



Curriculum Intent for English at St Joseph's College

The English department at St Joseph's College aims to develop great thinking English students who use the English language to interpret themselves and the whole of society with world-changing insight.

The journey of Literature throughout the ages is one in which writers have endeavoured to make sense of, explore and question the wonderful complexities of the human psyche through the power of our always-changing, multi-cultural and ever-diversifying English Language. It is therefore logical and vital to take students on this journey: from the study of Greek theatre in year 7 where ancient philosophers first used drama and poetry to explore what it means to be human through to the Enlightenment, Romantic, Gothic and Modern eras in years 8 and 9 to chart the impact that social, political and industrial changes have on the ways that writers interpret people and the world in which they live.

The works of Shakespeare are studied in every year of Key Stage 3 as his scrutiny of: human relationships, human weaknesses, the way prejudice in its many forms can erode a society and the power of language to manipulate and inspire, delude and delight, degrade and enlighten is always relevant to young people trying to navigate their way through an unstable and insecure modern world.

Key Stage 3 therefore establishes firmly the foundations of knowledge and analysis required for success at GCSE level: where the study of Lord of the Flies will draw upon their knowledge of the dystopian genre from year 9 as well as Shakespearean themes of power and ambition encountered as early as year 7 and where the study of poetry throughout the ages will enable students to revisit their knowledge of such traditions as romantic and classical poetry from years 8 and 9. In addition, their experience will be enhanced by the ways in which the English Department, in conjunction with other departments, encourage students at each stage to make productive links between academic units across subjects: their study of the innate evil in humanity in the works of Golding and Shakespeare at GCSE will echo their year 8 studies of the Gothic era as well as the theories of Darwin studied in their Science lessons during the same year.

At all stages and in all units, the constant reinforcing and retrieval of key language skills is essential, whether studying literary or non-literary fiction and non-fiction. Each unit comes with a knowledge booklet which forms the basis for in-depth study, each one containing a range of literary and linguistic tasks which promote the sophisticated exploration of each genre. Key reading skills of inference, evaluation, comparison, synthesis and the analysis of language and structure are woven into all four units of each academic year and a range of imaginative writing tasks aim to hone the skill of writing engagingly and compellingly for a variety of purposes and audiences.