

Subject Curriculum Overview - English

Why is English important?

The English department's motto is 'Life through Literature and Language for Life'. As such, our intent is that students should be provided with the tools and skills to be able to communicate their views effectively and make inferences about the world around them. We want them to not only understand others' experiences and lives, but also be able to positively manipulate opinions.

Key areas for students to become effective communicators and show empathy towards others are:

- gaining an understanding of other cultures and diversity in society;
- utilising personal experiences to express opinions and influence others;
- bringing cultural capital to our students – opening up worlds of experience through love of literature and allowing students to be able to participate in these worlds;
- providing the skills to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing;
- promoting personal learning independence through a range of activities beyond the classroom.

There are a wealth of careers available to students once they have completed their studies in English. The majority of employers will look at GCSE results to evaluate how well an employee can produce both written work and give presentations to colleagues. Post university level, careers can include jobs in: Media and Journalism; Publishing; Teaching; Advertising and PR work; Law; Speech Therapy; Business.

Summary of the Department

The staff of the English Department at Workington Academy are all English specialists, with a diverse range of skills and personal interests. As you will see on the staff list below, many of the dept hold additional responsibilities within the school, which is testimony to how proud we are of our school community.

We are all incredibly passionate about our subject, and want to share our drive for success with all students.

Our suite of classrooms is all based on the first floor of the school. We are also incredibly lucky to have a dedicated Teacher of Reading and a well-stocked Learning Resource Centre. We have membership to Accelerated Reader for Key Stage 3 students, and a bank of laptops are available for students to use for AR quizzing or research tasks if they do not have access to their own personal device.

Staff name	Staff code	Roles and Responsibility
H Calvert	HCA	KS3 Co-ordinator for English
J Flanagan	JFL	Teacher of English
D Foley	DFO	Teacher of English
E Headley	EHE	Director of Literacy
E Jary	EJA	Teacher of English
J Kearton	JKE	Teacher of English
S Lee	SLE	DDoL for Year 7
N McGregor	NMC	Teacher of Reading
J McTaggart	JMT	DDoL for Years 10 + 11
R O'Hagan	ROH	Deputy Headteacher
A Savage	ASA	Teacher of English
K.Sheckley	KSH	Curriculum Leader for English
T Thompson	TTH	DoL for Years 8 + 9
A Williamson	AWI	DDoL for Years 8 + 9

Key Stage 3

In each Year, students will study 3 key units. Each unit is based around a 'spine' text (prose or a play) with supporting extracts and additional material introduced to develop analytical skills and wider appreciation of literature.

Year 7

- **War and Conflict** – Students will study a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts, starting to develop the skills that will allow them to critically evaluate writers' methods. Students will complete creative and descriptive writing tasks to encourage accurate, fluent and effective written communication and build writing stamina. Spoken Language skills will be developed through the use of regular whole-class discussions, debates and presentation opportunities.
- **Man, Myth and Magic** – This unit will provide the foundation for studying Shakespeare; it will focus on breaking down the barriers of Shakespearean language, creating and building confidence for future years. Alongside this, students will begin to develop their writing skills by producing their own dramatic monologues to complement their study of the themes of the play.
- **Medieval Literature** - This unit will provide students with a foundation of knowledge of the history of literature and language. Students will begin to consider the influence of contextual factors on literature, and literature's purpose in society at the time. This will give students the opportunity to practise extended reading responses to literature texts, building up to the ability to write an essay response.

Year 8

- **Equality and Dreams** – In this unit of work students will address the use of bias in writing and the implied audience. Texts will be examined through the literary lenses of Marxism and Feminism, allowing students to develop different ways to 'read' a text. It will address the skills of writing and analysing a range of different viewpoints across time and how different viewpoints can be compared.
- **Elizabethan and Jacobean Literature** – During this unit students will study the play 'Twelfth Night' and a choice of sonnets. Through their study of a range of thematically-linked texts, they will develop their critical evaluation skills, exploring a writer's intentions in more depth. Students will enhance their creative and descriptive writing skills through the use of higher-level vocabulary and grammatical features. For Spoken Language skills, students will progress to leading and initiating discussions and debates.
- **Short Stories** – This unit will introduce students to the short story genre; students will be developing their appreciation of how writers can craft language to create character, setting and tone within the confines of a shorter piece of prose. Students will have time to focus on building their own creative writing skills, using short stories they have studied as style models to practise creating different writing styles, narrative perspectives and voices.

Year 9

- **Gothic genre** – This unit will solidify strong inference skills, and students will confidently refer to textual evidence when analysing a range of fictional texts, including short stories and poetry. Students understand how language (including figurative language), vocabulary choices, grammar, text structure and organisational features present meaning. A range of poetic conventions are also going to be explored within this unit. Creative writing will be shaped to meet the conventions of the genre, and students will employ a sophisticated approach to any written work.
- **Society and Class** - This unit of work will provide students with a greater awareness of cultural diversity and universal issues that are having an impact on today's society. Through the use of a variety of inspirational and aspirational texts, students will reflect on how social attitudes have altered over time, and how to be a discriminating reader in today's society.
- **Victorian Literature** - In this unit, students' prior application of historical context and conventions of genre will be developed. Students will be introduced to Victorian depictions of poverty, morality and crime, scientific discovery and the impact of the Industrial Revolution. This provides a foundation of contextual awareness to help students to approach nineteenth century non-fiction at KS4. Students will continue to

develop their ability to analyse writers' choices and methods, as well as using their understanding of literary and genre conventions alongside historical context to inform their interpretation of a literary text.

In each unit of study, students will complete a range of formative tasks approximately once every three weeks. These will be assessed using progress grids to identify next steps for each student. At the end of each unit there is a summative assessment for Reading and Writing skills to identify student progression over the term.

Throughout Key Stage 3, one lesson of English each week will be dedicated to improving and enriching pupils' reading. During these 'Reading for Pleasure' lessons, students will develop their reading skills through discussions based on the VIPERS questions. Students will also have the opportunity to read a book they have selected themselves. They will either be following the Accelerated Reader programme or Workington Academy's 'Reading Challenge.' Some pupils will also have the opportunity to take part in small group reading intervention programmes. .

Whilst students are put into classes based on their reading and writing abilities, these sets are very fluid, with classes reviewed at the end of each term. Due to timetabling, these sets are the same for English, History, Geography and MFL.

Key Stage 4

For the majority of students, we offer GCSEs for English Language and English Literature. These are both with AQA. For any students who are performing below GCSE expectations, we offer the Entry Level Certificate of 'Step Up to English' with AQA.

Due to the skills for English Language and English Literature being transferable between both courses, the two subjects are taught in parallel throughout KS4.

English Language

Language Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing engages students in a creative text and inspires them to write creatively themselves. Section A (Reading) – students consider how established writers use narrative and descriptive techniques to capture the interest of readers. Section B (Writing) – students create their own text inspired by the topic that they have responded to in section A to demonstrate their narrative and descriptive skills in response to a written prompt, scenario or visual image.

Language Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives develops students' insights into how writers have particular viewpoints and perspectives on issues or themes that are important to the way we think and live our lives. Section A (Reading) – students analyse two linked non-fiction sources from different time periods and genres in order to consider how each presents a perspective or viewpoint to influence the reader. Section B (Writing) - students produce a text to a specified audience, purpose and form in which they give their own perspective on the theme that has been introduced to them in section A.

Spoken Language: This is the NEA (Non-Examination Assessed) element of the course. The aim of the assessment is to allow students to demonstrate their speaking and listening skills by giving a formal presentation using Standard English and responding to questions and feedback. Students may talk about any topic they wish, and their presentation should last no longer than 10 minutes. Students may use pre-prepared notes, PowerPoints etc. to assist them during their presentations but this is not a requirement.

English Literature

Macbeth: Shakespeare has always been a compulsory element of English Literature. His plays cover universal ideas and offer insights into the human condition. Building on the themes covered in the poetry from the autumn term, *Macbeth* explores human ambition and conflict of conscience. In the exam, students must produce an essay on a prescribed topic, starting with the analysis of an extract from the text before discussing the whole text.

A Christmas Carol: Dickens' novel of redemption and social equality allows students to explore life in 19th century Britain. A text many will already be familiar with, students will explore the characters and themes

presented through analysis of writer's methods and the context in which the novella was written. In the exam, as with the Shakespeare question, students will respond to a specific question and extract as a starting point for their analysis of the whole text.

Blood Brothers: Set in 1980s Liverpool, Russell's musical explores themes such as the class divide, friendship and education. Chosen to cover the 'Modern Text' element of the Literature course, the use of songs not only provides students with an engaging writer's method to explore, but also helps when memorising quotations! Students work towards responding to an essay question on either a specific character or theme in the exam.

Power and Conflict Poetry: Students will study a bank of 15 poems written between 1789 and the present day. Writers will range from those viewed as part of the classical literary canon, such as Wordsworth, to modern writers like Dharker. The poems will draw on a range of personal and imagined experiences, including those of writers from other cultures. For the exam, students will be expected to compare two of these poems: one will be named and printed in the exam, while the other is chosen by the student based on links made from the question topic.

By Christmas of Year 11, all elements of both GCSEs have been covered. Students will have completed trial exams in November, allowing their class teacher to identify which key skills students need to revisit and revise further. Where possible, teachers will look for opportunities to widen students' cultural experiences through theatre visits, use of 'virtual learning' environments, 'live' theatre and film productions of texts and extracts from a wide variety of literature. Recall and retention activities will aid to embed key subject terminology and aspects of the Literature texts students must remember for the exams, such as key quotations and narrative structure.

Throughout delivery of the course, teachers will use a range of methods to promote learning, including targeted questioning; hot and cold writing tasks; baseline assessments; practice papers and end of unit assessments.

Students will be encouraged to use subject specific vocabulary and sophisticated language in their responses, developing appropriate use of vocabulary to target a specified audience and provide clarity of thought.

Feedback will be provided through whole-class marking, individual student/teacher discussions, guided self-assessment and (once appropriate) peer assessment. Students will complete exam style assessments at the end of each unit along with trial exams at whole school level.

Students are grouped by key areas of strength and areas for development in their English skills. This means that while students are initially set by ability, these classes are reviewed each term following completion of assessments.

Key Stage 5

At Key Stage 5 we offer 2 full A Levels with AQA: English Language and English Literature B. We also offer students the opportunity to re-sit GCSE English Language.

For both A-Levels, students will be taught by 2 teachers in a 3:2 lesson split. Students will be entered for exams at the end of Year 12 for the AS qualification. This will not only act as a gauge for final results at the end of Year 13, but stands as a separate qualification if students decide not to continue with their English A-Level into Year 13.

English Language

AS level

Paper 1 – Language and the Individual

Students study a wide variety of texts, looking at various subjects, writers, audiences and genres. They explore methods of language analysis, how identity is constructed and how audiences are positioned. The exam is 1

hour 30 minutes long and worth 50% of the AS level. Students analyse two texts as individual sources, then compare the two as they are linked by either topic or theme.

Paper 2 – Language Varieties

Students study a range of examples of language in use and research data to put language into context. The exam is 1 hour 30 minutes long and worth 50% of the AS level. Students must complete one of two discursive essays on language diversity and one writing task on attitudes to language.

A-level

Paper 1 – Language, the Individual and Society

This exam builds on Paper 1 studies at AS; in addition to the work previously studied, students will also examine how children develop their spoken and written skills. The exam is 2 hours 30 minutes long and is worth 40% of the A-level. Students analyse two texts individually and then compare them, plus produce a discursive essay on Children's language development.

Paper 2 – Language Diversity and Change

There are two sections to this exam: Section A focusses on language diversity and change, while Section B looks at language discourses. For Section A, students have a choice of two questions, one on each topic. In Section B, students must analyse two texts that are linked to the study of diversity and change, then complete a writing task linked to the same topic. The exam last 2 hours 30 minutes and is worth 40% of the A-level.

Non-exam assessment (NEA coursework)

In addition to the two exams, at A-level students are expected to complete coursework. This consists of a language investigation on a topic of their own choice (200 words long) and a piece of original writing with commentary (1500 words long). An example of a NEA folder may be an investigation into features of the Cumbrian dialect and a creative writing piece on local history.

English Literature B

AS level

For both papers, we focus on Aspects of Comedy within a selection of texts

Paper 1 – Literary genres: drama

Students study 'Twelfth Night' and 'The Importance of Being Earnest'. The exam is closed book and 1 hour 30 minutes long. The exam is worth 50% of the AS level. Students respond to one extract-based question for Shakespeare and one essay question for 'Earnest'.

Paper 2 – Literary genres: prose and poetry

Students study 'Small Island' and a selection of poems published as an anthology by the exam board. The exam is open book (meaning unannotated copies of the texts are allowed in the exam) and 1 hour 30 minutes long. The exam is worth 50% of the AS level. Students respond to one essay question on poetry and one on the novel.

A-level

Paper 1 – Literary genres – Aspects of Comedy

This exam builds on studies for AS; students will focus on three of the texts studied in Year 12. The exam is closed book and 2 hours 30 minutes long. The exam is worth 40% of the A-level. Students complete three essay responses; two are on 'Twelfth Night', while the third expects students to write about two other texts studied, linked by the question topic.

Paper 2 – Texts and Genres – Elements of Crime Writing

Students study 3 sets of texts for this unit: a novel, such as 'Atonement' or 'When Will There Be Good News'; 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner'; and a poetry anthology published by the exam board containing poems by Crabbe, Browning and Wilde. The exam last for 3 hours and is worth 40% of the A-Level. Students complete three essay responses: one question is analysing an unseen passage; one question looks at one of the set texts on its own; in the final question, students write about the other two texts studied, linked by the question topic.

Non-exam assessment (NEA coursework)

In addition to the two exams, at A-level students are expected to complete coursework. This consists of two essays of 1250-1500 words each. Students will study a Critical Anthology of literary theories, such as Marxism or Post-Colonialism, and then apply two of these theories to two texts (one prose and one set of poetry)

chosen by the students themselves. An example of a coursework folder would be applying Marxism to Philip Larkin's poetry and Feminism to 'The Yellow Wallpaper' by Charlotte Perkins Gilman.

Outside the classroom

As part of English, we are keen to offer students as many extra-curricular opportunities as possible to widen their understanding of 'cultural capital'. As such, we have offered:

- Theatre trips for Key Stage 3 and 4.
 - Screenings of 'live' RSC and National Theatre performances.
 - Entries to national writing competitions, with a number of students having their work published.
 - Key Stage 5 residential trip to London.
 - Guest speakers, both in lessons and to whole year groups, talking about their personal experiences; for example, a soldier who served in Iraq.
 - Departmental competitions, such as designing the English reward postcard.
 - 'Virtual' tours of historical sites such as Auschwitz.
 - Bookbuzz, where students in Year 7 all receive a free book of their choice.
 - In school events and activities for World Book Day.
 - For older students, involvement in Key Stage 2 transition events, such as Year 6 Shakespeare Day.
-