

Whole school curriculum principles

1. The core, foundation knowledge in each discipline				
2. Opportunities for reading and development of Tier 2/3 vocabulary, writing styles and text types				
3 The numerical concepts used within each discipline.	4 The practical and cognitive skills inherent to each discipline.	5 The key timelines, theories and figures within each discipline	6 Exposure to and consideration of diverse perspectives	7 Knowledge of how each discipline has impact on the modern and future world.
8. learning to be responsible for ourselves and our future		9. learning to be responsible for our community		10. Learning to consider our global and environmental responsibilities

Key Stage 3 (years 7-9)

We are passionate about students enjoying English and reading. Students will read and interact with interesting texts from a variety of time periods, learn about different genres, styles and contexts. They will have opportunities to be creative and imaginative with their own writing, and practise expressing their opinions in a variety of ways.

The content and themes we have chosen to study enables students to develop an understanding of how writers use language and structure to create meaning and provides them with the tools they need to be able to comment on how texts make them think and feel. This will allow students to develop their ability to manipulate their own language and structural features, in order to communicate powerfully in both speech and written work. It is also important that the themes and texts we study increase in maturity to give students the opportunity to discuss and analyse stories and voices that relate to the real world and how we interpret it.

Students study a range of core texts throughout Key Stage 3. We teach these texts with a thematic approach, linking them to other fiction and non-fiction extracts to widen their discussion and analysis of stories from our culture and history.

Year 7:

Theme	Describing Worlds	The Art of Storytelling	Love Through Time
Set texts	Travel writing extracts	A Monster Calls	Romeo and Juliet

Year 8:

Theme	Gothic Fears	War and Conflict	Writing Around the World
Set texts	Dracula	The Bone Sparrow	World fiction extracts

Year 9:

Theme	Identity and Representation	Trends in Literature	Writing to Empower
Set texts	Pigeon English	Short stories & extracts from Shakespeare plays	Poetry

English

Key Stage 4 (years 10-11)

English Literature:

The AQA specification offers a variety of texts which are equally accessible for pupils of all abilities:

- “An Inspector Calls” remains key in conversations we can have with our pupils about class and social responsibility.
- “Macbeth” is a perennial favourite choice of Shakespeare text. Incorporating as it does the intriguing themes of power, betrayal and the supernatural, we feel that “Macbeth” continues to be the best choice.
- “A Christmas Carol” is a challenging novel, both in terms of its context and rich language. Our approach and the resources we have created help students with developing a sufficiently detailed understanding of this text.

English Language:

The use of written fiction and non-fiction extracts to inspire writing tasks is something really helps improve pupils’ writing; after all, to be a great writer you must be a great reader. Here pupils will learn to analyse writers’ use of language, structure, character etc. To explore the intended purpose of the piece of writing, be it an article, letter, diary entry or novel. Pupils will then make use of such techniques in their own creative writing. There are a good deal of links between the questions and skills assessed on Language Paper 1 and both Literature papers and the focus on the writer is present throughout all four exams. In this way, the AQA spec offers across both Language and Literature. Despite the Governmental push on ‘knowledge-based curriculums’, AQA promote themselves as providing a ‘skills based’ specification, which will always be the way with English Literature and Language. We do not want to promote rote learning of texts and answers; we want students to develop an analytical and curious eye when it comes to reading (which the examiners also tell us is the only way to reach the higher marks).

Key Stage 5 (years 12-13)

English Literature:

AQA’s A Level English Literature specification offers a rigorous, thought-provoking and engaging route through Literature over time. This course provides a broad range of text choices, delivered by teachers who are both knowledgeable and enthusiastic about them. The course places heavy emphasis on the contexts in which each text was written, including social, cultural and historical influences. This encourages students to develop a deeper understanding of our literary heritage. Students are actively encouraged to become critical readers and confident debaters. During Year 12, students explore texts with the focus of ‘Love through the Ages’ (Othello, The Great Gatsby); whereas, in Year 13, students explore texts written post-1945 (A Handmaid’s Tale, Streetcar Names Desire, Carol Anne Duffy poetry). In addition, the NEA task allows students to develop their independent research and essay-writing skills and serves as excellent preparation for all manner of University courses.

English Language:

The AQA specification is an interesting and varied course that allows students to gain the skills needed to analyse any text that is in front of them and establish, not only the deeper meanings within a text, but also how to connect meaning to a writer’s hidden agenda, ideology and values. Highly engaging and topical linguistic studies are a focal area of the course and include: language and gender; language and social groups; language and region; child language acquisition and language and occupation, offering a practical element to the programme in preparing students for further education and careers. An additional advantage of this specification is the opportunity for students to complete two NEAs where students investigate a particular aspect of language of their choice and produce one piece of original writing based on one of the following three areas: the power of persuasion; the power of storytelling; the power of information.

English

Key Stage 5 (years 12-13) continued

Media Studies:

The media play a central role in contemporary culture, society and politics. They shape our perceptions of the world through the representations, ideas and points of view they offer. The media have real relevance and importance in our lives today, providing us with ways to communicate, with forms of cultural expression and the ability to participate in key aspects of society. The economic importance of the media is also unquestionable. The media industries employ large numbers of people worldwide and generate significant global profit. The globalised nature of the contemporary media, ongoing technological developments and more opportunities to interact with the media suggest their centrality in contemporary life can only increase. The Eduqas A Level specification studied in Gordano School offers learners the opportunity to develop a thorough and in depth understanding of these key issues, teaching theory in order to support critical exploration and reflection, analysis and debate. The study of a wide range of rich and stimulating media products is central to the specification, offering opportunities for detailed analysis of how the media communicate meanings in a variety of forms. Students will develop skills of enquiry, critical thinking, decision making and analysis and demonstrate an appreciation and critical understanding of the media and their role both historically and currently in society, culture, politics and the economy. For the NEA, students will hone their practical skills by creating a media production (short film, magazine cover, film poster, music video etc.)