

english language

A Level Preparation Pack



Overview

Everyone has studied English Language but it is so much more engaging and interesting at A-level. Language is everywhere, from literary texts to tweets, stand-up comedy to shopping lists. And the language we use reveals aspects of ourselves and the society in which we live. The material below helps you to see how language embodies social attitudes to gender, sexuality, class and race, and also to think about attempts to challenge 'political incorrectness' usage.

We hope you enjoy exploring the material and look forward to welcoming you to the College.



Jon Thorpe
Head of English

Preparing for the Course

Getting Started: Language and Social Attitudes

- Think about what you understand about the term 'political correctness'. Try and write a definition in a couple of sentences, or find one.
- Try to list examples of someone's language use revealing a concern for political correctness.
- Try to list examples of someone's language use revealing a disregard for political correctness.
- Try to think of five examples of words or phrases that have been changed in the last twenty-five years as a result of social concerns. For example, the signs over the toll booths at the entrance to the Liverpool tunnel used to say **manned**, now they say **attended**.

Political Correctness on Television

1. Watch this interview from Live at the Apollo:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u8F62j-PWnE>
2. Choose five quotes which best reveal Caton's attitude towards political correctness in his stand-up routine.
3. Try to explain how these quotes help demonstrate Caton's attitude?
4. You might wish to see more examples of shows that present or challenge PC stereotypes
 - a. Friends: presentation of LGBTQ+ (Chandler's sexuality):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xcWYu18a-w>
 - b. Brooklyn 99: presentation of LGBTQ+ community (Holt):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=phm5kqlxUU4>
 - c. Parks and Recreation: presentation of strong female figures (Leslie Knope, April Ludgate, Donna Meagle):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iqsigl2A-nw>

Language and Class

The way we think about class shapes the language we use. Watch the debate on ITV's This Morning about baby names: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5b9mGp5uY9Q>

1. Try to summarise Katie Hopkins' attitude towards some children's names.
2. What stereotypical ideas do you think she has about class?
3. How do the presenters use language to challenge Hopkins' politically incorrect views?
4. Can you see any differences in the way the two hosts respond? Why do you think this could be the case?

Language and Gender

The way we think about gender shapes the language we use. The following exercises should help to bring this out.

- Look at the list of occupations below. Take a small survey, asking a range of people from different age groups and ask them what gender do they picture when they hear each occupation. Do your findings tell you anything interesting?
 - Surgeon
 - Nurse
 - Bus driver
 - Doctor
 - Plumber
 - Model
 - Sex worker
 - Dentist
- Click on the links to watch the clips for Barbie Princess castle and Power Rangers:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XWE2md3zNXw>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CbwHsKbl2HY>
 1. How is language used to address boys and girls?
 2. What do the adverts suggest about male and female roles?
 3. How is all of this conveyed through language?
 4. What do the adverts suggest about the way boys and girls are socialised?

Films are a great way to explore gender representation. For example, you could watch superhero films like Batman Returns, Wonderwoman, or, The Black Widow and look at the language that the male and characters use and the language used by others to or about them.

Course Specifications



[A Level - Download Eduqas English Language Specification](#)