

WHAT ARE THE BIG AIMS OF YEAR 8?

Having explored a range of genres and viewpoints in Year 7, our Year 8 curriculum will build on this by continuing to explore a range of different contexts and time periods, both contemporary and historical. We provide pupils with opportunities to explore Shakespearean literature, themes of conflict, power and manipulation and exploration of other cultures and places. We aim to expand their abilities in reading; to enhance creative flair in various writing tasks and to assist pupils in the application of ambitious vocabulary to improve communication.

WHAT WILL EXCELLENCE LOOK LIKE IN YEAR 8?

A pupil achieving excellence will select appropriate reading strategies in order to read, decode, interpret and understand a range of challenging texts from different genres, including Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet, Lord of the Flies by William Golding and extracts of travel writing from various authors. A pupil showing excellence will understand how writers use methods to create meaning and will examine and explain how a writer develops a theme across a text; will analyse a writer’s presentation of character and will decipher meaning from figurative language and writer’s method analysis.

A pupil achieving excellence will evidence a range of analytical and creative pieces showcasing their ability to track a theme or perspective across a text and replicate this skill in their own writing. Within these pieces, pupils will develop their empathetic writing skills, their ability to craft sensory descriptions and maintain a viewpoint. The student will use ambitious vocabulary and grammatical structures precisely appropriate to the purpose, audience and format of the pieces.

WHAT KNOWLEDGE DO THE PUPILS NEED TO ACQUIRE?

- An understanding of the key themes that appear across the topic: conflict in Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet, power and manipulation in Lord of the Flies and place in extracts of travel writing.
- An understanding of a range of methods- in particular of figurative devices- which writers employ in order to create meaning and develop a theme or create a character.
- An understanding of the contexts in which the aforementioned texts were written.
- A range of punctuation and grammatical structures.
- A range of ambitious (tier 2) vocabulary related to the areas of study.
- Specialised (tier 3) vocabulary related to the areas of study.

WHAT SKILLS DO THE PUPILS NEED TO DEVELOP?

- Various reading skills and strategies, including decoding, developing inferences from deductions, making predictions and developing empathy for characters.
- To track a theme across a text
- The ability to explain opinions and interpretations of the writers’ methods and justify them with a range of evidence from the text.
- To establish and maintain a viewpoint in formal, non-fiction writing.
- The ability to craft imaginative pieces of writing appropriate to the purpose, audience and format.
- The ability to vary punctuation and grammatical structures to aid meaning.
- The ability to accurately apply appropriate vocabulary in writing

WHAT MISCONCEPTIONS MAY THEY HAVE FROM PREVIOUS LEARNING?

Pupils will have difficulty identifying the impact of a writer’s method on the reader, they may believe that identifying methods is enough to show understanding. There may be general misconceptions about the genres and historical contexts of the Elizabethan Era, perhaps due to a lack of cultural capital. There may be language barriers due to the use of metaphor and figurative language. There may be a lack of geographical and cultural knowledge of other places. They may have knowledge of different purposes and formalities but may not adapt the correct conventions and forms to the appropriate task/viewpoint. They may have difficulty in using language and features to create the appropriate register/tone. Pupils could have difficulty understanding the narrative viewpoint and the reasons for the writers’ choices.