. ● Ensure paragraphs flow fluently, using seamless discourse markers. ● Study of anthology poetry cluster. 	<p>Assessment 3: Writing - Write a description of the natural world inspired by an image</p>
4	<p>Shakespeare and Poetry Clusters Students read and study Shakespeare's <i>Macbeth</i>. They:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learn about and recognise the importance of the context of the 1600s. ● Explore Shakespeare's language. ● Note how meaning is shaped through Shakespeare's use of characterisation; setting and structure. ● Use quotations and textual references to showcase understanding and learn how to plan quickly and effectively. 	<p>Assessment 4: Macbeth exam question</p>
5	<p>Poetry Cluster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recognise the context of the texts and how that aids meaning. ● Note the devices used by the writer and the effect these have on the reader and analyse the language within the text. ● Use quotations and textual references to showcase understanding. 	
6	<p>Unseen Poetry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Revising knowledge about poetic form and techniques ● Analyse a range of unseen poems applying knowledge and skills already gained through anthology study ● Compare unseen poems by thematic links 	<p>Assessment 5 and 6: Year 10 Exams Language Paper 1 Literature Paper 1</p>

Curriculum Plan: Year 11

Exam Board: AQA: Specification: Language 8700 and Literature 8702

Term	Curriculum Foci Areas	Assessment Criteria
1	<p>Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives (Reading and Writing) Students gain full understanding of how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas; select and synthesise evidence from different texts. ● Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views. ● Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts. ● Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references. ● Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences. ● Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts. ● Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation. 	<p>Assessment 1: Writing - Non fiction perspective writing.</p>
2	<p>Recall and Revision and Exams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students embark on recall and revision sessions in preparation for Literature and Language mock exams ● Focus on Anthology Poetry and Unseen Poetry <p>Modern Text: An Inspector Calls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding the plot and characterisation in An Inspector Calls ● Exploring the thematic concerns and social context of An Inspector Calls ● Analysing language and dramatic techniques in An Inspector Calls ● Evaluating the playwright's use of dramatic devices and their impact 	<p>Assessment 2 and 3: Mocks - Language Paper 2 Literature Paper 2 (Poetry)</p>
3		<p>Assessment 4: Reading - An Inspector Calls exam question</p>

4	<p>Recall and Revision and Exams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students continue to embark on recall and revision sessions in preparation for Literature and Language success: Including purple pen responses to mock exams, poetry, <i>A Christmas Carol</i>, <i>Macbeth</i> and language paper two 	<p>Assessment 4: Mock Exams 2: Paper 1 Language Paper 1 Literature Paper 1</p>
5	<p>Recall and Revision and Exams (Cont.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students embark on recall and revision sessions in preparation for Literature and Language success. Teachers will begin to assess the needs of individual classes and students in order to focus on the most important areas of need. 	<p>GCSE Exams</p>

Final Assessment Structure: English Language

Component	Weighting	Content	Date of Final Examination
Paper 1 1 hour 45	50%	<p>Exam</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An exploration in creative reading and writing Reading and Writing 	May/June of Year 11
Paper 2 1 hour 45	50%	<p>Exam</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writers' viewpoints and perspectives Reading and Writing 	May/June of Year 11

Please see exam board websites for up to date information:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-8700/specification>

English Literature

Component	Weighting	Content	Date of Final Examination
Paper 1 1 hour 45	40%	Exam <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shakespeare - Macbeth ● 19thCentury Text - A Christmas Carol (Charles Dickens) 	May/June of Year 11
Paper 2 2 hours 15	60%	Exam <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Modern Prose - An Inspector Calls ● Unseen Poetry ● Poetry Anthology - Power and Conflict 	May/June of Year 11

Please see exam board websites for up to date information:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-8702/specification>