



ST GEORGE'S SCHOOL
A CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

ENGLISH CURRICULUM

ENGLISH CURRICULUM PHILOSOPHY

Within the English Department, the curriculum has been coherently planned and sequenced around our philosophy that all pupils must leave St George's with the confidence and ability to communicate effectively in a variety of situations in order to excel in the modern world for future learning and employment. We believe that it is fundamental that pupils gain an understanding of both cultural capital, and responsibilities in an ever-changing society, supporting them to be resilient and independent in order to develop strength of character.

Our curriculum therefore not only promotes a love of English, but also nurtures a deeper understanding of how English operates in the world around us. Our curriculum aims to instil a genuine love of literature enabling all pupils to respond to texts personally, developing an appreciation and respect of the written and spoken word, and differences in the world and its people. Through a stringent focus on vocabulary, pupils gain access into worlds and thoughts that may have previously been prohibited to them, allowing them to articulate and express themselves in a thoughtful manner. They will learn how to discuss and debate issues and ideas in a considered way, showing respect whilst communicating their perspective.

In the St George's English department, we hold reading and reading fluency in the highest esteem and seek to cultivate both proficiency, and an enjoyment of reading in our pupils. Through their immersion into a breadth of world-renowned, culturally rich literature, we aim to deepen pupils' understanding of the writer's craft, their intent and their methodology, allowing them to both appreciate and emulate these works in their own writing, ultimately developing their own individual voice. Alongside this, here at St George's, we want our pupils to have an awareness of the extent of the variety of books on offer to them – from the classic to the modern. This is why we place great significance onto reading for pleasure, enjoying a variety of authors, genres and styles to pique their interest.

In order to achieve a true understanding of English, topics have been intelligently sequenced based on the following rationale:

- We pride ourselves on delivering an interconnected, sequenced web of learning that interleaves reading, writing, and oracy to develop a deep, thorough understanding of language and communication, and its place in the wider curriculum. Our key stages are interlocked precisely to build on prior learning from previous key stages, and seamlessly transport pupils through each stage towards their career goals. Our knowledge and skills-rich curriculum therefore ensures that pupils cover a full range of challenging texts – from Shakespeare, modern prose, non-fiction and rhetoric, to 19th texts.
- “Reading is essential for those who seek to rise above the ordinary” and through building fluency, nuanced understanding, and an appreciation of emotions and perspectives, we prepare our pupils in a way that encourages them to write and speak with substance, expression, and flair.. Through a rigorous focus on writers’ perspectives and purposes, pupils also develop a critical understanding of how meaning and impact are crafted in their own writing, giving them a perceptive understanding of their progress, to enhance metacognition and reflection skills, irrespective of ability. We believe in our curriculum, and we believe in our pupils. “Today a reader, tomorrow a leader.”
- Each academic year, pupils are introduced to high quality 'core texts' which build on the strong foundations of the previous year or Key Stage. Pupils will be gradually exposed further to the challenging world of English, ensuring mastery of the important knowledge and processes involved in their reading and writing. The sequencing of core texts involves the mastering of key concepts, time periods and writers including classical works, Shakespeare, Victorian literature and twentieth-century novels.
- Within each scheme of work, key knowledge is taught and re-visited on a regular basis. All schemes of work allow for key schema to be added to, allowing the English department to carefully select new knowledge to teach based on the changing needs of the pupils each time they re-visit an area of a key concept or knowledge.
- Texts have been selected and sequenced to increasingly develop in levels of challenge
- The curriculum has been sequenced to build on existing knowledge and skills, and to develop incrementally, over time, ensuring that pupils develop a robust understanding of core concepts and knowledge
- Key concepts and themes are encountered and revisited to create curriculum coherence

The English curriculum will address social disadvantage by addressing gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills:

- The English curriculum places considerable focus on the explicit teaching of vocabulary and wider language development to close the word gap which often forms as a result of social disadvantage
- We aim to address social disadvantage by studying a wide range of culturally rich texts from varied genres, eras and cultures. By placing significant focus on cultural literacy, we aim to address gaps that may have formed due to social disadvantage
- Throughout the curriculum, pupils will read and immerse themselves in large amounts of texts, especially whole texts, meaning that all pupils will leave St George's having read a myriad of literature to close the reading gap.
- By providing smaller classes for the lowest ability learners, and those who are new to English, the department aims to close gaps in the pre-requisite knowledge pupils require swiftly and responsively in order for pupils to access the wider curriculum.

We fully believe English can contribute to the personal development of pupils at St George's:

- The study of English is fundamental in a pupil's ability to consider what it means to be human. Through their exploration of human behaviour and the human condition, pupils develop a personal response and understanding of both themselves and the world they live in. In the safety of the classroom, pupils will discuss and analyse many sensitive subjects, whilst learning how to articulate themselves compassionately and empathise with their peers. This direct engagement with diverse literary perspectives and complex moral dilemmas builds emotional intelligence, personal resilience, and social awareness, explicitly supporting our students' character development.
- Pupils will read a wide range of texts from both fiction and non-fiction, in varied forms. Through the exploration of these forms and the methods employed by a writer to communicate their thoughts and feelings, pupils will be taught to think and write in a critical manner and tailor their writing accordingly. This deep textual analysis links directly to critical thinking and decision-making, training pupils to look past surface meanings, evaluate subtext, detect bias, and form independent, evidence-based conclusions.
- The English curriculum exposes pupils to a carefully selected and sequenced range of texts, which develop in challenge incrementally. It is our aim for pupils to master the ability to converse with confidence in academic scenarios. By providing opportunities for all pupils to appreciate a very broad variety of texts written in a very broad variety of contexts with situated purposes, we intend to increase the cultural capital of all pupils allowing them to access concepts and moral standpoints at least as well as their more advantaged peers. The texts and topics have been deliberately chosen to educate pupils on both the past and present of British society, and other cultures, preparing pupils for a life in modern Britain with their understanding of democracy, rules of law and liberty. This focus on equity, shared humanity, and moral reflection naturally links to our core Christian values, ensuring every individual is uniquely valued in an environment of inclusivity and mutual respect.

Through all key stages, our belief is that exam preparation, practice and home learning revision should be interleaved with revisited powerful knowledge that has been modelled and taught in lessons. This knowledge is recalled and applied through a range of tasks, from low-stakes quizzing to extended practice.

Opportunities are built in to make links to the world of work to enhance the careers, advice and guidance that pupils are exposed to:

- The curriculum will focus on both written and verbal forms of communication, enhancing pupils' capacity to communicate clearly whilst effectively listening and responding to others. Students are exposed to a breadth of literature from a wide range of genres, eras, authors and backgrounds. Through this, pupils are exposed to writer's choices, conscious crafting and structuring of descriptions and narratives – encouraging them to emulate and write in the style of an author. As well as this, drafting and proofreading their work is a skill which is practised and developed as they progress through the curriculum, showing them the importance of refinement and sophisticated professional impressions. These standards map directly to essential employability skills, including precise written communication, information synthesis, and the confident verbal articulation required for workplace collaboration.
- The mastery of these skills prepares students for specific education routes and courses. Ready for Key Stage 5, our carefully selected content provides the foundation for A-Levels in English Literature, English Language, Creative Writing, and Media Studies. In higher education, it opens up degree pathways in English, Law, Journalism, Linguistics, and Corporate Communications, alongside vocational routes such as T-Levels in Media, Broadcast and Production or professional marketing apprenticeships.
- The exploration of human behaviour is a key concept revisited throughout our key stages. Examining theorists such as Sigmund Freud, John Locke and Simone de Beauvoir give pupils insight into the human psyche, allowing them to explore their interests in professions linked to sociology, psychology and politics. In addition to the exploration of human behaviour, pupils will explore the evolution of social constructs and an individual's role within society. This allows them to develop the empathy and compassion needed for future careers and roles within healthcare, public services, social work and charity, as well as professional sectors such as publishing, copy editing, public relations, law, and digital content creation.

A true love of English involves learning about various cultural domains. We teach beyond the specification requirements, but do ensure pupils are well prepared to be successful in GCSE examinations:

- We believe that learning should be both appreciated and retained for future use, therefore our pupils are taught revision skills built into all our topics – both linked to their whole school knowledge organisers, and bespoke tasks within each scheme of learning. Our focused, expertly tailored booklet learning also ensures that pupils have access to all the content and skills needed to progress along their academic journeys successfully.
- Students explore: how characters in Shakespeare’s ‘Macbeth’ grapple for power, and succumb to their hamartia; how Scrooge transforms and redeems himself in Dickens’ ‘A Christmas Carol’; how school boys regress into lawless savages, subverting the very essence of humanity in Golding’s ‘Lord of the Flies’. Pupils examine these texts alongside the Power and Conflict poetry cluster, as well as learning how to approach unseen poems, before delving into English careers and spoken language study. Students also experience a theatre production of Macbeth in school to bring their studies to life, and appreciate the cultural significance of the dramatic arts.
- In the final year, pupils are taught how to critique collections of fiction and non-fiction texts, uncovering a deeper understanding of writers’ viewpoints and perspectives, zooming into the writers’ creative craft and honing their own abilities to influence, intrigue and entertain. This curriculum for AQA English Language is intertwined with continued literature study, and reinforced by our weekly exam homework booklets which effectively strengthen skills needed for exam stamina and practised excellence.

CURRICULUM SEQUENCING

All children are entitled to a curriculum and to the powerful knowledge that will open doors and maximise their life chances. Below is a high-level overview of the critical knowledge children will learn in this particular subject, at each key stage from Year 7 through to Year 11, in order to equip pupils with the cultural capital they need to succeed in life. The curriculum is planned vertically and horizontally giving thought to the optimum knowledge sequence for building secure schema.

Year 7	Term 1	Origins of literature: Greek Mythology (Writing) Biblical allusion in literature through the work of C.S. Lewis (Writing)
	Term 2	English Mythology and Legend (Reading: Novel and Poetry Study) Shakespeare's Julius Caesar (Knowledge: Rhetoric and Tragedy)
	Term 3	A study of Dickensian London (Writing: Character and Setting) Poetry from other cultures (Reading: Poetry)
Year 8	Term 1	Animal Farm (Reading: Novel Study) Voices and Resilience: Identity, Inequality and Change (Oracy)
	Term 2	Gothic Literature: Edgar Allen Poe (Writing: Gothic) The World's Wife, poetry by former poet laureate Carol Ann Duffy (Reading: Poetry)
	Term 3	Inequality (Writing and Oracy: Rhetoric) Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet (Reading: Shakespeare)
Year 9	Term 1	J.B. Priestley's An Inspector Calls (Reading: Modern Play) 19 th Century Narrative Love Poetry (Writing: Poetry)
	Term 2	Phillip Pullman's Northern Lights (Writing: Confidante Focus)
	Term 3	Conflict Poetry (Reading: Poetry) Macbeth (Reading: Shakespeare)
Year 10	Term 1	Power and Conflict poetry (Literature Study: Comparison Focus) Golding's Lord of the Flies (Literature Study: Extract to Essay Focus)
	Term 2	Unseen Poetry and A Christmas Carol (Literature Study: Extract to Essay Focus) Macbeth and Unseen Poetry (Literature Study: Essay Focus)
	Term 3	Revision and unseen (Cumulative Literature Study and Recall) Spoken Language and Reading to Write (Oracy and Writing through Willy Russell's Blood Brothers)
Year 11	Term 1	Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing through Robert Cormier's <i>Heroes</i> Language Paper 2 – Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives: Writing
	Term 2	Language Paper 2 – Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives: Reading Language Paper 1 – Explorations in Creative Reading: Reading
	Term 3	Revision and closing the gaps