

The Curriculum: English Department

Introduction:

Within the English Department we strive to instil a fascination and love for literature and communication. We want students to have access to a wide range of texts across history and cultures and the ability to communicate clearly and effectively, using the written word. It is incredibly important that our young people develop the capability to think critically; express themselves succinctly and have the tools to use English across any subject or future career.

From year 7 we look to forge skills that will be used in a student's later GCSE career (and beyond). Our department looks at a range of both fiction and non-fiction texts; writing skills (both fiction and non-fiction). This includes:

- Poetry
- Shakespeare
- Pre 20th century fiction
- Modern fiction
- Non-fiction texts

By developing core knowledge of these areas we aim to ensure that students have the cultural capital to see the intertextuality across English and develop skills of analysis that can only come from knowing a wider range of the literary canon. Below is an example of how reading skills for fiction are developed:



We are developing skills by introducing tier 2 and 3 language in lessons, both through oracy and worked examples, in order to provide a framework for students to increase their written fluency. With regards to writing skills we provide development of skills moving from word, sentence, paragraph and whole text level.

Knowledge in English

The curriculum addresses this by taking a chronological view of literature and structuring written lessons around this.

Every student should progress through their English education at QEA with the knowledge that they need to be successful at GCSE; further education and any potential future career. We feel that they should all have access to the literary canon; the skills to write confidently and in Standard English

and be able to read confidently. This is not an expectation in our opinion, but a right that every student has regardless of their academic antecedence.

Summative assessment is now done using a cumulative approach. This will be done by using a knowledge recall quiz and longer form analytical questions, these assessments will take place twice a year and test both knowledge and application of that knowledge. For example:

Year 7 first assessment (Jan/Feb)

- Knowledge based quiz covering topics studied to date (40%)
- Skills based assessment covering topics studied to date (60%)

Example of student A:

Knowledge Result out of 40	Quotation based question for class novel (10 marks)	Full extract language question – Myths and Legends (50 marks)	Total
27	6	23	56

Key stage 4:

The selections of text at Key Stage 4 are chosen carefully so our students have the best chance to build on the knowledge acquired in Key stage 3, such as Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde building on the knowledge of gothic fiction. Students can make links to the prior knowledge of a Shakespearian tragedy Romeo and Juliet studied in year 8 to a further text in a later period studied in year 10 Macbeth underpinned by Greek tragedy knowledge in year 7.

Assessments are carried out at the end of every topic and mock examinations are held in both years 10 and 11. We use GCSE past papers and mark schemes to ensure we stand up to the academic rigor of exam boards. We are fortunate in the department that we have access to staff who have been and are currently examiners for the new style GCSEs to give us accurate judgements of current grading.