

## **Year 11**

By the start of year 11, students have covered all of the content of the four papers required for the exams in the summer. As they revise the knowledge and skills learned in year 10, the level of challenge increases, and focus on the higher order analytical skills needed for their GCSEs.

At the start of the year, students prepare their persuasive speech for the GCSE Speaking Endorsement. The speech is on a topic of their own choosing and allows them to explore and present subjects they are passionate about. It is written in part first to allow practice for the Paper 2 writing task, before being recorded and graded.

We then move on to our first phase of revision of Macbeth and A Christmas Carol for GCSE English Literature. Students study how to analyse exam questions by developing a thesis, then deciding which parts of the text they will use to support their conceptualised response. The what/how/why model for literary analysis is especially useful and is used to support students to link appropriate textual evidence to the 'big ideas' they will meet in GCSE exam questions. We revisit skills and knowledge from the other Language and Literature units in interleaved starters to support memorisation.

In the run up to the November mock exams, students also revise and prepare for Language Paper 1 by practising skills in reading and writing fiction texts, and focusing on their exam technique.

After the mocks and on the run up to Christmas, we concentrate on revising An Inspector Calls. As with Macbeth and A Christmas Carol, we revise the basic building blocks of knowledge first before moving on to the higher order skills of developing a thesis, planning and creating a conceptualised response to exam questions, while linking 'big ideas' with a close reading of key moments in the texts.

We begin the spring term with a short unit revising at practising skills needed for the unseen poetry paper of the literature exams. Here we study a range of poems new to the students, and hone their ability to explore feelings and ideas communicated by poets, and how they have created effects. Comparison skills are also an important part of this part of the literature exam, as two unseen poems are compared. The what/how/why approach is again especially useful when answering on unseen poetry.

In the second half of the spring term students finesse their reading and writing skills and knowledge for Language Paper 2, looking at non-fiction texts and extending their comparative skills. This builds on their work on the refugee paper in year 10 and allows further practice of persuasive writing taught in the autumn term. Both terms before Easter include a mock exam, meaning that students have had the experience of taking all the exam papers they will face in the real GCSEs; and receive detailed feedback from staff.

In the summer term teaching staff revise for the GCSE exams for a final time with their students, in short 4-6 lesson bursts, so that learning is spaced and revisited to fully embed know-how and recall.

Our curriculum at Key Stage 4 is also flexible in that we offer AQA Step Up to English Silver or Gold awards to students who might struggle to attain a GCSE in English. We also deliver the AQA Certificate course for students with severe learning difficulties in conjunction with the Learning Support Department.

Early in the Autumn term we run groups for students who are educationally disadvantaged, that is, selected students in the lower 10% in the rank order. This extra support enabled them to improve attainment with lessons focusing on the gaps in their skills and knowledge.