

Year 8 English

The Year 8 curriculum is built around four core units: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing; Prose Study; Non-Fiction; and Drama. In Year 8, these units build on the key concepts and knowledge taught in Year 7. Students will strengthen their understanding of literary archetypes, genre conventions, writing for a variety of audiences and purposes and responding to texts with inference and insight.

Across the year, students encounter challenging texts drawn from a range of cultures, time periods and styles. The theme of the year – society and monsters – enables students to form connections between each unit, as well as providing an engaging theme. Regular reading for pleasure is built into the curriculum, alongside the development of technical writing skills. Throughout the year, students are encouraged to write for pleasure and there are several writing competitions run by the department and wider Areté Learning Trust.

Methods of deepening and securing knowledge:	
Retrieval practice	Retrieval practice is an embedded part of the KS3 curriculum. Each unit builds on the previous unit; retrieval activities are built into each lesson to allow students to make connections between topics and reinforce their understanding of key knowledge and skills. Independent Learning tasks are also used to support retrieval of content taught in lessons.
Elaboration	Students are encouraged to make connections between prior learning and new material: regular class discussion allows students to connect new content to their own experiences and prior learning, supporting the development of schemas that lead to long-term retention of knowledge. Questioning strategies encourage elaboration – focusing on ‘How’? and ‘Why’? questions.
Concrete examples	Concrete examples are provided through the use of high-quality literary and non-fiction texts, drawing on the work of contemporary writers and from recent topical events. In addition, teacher modelling of writing skills, grammatical structures and analytical writing provide scaffolding and support for students.
Dual coding	Images, diagrams and symbols are used across the KS3 curriculum to support learning – knowledge organisers, lesson resources and teaching and learning activities all feature dual coding as embedded part of our practice.

	Autumn term 1	Autumn term 2	Spring term 1	Spring term 2	Summer term 1	Summer term 2
Topic(s)	Unit 1: Gothic - Extracts from the gothic genre - Archetypes and conventions of the gothic genre	Unit 1: Gothic Unit 2: Animal Farm - Allegory - Symbolism	Unit 2: Animal Farm	Unit 3: Burning Issues - Letter writing - Article writing - Rhetorical features	Unit 3: Burning Issues Unit 4: The Tempest - Dramatic conventions	Unit 4: The Tempest

	- Metaphor, simile and personification - Pathetic fallacy foreshadowing - Tension - Sentence crafting	- Political context Soviet Russia - Propaganda		- Structure and sentence crafting	- Soliloquy and monologue - Colonialism - Dual nature	
Assessment	Reading: - Character analysis of Dracula	Narrative writing: - Writing in the gothic genre, produce an atmospheric beginning to a story	Reading: - How and why does the farm fail in 'Animal Farm'?	Non-fiction writing: - Letter on a topical issue	Non-fiction writing: - Write an article for your school website on a topical issue	Reading: - Focusing on an extract and then the wider play, explore how Shakespeare presents the character of Caliban

Independent Learning:
<p>Independent learning is a core part of learning and serves to support the learning in class, enrich the student experience and develop learning skills. There are several types of independent learning set in English such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researching a key area of context in preparation for a new unit • Applying knowledge and skills learnt in lesson by completing an independent task • Developing a response or task begun in lesson • Revising key content in preparation for an assessment • Learning spellings and key vocabulary in preparation for a test • Independent reading