



Sturminster Newton High School
Sixth Form

ENGLISH LANGUAGE A LEVEL HANDBOOK



NAME: _____

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COURSE OUTLINE WITH KEY ASSESSMENT DATES

For the A Level qualification, you will study for two terminal exams and a Non-Exam Assessment:

Paper 1 (Language, the individual and society): two sections.

- Section A: Textual variations and representations - two questions on unseen texts (one contemporary and one older) and one question comparing the two texts.
- Section B: Children's language development - a discursive essay on children's language development.

Paper 2 (Language diversity and change): two sections.

- Section A: Diversity and change – choice of two evaluative essays on either language diversity (gender, occupation, regional variation etc) or language change.
- Section B: Language discourses – two texts linked to diversity/change topic, one analysis question and one directed writing task linked to the same topic.

Non-Exam Assessment – a language investigation (2000 words) and a piece of original writing with a commentary totalling (1500 words in total – 750 words each).

HOW THE COURSE IS ASSESSED

Paper 1 & Paper 2: 2 exams of 2 hours 30 minutes each = 80% of A Level
Language investigation & creative writing = 20% of A Level.

Both NEA submitted and terminal exams taken in Summer 2021.

LINK TO THE EXAM BOARD SPECIFICATION

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/as-and-a-level/english-language-7701-7702/specification-at-a-glance>

USEFUL ONLINE RESOURCES

<http://www.bl.uk/>

<http://englishlangsfx.blogspot.co.uk/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/language>

<http://modern-english.co.uk/>

HOW THE COURSE IS DELIVERED

At A level, students are taught through paired teaching: one teacher will cover one exam and the other will cover the second exam. You will be required to attend eight teaching hours per fortnight: all eight lessons will be preparation for the two exams, plus there will be tutorial sessions to help support the NEA unit. Independent study will consist of students collecting and analysing their own data in the form of transcripts of speech, non-fiction texts like leaflets, recipes, newspaper articles etc.

DEPARTMENTAL EXPECTATIONS

This course offers opportunities for engaging and challenging discussions and debates. As such, the extent to which you engage in in classroom discussions and debates with enthusiasm and intellectual curiosity will directly influence your potential for success. You must be prepared to undertake presentations to your student group and to be willing to contribute positively to the learning climate. In addition to this, you must engage actively with all aspects of your study in order to maximise your understanding of the course content. Be proactive about any missed learning time; it is your responsibility to ensure you keep up with any missed work. Your teacher will support you by either providing missed material, or signposting you to appropriate resources, but you must ensure that you actively seek this support out. You are expected to be independent and proactive in your approach to learning; analysing texts and language examples creatively, 'thinking outside the box'. The A level learning environment is very different to the one you have experienced at GCSE, and as such, your own approaches will need to evolve. Achieving well at A level involves taking responsibility for your own learning, working independently and meeting all deadlines.

HOW THE COURSE IS TAUGHT OVER TWO YEARS

Year 12:

- Introduction to studying language at an advanced level – key concepts, methods of language analysis, advanced grammar
- Units to be covered – Children's Language Development, Language Diversity (Gender, Age, Sexuality, Regional variation, Occupation), Language Change
- NEA – Original writing/start investigation before Summer holidays

Year 13:

- Revise all exam topics/concepts
- Textual analysis
- Finish NEA folder by early Spring term

PRE-READING

Topics we will cover during the course:

Paper 1

- Introduction to language study
- Grammar in use
- How language creates meaning & representation
- Children's language development – speech, reading & writing

Paper 2

- Language change – historical change over 400 years, current English Language issues, models of World Englishes, future of English.
- Language & gender
- Language & age
- Language & occupation
- Language & social class
- Regional variation: accent & dialects of UK

ONLINE COURSES THAT WILL HELP WITH A LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE

For use during independent study, revision or for cover lessons if you are at a loose end.

From <https://www.futurelearn.com/>

Introduction to Intercultural Studies: Language and Culture – University of Leeds	2 weeks, 5 hours per week
Understanding Language: Learning and teaching – University of Southampton	6 weeks, 3 hours per week
Understanding English Dictionaries – Coventry University	6 weeks, 6 hours per week
An introduction to Sociolinguistics: Accents, Attitudes and Identity – University of York	4 weeks, 4 hours per week
Start writing fiction – Open University	8 weeks, 3 hours per week
English in Early Childhood – British Council	6 weeks, 2 hours per week
Phonics in Early Childhood – Queensland University	2 weeks, 1 hour per week

From <https://www.my-mooc.com/>

Miracles of Human Language – University of Leiden	6 weeks, 4 hours per week
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From <https://www.coursera.org/>

Neurolinguistics – University of St Petersburg	19 hours total
Introduction to research for essay writing – UCI	4 weeks, 3 hours per week

From <https://www.edx.org/>

English Grammar & Style – University of Queensland	8 weeks, 4 hours per week
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The History of the Book – 17th/18th C – Harvard University	1 week, 2 hours
Language is life – University of Adelaide	5 weeks, 3 hours a week

After completing a course, you should prepare a short presentation or summary sheet about what you have learnt. Bring this with you when you start the course.

General skills that you could practise before A Level courses start:

- Academic essay writing/structure.
- Research skills – finding sources and being critical.
- Advanced Grammar – use <http://www.cybergrammar.co.uk/>

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU PREPARE FOR A LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE

 <p>Complete this course on screenwriting, which includes learning the characteristics of screen stories, structure, character development and the writing process.</p> <p>An Introduction to Screenwriting</p> <p><i>University of East Anglia</i></p>	 <p>Listen to this podcast which provides a fascinating exploration into how spoken and written language gives criminals away and helps to solve crimes. This podcast is part of a wider series called 'Word of Mouth' by Michael Rosen, and there are lots of other episodes available if you like this one.</p> <p>Forensic Linguistics</p> <p><i>BBC Sounds</i></p>	 <p>Read this article about Tottenham Hotspur's protests about the OED's definition of the Y-word.</p> <p>The point of dictionaries is to describe how language is used, not to police it</p> <p><i>The Guardian</i></p>	 <p>Watch this TED talk, presented in Spanish with English subtitles, which asks the question: does spelling matter in this day and age?</p> <p>Should we simplify spelling?</p> <p><i>TED Talks – Karina Galperin</i></p>	 <p>Complete this course which will help build your skills of literary analysis and creative writing by exploring the meaning of fairy tales.</p> <p>Fairy Tales: Meaning, Messages, and Morals</p> <p><i>The University of Newcastle, Australia</i></p>
 <p>Listen to this radio programme, hosted by Mariella Frostrup, and hear from authors on their latest publication and what influences their writing.</p> <p>There are 537 episodes available!</p> <p>Open Book</p>	 <p>Read this free e-book which provides a brilliant survey of the history of the supernatural genre by renowned author H.P.Lovecraft.</p> <p>Supernatural Horror in Literature</p>	 <p>Watch this TED talk which presents a compelling argument for why you should bother to learn a new language.</p>	 <p>Complete this course which is ideal for any student who is going to start A level English Language or A Level English Language and Literature in 2020.</p> <p>An Introduction to Sociolinguistics: Accents, Attitudes and Identity</p> <p><i>University of York</i></p> <p>Starts 13th July</p>	 <p>Read this article on how you can harness the power of storytelling.</p> <p>Storytelling is a powerful communication tool</p>
 <p>Watch this TED talk in which Christopher Warner sets the record straight on what irony <u>really</u> is.</p> <p>Situational Irony: The opposite of what you think</p> <p><i>TED Talks – Christopher Warner</i></p>	 <p>Watch this TED talk in which lexicographer Erin McKean explores how we can manipulate language to express ourselves better.</p> <p>Go ahead, make up new words!</p> <p><i>TED Talks – Erin McKean</i></p>	 <p>Read this article which, although very long, is a booklist that details all of the books covered on the BBC Sounds Open Book episodes – so it will help you decide what you want to listen to first.</p> <p>BBC Sounds Booklist</p> <p><i>BBC Programmes</i></p>	 <p>Watch this TED talk which explores how we can communicate effectively in non-verbal ways, using pictures and 'maps' to represent meaning.</p> <p>A word game to communicate in any language</p> <p><i>TED Talks – Ajit Narayanan</i></p>	 <p>Watch this TED talk which poses important questions about storytelling and culture. Is there a danger if we hear only a single story about another person or country? Do we need overlapping stories to form our opinion to avoid misunderstanding?</p> <p>The danger of a single story</p> <p><i>TED Talks – Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie</i></p>

TIMELINE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

1600

1800

2020