

Year 9

Common approach at Key Stage 3.

Our aim is to read a range of challenging and inspiring texts with students, and to instill in them a genuine and lasting love of the written word. Our curriculum provides an increasing range of depth and challenge for students, where we revisit Shakespeare, the Nineteenth Century Novel and poetry in each year, so students are well equipped to explore these genres at Key Stage 4. We increase the level of challenge over Key Stage 3 introducing more challenging texts later, or introducing challenging texts earlier using extracts. By the end of Year 9, all students have had the opportunity to express themselves creatively, inspired by their own lives and various literary texts. With all schemes of work students study tier 2 and 3 vocabulary in context. We integrate 'Hot Tasks' into each half term so students have the opportunity to regularly respond to teacher feedback.

Year 9 begins with F Scott Fitzgerald's 'The Great Gatsby', which shows the experiences of the ultra-wealthy in the 'roaring twenties'. Students explore the reasons behind the economic boom, and consider the hollow and hedonistic world of Gatsby. Students will again look closely at the big ideas of the text: the corrupting power of money, identity and the superficial side of this era of history, while also examining the imagery and vocabulary in the text, increasing the level of challenge in prose fiction in preparation for the GCSE. Student's knowledge of the class system is revisited in An Inspector Calls in Key Stage 4.

Year 9 then study 'Romeo and Juliet'. It is the first time in KS3 they study a Shakespeare text in its entirety. This is valuable for them to be confronted with the style and language of Shakespeare before embarking on studying Macbeth in KS4. Students explore the intertwining themes of love/hate and how they pervade the text and define a lot of the actions of the key characters. They examine extracts and look to hone their skills of annotating and picking out quotations. Moreover, we examine the social and historical context of the play and further investigate the theme of patriarchy in Shakespeare, building on the Julius Caesar work in Year 8 while pointing forward to presentations of gender in Macbeth in year 10.

Year 9 then begin their first writing unit of the year: on persuasion. The unit explores current topics – such as social media, climate change and current affairs in order to chime with students' interests and guide them to form their own views on these important issues. They look at the ways in which they can structure their writing effectively and include key techniques that will help shape their work and attain highly. As part of Language Paper 2 this unit is also valuable in preparing Y9 for the rigours of KS4. Students then move on to a short poetry unit. This set of lessons explores the very definition of culture- how this varies from country to continent and includes some reflection on the students' cultural identities. Students not only analyse the poems themselves but explore the stories behind them from the experiences of African slaves travelling through the middle passage to the Apartheid system. We reinforce skills of annotating, identifying key/common features and creating and shaping their own poetry which responds to their own cultural outlook. Students also develop their knowledge of terminology and ability to compare poems which is needed at Key Stage 4. The unit opens up students' understanding of the world around them.

Students then study a selection of short stories from the anthology; Iridescent Adolescent. These contemporary texts present students themes and characters drawn from a range of cultural perspectives. Students will explore these different themes within each story, and analyse how writers present them. They will also compare and contrast different stories, building on the comparative skills

learned in the Year 8 Detective Fiction unit of work, and preparing their comparative skills for GCSE poetry and non fiction papers.

Next the students study 'Jane Eyre, interleaved alongside work on Victorian context and language. Here they can extend previous work from Year 8 on gothic writing and the conventions of nineteenth century prose, such as the list sentence and pathetic fallacy, while also deepening their knowledge of patriarchal attitudes met on Romeo and Juliet. This unit stretches students through close analysis of elaborate Victorian language and prepares them for the study of Dickens's prose in Year 10. The interleaved lessons on Victorian contexts look at a different aspect of Victorian life through the lens of literature: the experiences of children, work, women and suffrage, science and the supernatural and health. Attached to these lessons are seminal 19th century extracts from Oliver Twist to Frankenstein. Students are taught to see how these authors are directly responding to the society in which they lived and how (for example) the experience of Oliver Twist can teach us a great deal about the harsh realities of life for working class children. This again helps to prepare students for their entry into KS4 as the 19th century novel is a mandatory part of their GCSE.

Year 9 is an important year as students finish KS3 and look towards KS4. The year plan prepares them for that transition and eases them into Y10 feeling confident they have been exposed to challenging material. With 'Gatsby' allows students to analyse character, context and key thematic concerns while gaining a cultural understanding of different eras of history and how they are reflected in demanding,, seminal American work. The scheme offers opportunities for creative writing through poetry, short stories and writing to persuade. Students are exposed to a full Shakespeare text for the first time and sit a formal assessment which helps to hone the exam skills they need for the literature side of the exam. They conclude the year by enhancing their comparative skills through reading Iridescent Adolescent, and gaining knowledge of 19th century context, literature and society again as a way to prepare them effectively for the start of KS4.