



English

Curriculum Philosophy

Within the English Department, the curriculum has been **coherently planned and sequenced** around our philosophy that all students 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 students 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 students 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**, students 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 students. Through their immersion into a breadth of **world-renowned, culturally rich literature**, we aim to deepen students' 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** students through each stage towards their **career goals**. Our **knowledge and skills-rich curriculum** therefore ensures that students 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 students in a way that encourages them to write and speak with **substance, expression, and flare**. Through a rigorous focus on **writers’ perspectives and purposes**, students 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, students 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 students 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 students 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 students' 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, students will read and immerse themselves in **large amounts of texts**, especially **whole texts**, meaning that all students 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** students require swiftly and responsively in order for students to access the wider curriculum.

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

- The study of English is fundamental in a student's ability to consider what it means to be **human**. Through their exploration of **human behaviour** and the **human condition**, students develop a personal response and understanding of both themselves and the world they live in
- In the safety of the classroom, students will discuss and analyse many sensitive subjects, whilst learning how to articulate themselves **compassionately** and **empathise** with their peers
- The curriculum will focus on both **written and verbal forms of communication**, enhancing students' capacity to communicate clearly whilst effectively listening and responding to others.
- The English curriculum exposes students to a carefully selected and sequenced range of texts, which develop in challenge incrementally. It is our aim for students to master the ability to converse with confidence in academic scenarios. By providing opportunities for all students 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 students** 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.

Through all key stages, our belief is that homework should be interleaved revision of powerful knowledge that has been modelled and taught in lessons. This knowledge is recalled and applied through a range of low-stakes quizzing and practice

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

- 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.
- 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.
- 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 roles within healthcare, public services, social work and charity.

A true love of English involves learning about various cultural domains. We teach beyond the specification requirements, but do ensure students 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 in **Dickens’ ‘A Christmas Carol’** 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, students 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 students 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.

		Sequencing
Year 7	Term 1	Origins of literature: Greek Mythology (Writing: Character and Setting) Biblical allusion in literature through the work of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien (Writing: Protagonist Focus)
	Term 2	Arthurian Literature (Reading: Novel 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) Racial oppression through history (Writing and Oracy: Rhetoric)
	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	Macbeth and Unseen Poetry (Literature Study: Essay Focus) Unseen Poetry and A Christmas Carol (Literature Study: Extract to Essay Focus)
	Term 3	Revision and unseen (Cumulative Literature Study and Recall) Spoken Language and Reading to Write (Oracy and Writing)
Year 11	Term 1	Language Paper 1 – Explorations in Creative Reading Language Paper 1 – Explorations in Creative Writing
	Term 2	Language Paper 2 – Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives: Reading Language Paper 2 – Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives: Writing
	Term 3	Revision and closing the gaps Revision and closing the gaps