

English Curriculum Intent Statement

Definition of Subject:

“The limits of my language means the limits of my world” – Ludwig Wittgenstein

The study of English is the study of words, ideas, people and the world around us. At Teign, students explore the power of language: how words shape the way we think, influence how we see others and enable us to find and express our own perspectives.

Through literature, students encounter lives, cultures, experiences and viewpoints beyond their own. They learn to question assumptions, think critically, embrace complexity and approach the experiences of others with curiosity and empathy. In doing so, they develop a richer understanding of both human nature and the world they inhabit.

Through reading, discussion and the craft of writing, we empower students to become thoughtful, articulate and independent thinkers: young people who have something to say and the confidence and skill to say it. We want them to challenge ideas, imagine possibilities and recognise the power of their own voice — to understand the world as it is, while dreaming boldly about what it could become.

Nature of the subject:

English as a discipline is often viewed as two separate but closely related areas: the study of language and the study of literature. While these are examined as two separate subjects at GCSE, we encourage students to see them as two parts of one whole. A strong knowledge of technical aspects of language helps students to refine their literary analysis, while a strong knowledge of literary works and concepts helps them to understand how language is used in the world around us.

English Literature focuses on the study of literary works, including a range of poetry, prose and drama from across time and space. Students begin by exploring the concept of authorship and intentionality before developing their ability to analyse how texts are shaped by writers to fulfil a wide range of purposes. English Language focuses on the study of technical and grammatical aspects of English, with students taking on the roles of both analyst and creator of texts.

Purpose of the subject:

To help students understand themselves, others and the world, and develop the confidence and voice to shape their place within it.

Our key objectives are:

- To build students' knowledge of literature, language and the world.

- To develop critical, thoughtful readers who question ideas and explore different perspectives.
- To foster a love of reading and an appreciation of the craft and possibilities of language.
- To develop empathy through encountering lives, experiences and perspectives beyond their own.
- To enable students to communicate with precision, confidence and creativity.
- To help students find their own voice, form their own perspectives and express them with confidence.
- To inspire students to think independently, challenge assumptions and dream big about their future.

Curriculum overview:

Year 7: Students explore the dual concepts of authorial intention and reader response. Their studies start with the exploration of fable and allegory, including Aesop's Fables and 'Animal Farm'. Students use 'Animal Farm' to explore the concept of 'theme' and to discuss wider intentions beyond narrative entertainment. Having developed knowledge of the intentionality of texts, students then move on to apply this to their own writing, in the form of Gothic descriptions inspired by their reading of 'The Woman in Black' and Pullman's stage version of 'Frankenstein'. Finally, students engage with ideas about power and control in 'The Tempest', developing their oracy skills alongside their reading of the text.

Year 8: Year 8 students will build on their knowledge of intentionality by focusing in more depth on writer's choices, and by exploring the role that genre and form have on shaping texts. Students begin with the exploration of poetry through the Teign School anthology, alongside reading the verse novel 'Long Way Down'. This study aims to focus students on the intentional choice of methods when constructing texts. This focus then develops in Cycle 2 to explore a range of distinct voices in both fiction and non-fiction texts, using these as inspiration for their own voices. Finally, Cycle 3 brings the study of 'Romeo and Juliet' where students read a range of extracts, focusing on character and theme development and how Shakespeare uses methods to communicate these ideas.

Year 9: The focus for Year 9 is on developing students' own purposeful use of language to succeed in their own intentions. Through the anthology 'Iridescent Adolescent', students explore a range of different narrative structures, analysing the effect of different writers' choices and using these as mentor texts for their own writing. Students then shift their focus to non-fiction texts, exploring a Teign School anthology of viewpoint texts from a range of genres and considering how intention can have an impact on language. Finally, in Cycle 3, students focus on the GCSE play 'An Inspector Calls' and analyse the choices made by Priestley in order to share his ideas about

society and the need for change. Alongside this, students also work on their own presentations and complete their GCSE Spoken Language endorsements.

Year 10: The focus in Year 10 is on developing students' confidence in independent analytical reading and writing of challenging texts. In Year 10, students build on their analytical reading skills through the study of a 19th century novel ('A Christmas Carol'). Dickens' text allows students to draw on conceptual knowledge of class, power, morality and human nature while also honing their analytical writing skills. Students also develop their own creative writing, exploring how to craft engaging descriptions and narratives in preparation for English Language Paper 1, Section B. Following this, students then study Shakespeare's 'Macbeth', deepening their exploration of power, tyranny, ambition, morality and human nature while developing increasingly confident and independent interpretations of the text. Students then move onto reading and writing non-fiction texts in preparation for their English Language Paper 2 exams, building on the skills obtained in Year 9, Cycle 2.

Year 11: Year 11 students work towards two GCSE qualifications: AQA English Language and AQA English Literature. At the start of the year, students continue to develop their unseen analysis skills by studying a range of fiction extracts in preparation for English Language Paper 1. Students explore the language and structural choices made by writers crafting their texts and then experiment with applying these methods in their own creative writing. Students then move on to their final English Literature. As students in the 2026-27 Year 11 cohort have followed a different curriculum sequence, at this point in the curriculum they will be studying 'The 19th Century Novel', focusing on how writers introduce and develop universal ideas across a text. In future years, 'Power and Conflict' poetry from the AQA anthology will be studied. The curriculum is sequenced to allow time for revision and exam preparation at the end of the course.

Year 12: The focus in Year 12 is on developing students as confident, independent readers who can explore how language and literary choices shape meaning across a range of texts. Students study the Component 1 non-fiction anthology, developing their understanding of how language is shaped by audience, purpose and context. Through the study of Shakespeare's 'Othello', students explore ideas around power, identity, race, gender, jealousy and manipulation, while developing increasingly sophisticated interpretations. Students also study Achebe's 'Things Fall Apart', exploring culture, identity, colonialism and conflict while considering different perspectives and contexts. Alongside their examined texts, students complete their coursework, developing their independence as readers, researchers and writers and pursuing their own interpretations of texts.

Year 13: The focus in Year 13 is on developing greater independence, confidence and sophistication in students' reading, interpretation and writing. Students complete their study of the Component 1 non-fiction anthology; study Blake's 'Songs of Innocence and of Experience' for Component 2 (exploring ideas around childhood, society, power, freedom and human experience) and for Component 3 students develop their creative writing, making deliberate and effective language choices. The remainder of the year allows students to revisit texts and concepts across the course, strengthening connections between their learning and refining their analytical and writing skills in preparation for their final examinations.