
Curriculum overview: English

Why do we study English at The Earls High School?

English is the language within which we live and work and as such, we need to be confident in the knowledge that our English teachers are preparing our pupils to leave us with: clear verbal communication skills; an appreciation of the need for clarity of expression in their written communication skills; a good standard of social skills which they can utilise to work with others; an ability to read texts critically to evaluate information, identify writers' viewpoints, recognise writers' bias and consequently make informed choices and form rational opinions; and finally, the freedom to express their own creativity. Three key words that underpin our curriculum are cultural, critical, and communication.

All pupils study literature alongside language, regardless of their ability, because we feel it is vital to experience a range of texts from across the ages and across continents to gain an appreciation of other cultures and beliefs, to understand ourselves and how we fit into our world. We also encourage our pupils to see reading as a pleasurable experience, a shared experience within which relationships are formed between readers, readers and writers, and readers and characters which in turn develops our emotional intelligence as human beings.

What skills and knowledge do we anticipate students will have in this subject before they begin at The Earls High School?

We would expect our new cohorts of year seven pupils to have reached a standard in literacy and oracy appropriate to their individual ability through familiarity with reading aloud, writing extended responses and participating in speaking and listening activities. We appreciate that while there may be extensive knowledge of SPaG, our year seven pupils may not always be able to apply this knowledge effectively. We acknowledge that year seven pupils may well have been taught a range of text types but not necessarily been given the opportunity to produce a range of text types in writing themselves. Therefore, an awareness of the writer's craft may be apparent though being able to comment on the effect of writer's conscious choices may not. Likewise, there may be an awareness of texts as constructs rather than real life, but this might not always be clear in their responses to what they have read. We would expect our year seven pupils to be familiar with working with others for the purposes of discussion and mutual support.

It is highly likely that our year seven pupils will be familiar with storytelling as a communication skill having been read to or read aloud themselves works by key authors such as: Roald Dahl, Julia Donaldson, Michael Morpurgo, David Walliams, Nina Bawden, Michelle Magorian, Michael Rosen, David Almond, Malorie Blackman, Jacqueline Wilson, Cathy Cassidy, Morris Gleitzman, Onjali Rauf, John Boyne, Charlie Higson, J K Rowling, Rick Riordan and Anthony Horowitz. In reading these texts, a familiarity with a range of genre conventions would be expected as well as a burgeoning ability to make connections between fact and fiction using their knowledge of the Victorians, World War Two, the environment, and other countries and cultures to make sense of the worlds presented in these texts.

What skills and knowledge would we like students to have in this subject at the end of their time at The Earls High School?

Ideally, our young people will leave school with a standard of literacy and oracy that is appropriate for success in life, work, and play. We will have enlightened them to explore their creativity in reading and writing by studying at least three plays by Shakespeare; a collection of pre—1900 prose fiction, prose non-fiction and poetry texts; the poetry of WW1; and contemporary drama, prose fiction, prose non-fiction and poetry.

To be equipped for life, our young people should be able to utilise an extensive vocabulary range and construct a coherent text to not only express themselves convincingly but also to defend their viewpoint both in written and verbal communications. They should also feel confident in their ability to deconstruct texts, understand a writer's perspective, recognise bias, and explore the effects of the writer's craft without feeling confused or misled.

Year 7 Curriculum Map: English

Unit 1: Education	Unit 2: Travel	Unit 3: Nature
To learn about: Pupils will explore the topic of school through the ages by studying extracts from ‘<i>Street Child</i>’ by Berlie Doherty, Charles Dickens’ novels ‘<i>Hard Times</i>’ and ‘<i>Nicholas Nickleby</i>’ and the whole of the Willy Russell play ‘<i>Our Day Out</i>’. We introduce the big idea of poverty. Other cultures will be experienced through exploring art and a collection of poems on the theme of education. Pupils will reflect on the role that teachers play in their lives and how they influence their development and progression as individuals. Pupils will explore the changing face of education over time through a selection of heritage texts and non-fiction news articles. Pupils will be given opportunities to use drama to interpret text as well as drawing to explore other visual representations of writers’ meanings. Main home learning tasks: <i>Reading</i> - independent practice of comprehension tasks using extracts from a range of heritage texts and quizzes created using Educake software. <i>Writing</i> - create original writing inspired by texts studied in lessons. <i>Retrieval practice</i> – online knowledge quizzes using Educake software. Summative Assessment: <i>Knowledge</i> – retrieval of subject knowledge taught up to and including Year 7. <i>Reading</i> – answering comprehension questions on a text. <i>Writing</i> – expressing a viewpoint. Assessment conditions: In class.	To learn about: Pupils will consider different purposes for travel and reflect on places they have visited and would like to go in the future. We introduce the big idea of prejudice. Focusing on travel from the perspective of refugees, pupils study the novel <i>Boy Overboard</i> by Morris Gleitzman. Pupils will be taught how to deconstruct texts and comment on the effects writers create through language and structure. The unit is interspersed with non-fiction accounts, in print and moving image, of life as a refugee, poetry and opportunities for speaking and listening and drama activities. In addition, pupils will revise and practise descriptive writing skills to learn from the experts how words, sentences, paragraphs and structure combine to create meaning for readers. Main home learning tasks: <i>Reading</i> – independent practice of comprehension tasks using extracts from the novel and quizzes created using Educake software. <i>Writing</i> – writing descriptive pieces about places, people and events. <i>Retrieval practice</i> – online knowledge quizzes using Educake software. Summative Assessment: <i>Knowledge</i> – retrieval of subject knowledge taught up to and including Year 7. <i>Reading</i> – answering comprehension questions on a text. Assessment conditions: In class.	To learn about: Pupils will study and explore how writers use language in a range of literature texts about nature and our environment. We introduce the big idea of power. We study a selection of Romantic poetry by famous Romantic poets such as Coleridge, Wordsworth and Tennyson; as well as non-fiction material and a selection of extracts from Shakespeare’s play <i>The Tempest</i> which will allow for opportunities for speaking and listening and drama activities. Pupils will develop their retrieval and inference skills and their ability to synthesize information from two different sources. We will also learn how to select appropriate and relevant textual detail to support their ideas and interpretations. Pupils will be taught how to construct an argument and present their ideas in a logical and persuasive structure. Main home learning tasks: <i>Extended project</i> – The Island Pupils imagine themselves as an explorer who has discovered a remote island. They create a project over a period of four weeks that includes: a map, detailed drawings and written detailed descriptions of the island and the new species of creature they discover on the island. <i>Retrieval practice</i> – online knowledge quizzes created using Educake software. Summative Assessment: <i>Writing</i> – write a descriptive narrative inspired by an image. Assessment conditions: In class.

Year 8 Curriculum Map: English

Unit 1: Conflict	Unit 2: Tales with a Twist	Unit 3: Myths and legends that inspired Shakespeare
To learn about: Pupils explore the theme of conflict in relation to war, studying WW1 propaganda material, war poetry from a range of poets both contemporary and heritage, as well as reading 'Private Peaceful' by Michael Morpurgo. We introduce the big idea of hierarchy. Pupils are taught how to develop their writing skills throughout, by writing in different forms and for different audiences. This will include writing creatively and responding critically to the texts they have studied. We will develop reading skills through closely analysing passages within the text focusing on the ways the writer uses language, structure and form to convey meaning. Pupils will develop their spoken language skills through class discussions and presenting. Main home learning tasks <i>Reading</i> - independent practice of comprehension tasks using extracts and quizzes created using Educake software. <i>Writing</i> – writing descriptive pieces from a given perspective about places, people and events. <i>Retrieval practice</i> – online knowledge quizzes using Educake software. Summative Assessment: <i>Knowledge</i> – retrieval of subject knowledge taught up to and including Year 8. <i>Reading</i> – answering comprehension questions on a text. <i>Writing</i> - expressing a viewpoint. Assessment conditions: In class.	To learn about: Pupils read a range of short stories, spanning from Chaucer to Dahl, covering different genres, such as crime and punishment, ghost and mystery, with the common thread being each one contains an unexpected turn in plot development. We introduce the big idea of the seven deadly sins. We learn about the development of the literary tradition within which tales with a twist were created. We explore how each writer uses characters and setting to create drama, mystery and intrigue for readers and use these methods to develop our own writing about duplicitous characters. Pupils are taught how to create narratives using the 'show not tell' method to engage readers. This style of writing forces readers to imagine the character, setting and events in their own minds using sensory language and detailed description thereby actively engaging readers rather than providing a passive reading experience. We evaluate evidence against someone's opinion, learn how to form our own ideas about a text and express a clear and cohesive argument. Main home learning tasks: <i>Reading</i> – independent practice of comprehension tasks using extracts and quizzes created using Educake software. <i>Writing</i> – writing descriptive pieces about places, people and events. <i>Retrieval practice</i> – online knowledge quizzes using Educake software. Summative Assessment: <i>Writing</i> – descriptive narrative inspired by the texts studied during this unit. Assessment conditions: In class.	To learn about: Pupils explore classic Greek myths and legends and learn how these have influenced our culture over centuries. We introduce the big idea of patriarchy. We focus on the myths that inspired Shakespeare's stories before focusing our attention on studying 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' a comedy Shakespeare set in Greece. Pupils continue to develop their reading skills through closely analysing scenes focusing on the ways the writer uses language, structure and form to convey meaning to a live audience. We explore how theatre companies create effective stage productions. Main home learning tasks <i>Reading</i> - independent practice of comprehension tasks using extracts and quizzes created using Educake software. <i>Extended project</i> – The Athenian Times Pupils will produce newspaper articles and features inspired by 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. <i>Retrieval practice</i> – online knowledge quizzes using Educake software. Summative Assessment: <i>Knowledge</i> – retrieval of subject knowledge taught up to and including Year 8. <i>Reading</i> – answering comprehension questions on a text. Assessment conditions: In class.

Year 9 Curriculum Map English

Unit 1: Gothic Literature	Unit 2: Diversity	Unit 3: Power
To learn about: Pupils explore the key features and conventions of Gothic Literature. We study extracts from classic texts as an introduction to gothic horror and be able to identify typical gothic themes. Pupils read a selection of Poe short stories and poetry from The Graveyard Poets looking closely at how language is used to create horror and fear in the reader. Pupils are taught how to write accurately and imaginatively to produce engaging stories using a wider range of vocabulary and methods learned from studying a range of short stories and extracts. Main home learning tasks: <i>Writing tasks</i> - writing to describe people, places and events using typical gothic/horror features. <i>Reading tasks</i> – investigating how texts conform to the gothic genre, analysing effects of writer's craft. <i>Retrieval practice</i> – online knowledge quizzes. Summative Assessment: <i>Knowledge</i> – retrieval of subject knowledge taught up to and including Year 9. <i>Reading (Literature)</i> – literature essay exploring how a writer conveys meaning through language, form and structure. <i>Writing</i> – narrative description inspired by an image. Assessment conditions: In class.	To learn about: Pupils will be encouraged to consider how literary representations can influence the culture and thinking of people in society both in the past and present. Pupils will be introduced to a diverse range of writers including the works of those of different genders, and races to explore different perspectives without prejudice. They will study a range of prose and poetry to explore diverse representations and attitudes to encourage our pupils to listen without prejudice and form their own opinions. Main home learning tasks: <i>Writing tasks</i> – viewpoint writing that evaluates expert opinions and encourages pupils to express their own beliefs, empathic writing as an imagined character. <i>Reading tasks</i> – using extracts from prose and poetry to identify writer's methods and explore the intended effects on readers; wider reading of texts dealing with issues of representation; comparison of writers' attitudes conveyed through use of language, and structure. <i>Retrieval practice</i> – online knowledge quizzes. Summative Assessment: <i>Reading (Literature)</i> – literature essay comparing two poems and poets' perspectives. Assessment conditions: In class.	To learn about: Pupils explore the concept of power and its potential to inspire and corrupt individuals and society. We read 'Animal Farm' by George Orwell and explore the writer's use of allegory. We examine propaganda and Orwell's craft at creating characters loosely based on real life historical figures who exploited propaganda for their own gains. Pupils will strengthen key skills of reading, analysis, inference, and writing, to prepare them for their GCSE years. Pupils will explore ideas of hierarchy, patriarchy and stereotypes, and examine their relevance in the modern age. Main home learning tasks: <i>Writing tasks</i> – viewpoint writing that evaluates expert opinions and encourages pupils to express alternative arguments, empathic writing as an imagined character. <i>Reading tasks</i> – read extracts depicting descriptions of characters and situations to analyse the methods used by the writer to engage readers; using extracts from prose and poetry to identify writer's methods and explore the intended effects on readers; comparison of writers' attitudes conveyed through use of language, and structure. Summative Assessment: <i>Knowledge</i> – retrieval of subject knowledge taught up to and including Year 9. <i>Writing</i> – viewpoint writing. Assessment conditions: In class.