



Curriculum Overview: English Year group 8

What your child will learn each half term

This overview shows the key topics, skills, and knowledge your child will be learning in **English** in **Year 8** across each year group. It helps families understand what's being taught, how it builds on previous learning, and how you can support your child at home.

- **What we are learning:** The topic or focus for the half term.
- **Key knowledge & skills:** What students should understand and be able to do.
- **How we assess learning:** knowledge checks, practical tasks, written responses and formal assessments.
- **Key words to know:** Vocabulary students will learn and use.

Half term	What we are learning	Key knowledge & skills	How we will assess learning in this unit	Homework	Key vocabulary for this unit
HT 1	War & Conflict Poetry	Students will explore conflict across a range of genres, including prose, poetry, and non-fiction. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand how propaganda is used to persuade, including attitudes to war over time and recognising bias.• Examine themes of patriotism and propaganda.• Develop the language of evaluation and analysis in written responses, including comparing themes and content of poems.• Build knowledge of persuasive techniques.• Use Stage Two analysis paragraphs to include writer's purpose and reader's response, and independently create word banks while exploring connotations of key quotations	Knowledge check on poetic devices, key vocabulary, literary conventions. Short written task on responses to poetry. Longer written task on poetic responses. Individual spoken language assessment.	1 x 60 minutes reading per week. 1 x writing, vocabulary, or knowledge recall task. To be completed in homework booklets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Propaganda• Bias• Perspective• Emphasis• Criticise• Context• Connotation• Conflict• Evaluate• Illustrate
HT 2	War & Conflict Comprehension Skills	Students will understand a range of non-fiction texts on war and conflict, including writers' intentions, ideas, viewpoints, and subtle/implicit meanings. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop reading and comprehension of non-fiction texts on war and conflict.• Understand writers' intentions, ideas, viewpoints, and subtle meanings.• Identify question types and use success criteria to answer them effectively.• Use strategies like skimming, scanning, and context clues.• Analyse language and sentence structures for effect.• Apply writing conventions, including punctuation, sentence variety, and cohesive devices.• Interpret and embed quotations, making inferences and drawing conclusions.• Write concise, focused responses considering writer intent and reader impact.• Engage in discussions using academic vocabulary, structured arguments, reasoning, and turn-taking.	Knowledge check on key vocabulary, connotations of language, and language devices. Short written task on reading comprehension skills. Longer written task on and extended range on reading comprehension skills. Individual spoken language assessment.	1 x 60 minutes reading per week. 1 x writing, vocabulary, or knowledge recall task. To be completed in homework booklets.	Inference, Demonstrates, Reflects, Impressions, Convey, Evaluate, Tabloid, Broadsheet, Connotations,

3 & 4	Animal Farm by George Orwell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand Orwell's life, times, and the historical context of the Russian Revolution. • Recognise <i>Animal Farm</i> as an allegory and explore its symbolism. • Identify recurring imagery and understand what it represents. • Track key themes such as corruption, control, conflict, and power. • Develop skills in rhetoric and persuasive writing. • Analyse character development and change, using comparative language. • Understand the novel as a form of protest, exploring Orwell's intentions. • Write Stage Two analysis paragraphs, incorporating writer's purpose, reader response, and key quotations, while independently exploring word connotations. 	<p>Formal assessment on knowledge and skills from the year so far.</p> <p>Knowledge checks on characters, events, and writer's techniques.</p> <p>Formal paired spoken language persuasive speech assessment.</p> <p>Shorter and longer reading responses on characters and themes.</p>	<p>1 x 60 minutes reading per week.</p> <p>1 x writing, vocabulary, or knowledge recall task.</p> <p>To be completed in homework booklets.</p>	<p>Propaganda</p> <p>Manipulation</p> <p>Rebellion</p> <p>Exploitation</p> <p>Consequences</p> <p>Explicit</p> <p>Implicit</p> <p>Authority</p> <p>Conform</p> <p>Represent</p>
5	Introduction to Gothic Creative Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how writers capture and hold the reader's attention. • Create vivid and convincing settings that bring scenes to life. • Develop atmosphere using detailed sensory descriptions, imagery, and techniques like personification and pathetic fallacy; begin experimenting with extended metaphors and tone. • Analyse how language, structure, and writing techniques build drama and tension. • Explore a range of extracts to study how authors craft their work and apply these techniques in their own writing. • Make connections between texts and the time or context in which they were written. • Identify and explain how writers use techniques and conventions to create meaning and effect. • Build and use a personal word bank to help understand and analyse key quotations. • Adapt tone and vocabulary to suit different audiences and purposes. 	<p>Knowledge checks on key vocabulary, and writer's techniques.</p> <p>Formal group spoken language presentation.</p> <p>Shorter and longer reading responses on gothic conventions.</p> <p>Written creative writing responses.</p>	<p>1 x 60 minutes reading per week.</p> <p>1 x writing, vocabulary, or knowledge recall task.</p> <p>To be completed in homework booklets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspense Predominant Gothic Significance Associate Narrator Personification Atmosphere Foreshadowing Hyperbole

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use figurative techniques to shape tone and mood. • Write clearly and cohesively, using well-structured paragraphs and transitions to organise ideas effectively. 			
6	Romeo & Juliet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the Elizabethan context and how it influenced Shakespeare's writing. • Know the conventions of a tragedy, including how violence and destruction lead to a character's downfall. • Recognise the purpose of the prologue, including how it foreshadows events. • Explore different types of conflict, such as physical, emotional, loyalty-based, and issues like arranged marriage. • Track character development and how characters change throughout the play. • Track the development of key themes across the play. • Build on prior Shakespeare knowledge from Year 7 (<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>). • Extend understanding of Elizabethan/Jacobean life, including ideas like the Great Chain of Being, patriarchy, and concepts of fate and destiny. • Connect themes to previous studies of texts like <i>Trash</i>, <i>Animal Farm</i>, and war poetry, exploring conflict as an external force, an internal struggle, and within families. • Analyse Shakespeare's use of language and structure to create dramatic effect, considering both the writer's intentions and audience response. • Explore subtle and implicit meanings, reading between the lines to understand deeper ideas. • Write Stage Two analysis paragraphs, incorporating writer's purpose, audience response, and independent word banks to explore quotations and connotations 	<p>Formal assessment on knowledge and skills from the year.</p> <p>Knowledge checks on characters, events, and writer's techniques.</p> <p>Shorter and longer reading responses on characters and themes.</p>	<p>1 x 60 minutes reading per week.</p> <p>1 x writing, vocabulary, or knowledge recall task.</p> <p>To be completed in homework booklets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prologue • Grudge • Tragedy • Iambic Pentameter • Foreshadowing • Soliloquy • Dramatic Irony • Conflict • Fate • Patriarchy • Sonnet