



Curriculum Overview

English

Subject Leader

Ms H Syrett

Intent - Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4

The English curriculum is built upon the following English Threshold Concepts

Reading

- To understand the core ideas of a text in relation to narrative, plot, character and theme
- To retrieve relevant information and use supporting evidence for ideas from a text
- To understand the effect of context, both on writers and readers
- To understand how different ways of structuring a text can produce different effects
- To understand how language can be analysed to reveal a variety of meanings
- To understand the ways in which language can affect readers.

Writing

- To understand how to use a range of sentence structures and punctuation for specific effects
- To understand how to structure a text using paragraphs for whole text cohesion
- To understand how to use a wide range of ambitious vocabulary (Tier 2 words) and linguistic devices to convey different and specified meanings
- To understand how to accurately use Standard English consistently to match purpose, audience and form
- To accurately use spelling and grammar to convey meanings
- To understand how to plan effectively in order to be able to write for a sustained period of time.

Oracy

- To understand how to express ideas clearly and confidently using a wide range of spoken Standard English
- To understand how to use a wide range of vocabulary to negotiate, evaluate and build on the ideas of others
- To understand how to listen and respond appropriately to questions and feedback
- To understand how to select, organise and present information and ideas effectively through formal presentations.

It is the intention for all students, across all key stages, to develop and embed skills that enable them to:

- Read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts
- Understand increasingly challenging texts (cultural capital)
- Read critically
- Learn and use new vocabulary (academic writing and creative writing)
- Write accurately, fluently and effectively (for a range of different purposes)
- Spell, punctuate and use grammar accurately
- Use a range of spoken Standard English to express themselves clearly and effectively, responding to questions and feedback in an appropriate way

The KS3 curriculum is completed in Year 9 with a core focus on the threshold concepts, as detailed in the National Curriculum for English. Whilst Year 9 is considered a 'bridging year' in preparation for GCSE (e.g. teaching texts that were on previous GCSE specifications) students are still assessed using the whole MAT KS3 level criteria.

The KS4 curriculum is completed, in line with national guidance, in Years 10 and 11 only with all exams being at the end of Year 11.

Implementation - Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4

The Year 9 Curriculum is split into the following units:

- *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins
- Dystopian short stories and writing
- *Journey's End* by R.C. Sherriff
- Conflict and War Poetry
- *Romeo and Juliet*

The Key Stage 4 curriculum is taught across two years, as per national guidance.

The exam board specification we follow, in this case, AQA English Language (8700) and English Literature (8702) dictate the Key Stage 4 curriculum.

'Deep teaching' of all core texts and units takes place in Year 10, focusing on the fundamental meanings within texts.

Year 11 is dedicated to fine tuning exam skills and allows us to complete a full mock series in January (students sit all four exam papers) to successfully prepare students for the Summer examination series.

Topics:

- *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare (Literature Paper 1)
- Power and Conflict Poetry Cluster (15 set poems) (Literature Paper 2)
- Unseen Poetry (Literature Paper 2)
- *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens (Literature Paper 1)
- *An Inspector Calls* by J.B. Priestley (Literature Paper 2)
- Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing (Language Paper 1)
- Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives (Language Paper 2)

Allocated curriculum time

	Y9	Y10	Y11
Fortnightly lesson allocation	8	8	8

Implementation - Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4

In the English department we will offer a range of complementary schemes of learning that build across the year groups.

The schemes will be categorised into wider areas within the English curriculum so that students receive a broad and balanced offer in English at Frome College.

Our schemes will cover the following broad areas: modern fiction, classic fiction, drama, poetry, Shakespeare, reading non-fiction texts, written communication (including creative and transactional writing) and spoken language. Grammar for writing, opportunities for speaking and listening and reading for pleasure will be interleaved throughout the schemes of learning.

All lessons are planned in line with each unit's specific assessment foci as the guiding principles; e.g. A02 and A03 at GCSE.

English lessons will consist of the following:

- Modelling
- Scaffolding (where appropriate)
- Talk for learning
- Retrieval practice
- Challenge
- Meaningful tasks that develop learning
- Opportunities for upgrade work
- Immediate, verbal feedback
- Deep and layered teaching of complex concepts

Year 9

	Unit
	<p>'The Hunger Games' by Suzanne Collins</p> <p>In studying <i>The Hunger Games</i> by Suzanne Collins, Year 9 students will explore themes of survival, power, and social inequality. Set in a dystopian future, the novel follows Katniss Everdeen, a young girl forced to compete in a brutal televised event where only one participant can survive. Students will analyse Katniss's development as a character, her resilience, and her complex relationships with other characters, such as Peeta and Gale. The novel's depiction of a totalitarian government, the Capitol, will encourage students to think critically about the use of propaganda, control, and inequality in society. Students will also examine the role of media, technology, and voyeurism in the narrative, considering the ethics of entertainment at the expense of others' suffering. By the end of the unit, students will have a deeper understanding of the themes of sacrifice, rebellion, and justice, as well as the novel's commentary on power and oppression.</p>
	<p>'Journey's End' by R.C. Sherriff</p> <p>In studying <i>Journey's End</i> by R.C. Sherriff, Year 9 students will explore the experiences of British soldiers during World War I, focusing on themes of courage, fear, and the harsh realities of war. Through the character of Captain Stanhope and his fellow officers, students will examine the psychological and emotional toll of warfare, including the effects of leadership, comradeship, and trauma. The play's setting in the trenches highlights the contrast between the soldiers' sense of duty and their internal struggles. Students will also analyse Sherriff's use of language and dramatic techniques to convey tension, conflict, and the futility of war. By the end of the unit, students will better understand the historical context of the play and develop critical thinking skills to interpret its themes, character dynamics, and the broader social implications of war.</p>

Conflict and War Poetry

When studying war and conflict poetry by writers such as Wilfred Owen and Simon Armitage, Year 9 students will explore the emotional and psychological impacts of war. Through Owen's poignant depictions of World War I, students will engage with the brutality, trauma, and disillusionment experienced by soldiers. They will analyse Owen's use of vivid imagery and poignant language to highlight the horrors of war, as seen in poems like "Dulce et Decorum Est." In contrast, Simon Armitage's contemporary work, such as *The Not Dead*, will allow students to examine how modern conflict affects individuals, both physically and mentally. Students will compare the portrayal of war in different contexts, considering themes of heroism, loss, and the futility of violence. Through these poets, students will deepen their understanding of how literature reflects the human cost of war and will develop critical thinking skills in interpreting complex, emotive language.

'Romeo and Juliet' by William Shakespeare

When studying *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare, Year 9 students will explore themes of love, fate, and conflict. Set in Verona, the play tells the tragic story of two young lovers from feuding families, whose passion leads to devastating consequences. Students will examine the complexities of the characters, particularly Romeo and Juliet, and how their impulsive decisions drive the narrative. The play's exploration of love, both romantic and familial, will prompt discussions about loyalty, identity, and sacrifice. Students will also explore the role of fate, considering how the characters' destinies seem predestined by external forces. Shakespeare's use of language, including poetry, imagery, and dramatic techniques, will help students develop skills in interpreting complex texts. Additionally, students will analyse the social and cultural context of the play, exploring the themes of honour, violence, and the role of women in society. Ultimately, they will gain a deeper understanding of timeless human emotions and conflicts.

Key Stage 4 - Years 10 and 11

English Language and Literature GCSE

All students take two GCSEs in English: English **Language** and English **Literature**

English Language GCSE

All students complete two exam papers in the Summer of Year 11

- Paper 1 (50%) Fiction
- Paper 2 (50%) Non-Fiction

English Literature GCSE

All students complete two exam papers in the Summer of Year 11

- Paper 1 (40%) Shakespeare and 19th Century fiction
- Paper 2 (60%) Drama and Poetry

Prescribed Literature Texts are as follows:

- *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare
- *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens
- *An Inspector Calls* by J. B. Priestley
- Poetry Anthology (various poets)
- Unseen Poetry

All students also complete a separate endorsement for Spoken Language which is graded as either a Pass, Merit or Distinction. This does not count towards their GCSEs.

Homework

Your child's class teacher will set weekly homework. Sometimes this homework will be revision based, and other times it will be extended written tasks to consolidate classroom learning.

How can I help my child?

- Encourage them to read, read, **READ!**
- Check that they are completing homework, even if revision based.
- Discuss texts and newspaper articles at home as part of preparation for GCSE English Language exams
- Purchase Revision Guides and Workbooks
- Ask them about their GCSE Literature texts (outlined above)

How can students prepare for their assessments and exams?

- Complete all revision and homework as directed by their teacher
- Use revision guides and workbooks
- Use class notes, practice papers and revision materials
- Attend additional revision sessions
- Watch relevant stage or film version of core texts
- Use FREE online revision resources such as <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/>
- Read, read, **READ!**

Key Stage 4 - Years 10 and 11

	Unit
	<p>'Macbeth' by William Shakespeare</p> <p>When studying <i>Macbeth</i> for the GCSE AQA specification, students will explore a range of key themes and ideas, such as the corrupting nature of power, the consequences of ambition, and the impact of guilt and fate. They will examine the complex characters, particularly Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, considering how their actions and psychological development are portrayed throughout the play. Students will also analyse Shakespeare's</p>

use of language, dramatic techniques, and the play's structure, helping them to understand how these elements contribute to the overall meaning and themes of the text.

By studying *Macbeth*, students will gain insight into the historical and social context of 17th-century Scotland, particularly concerning the concepts of kingship, loyalty, and the supernatural. They will also develop critical thinking and analytical skills, learning how to interpret both the characters' motivations and the broader moral and philosophical questions raised by the play. Through this, students will deepen their appreciation of Shakespeare's work and the enduring relevance of *Macbeth* in exploring human nature and societal issues.

'An Inspector Calls' by J.B. Priestley

When studying *An Inspector Calls* for the GCSE AQA specification, students will explore themes such as social responsibility, class inequality, and the consequences of individual and collective actions. The play, set in 1912, delves into the lives of the Birling family, whose privileged position is challenged by the unexpected arrival of Inspector Goole, who investigates their involvement in the death of a young woman, Eva Smith.

Students will examine how J.B. Priestley uses the character of the Inspector to promote his views on social justice and collective responsibility, urging the audience to reflect on their roles in society and the impact of their actions on others. They will analyse the different characters' reactions to the Inspector's questioning, focusing on how Priestley presents generational and class divides.

Through studying *An Inspector Calls*, students will consider the historical context of the play, particularly the tensions between the social classes in early 20th-century Britain, and how Priestley uses dramatic techniques, including characterisation and structure, to convey moral and political messages. The play encourages critical reflection on issues of morality, equality, and the need for social change, which remain relevant in contemporary society.

'A Christmas Carol' by Charles Dickens

When studying *A Christmas Carol* for the GCSE AQA specification, students will explore themes such as redemption, social responsibility, and the contrast between wealth and poverty. The novella tells the story of Ebenezer Scrooge, a miserly and cold-hearted man, whose transformation after being visited by three ghosts highlights the importance of kindness, generosity, and community.

Students will examine the character development of Scrooge as he moves from selfishness to compassion, and they will consider how Dickens uses this transformation to convey moral lessons about the impact of individual actions on society. The novella also critiques the social inequalities of Victorian England, particularly the harsh conditions faced by the poor, exemplified by characters such as Bob Cratchit and Tiny Tim.

In addition, students will explore Dickens' use of symbolism, setting, and language to reflect the moral and social messages of the story. They will consider how the supernatural elements of the ghosts' visits serve to challenge Scrooge's attitudes and encourage self-reflection, and how the festive setting of Christmas acts as a backdrop for themes of generosity and change.

By the end of their study, students will gain a deeper understanding of how Dickens uses *A Christmas Carol* to comment on social injustice, human behaviour, and the possibility of personal transformation. They will also reflect on the enduring relevance of the novella's themes, which continue to resonate in modern discussions about social responsibility and compassion.

Power and Conflict Anthology Poetry

When studying the *Power and Conflict* poetry cluster for the AQA GCSE specification, students will explore a range of poems that examine themes related to power, authority, conflict, and their effects on individuals and societies. The poems in this cluster reflect on both personal and historical conflicts, exploring the impact of war, oppression, political power, and the struggles for freedom and identity.

Students will analyse how the poets use language, imagery, and form to convey the emotional and physical effects of conflict, and how they present different perspectives on power, whether it's the power of rulers, the powerless voices of those oppressed, or the internal conflict of individuals. They will consider the contrasts between the experiences of soldiers, victims, and those in positions of authority, and how these differing viewpoints highlight the complex and often destructive nature of power and conflict.

The poems in this anthology span a range of contexts, from war poetry to social commentary, providing students with opportunities to engage with historical and contemporary issues. Through their study, students will learn how poets use their work to reflect on human nature, the consequences of violence, and the relationships between individuals, societies, and institutions.

By the end of the study, students will gain a deeper understanding of how poetry can communicate powerful messages about the human experience, and how themes of power and conflict resonate across time and place. They will also develop their skills in analysing poetic techniques and making connections between poems to explore how different poets approach similar themes.

Unseen Poetry

When studying unseen poetry for the AQA GCSE specification, students will develop skills in analysing and interpreting poems they have not encountered before. They will learn to explore the meaning, themes, and emotional impact of a poem by examining its language, structure, form, and use of literary devices. Students will be encouraged to consider the poet's intentions, the poem's context, and the effects of techniques like imagery, rhyme,

and rhythm.

Through their study, students will build an understanding of how poets convey feelings, ideas, and perspectives, and how the choice of words and structure shapes the reader's experience. They will also be asked to compare two unseen poems, identifying similarities and differences in their treatment of themes, tone, and form, and exploring how each poem communicates its message.

By practising these skills, students will improve their ability to respond to unfamiliar texts, form well-supported interpretations, and use precise evidence to justify their views. This will help them to become more confident readers, able to engage with poetry critically and thoughtfully, whether it is part of the GCSE exam or in future study.

Language Paper 1 and Language Paper 2

The AQA GCSE Language Papers assess students' ability to read and analyse a variety of texts, as well as their ability to write clearly and effectively. Students will develop skills in interpreting and evaluating both fiction and nonfiction texts, focusing on how writers use language, structure, and form to create meanings and effects.

In the reading section, students will respond to questions that explore themes, characters, and the writer's techniques, providing evidence from the text to support their analysis. They will be required to examine how language choices impact the reader and contribute to the overall message of the text.

The writing section tests students' ability to produce clear, coherent, and engaging pieces of writing. They will demonstrate their skills in writing for different purposes and audiences, using appropriate tone, style, and organisation. Students will also be assessed on their command of grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Through the Language Papers, students will develop a deeper understanding of how language shapes communication, how to craft effective written responses, and how to analyse texts critically.