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Course outline with key assessment dates

For the A Level qualification, you will study for two terminal exams and a non-exam assessment:

Paper 1 (Language, the individual and society): two sections.

- Section A: Textual variations and representations - two questions on unseen texts (one contemporary and one older) and one question comparing the two texts.
- Section B: Children's language development - a discursive essay on children's language development.

Paper 2 (Language diversity and change): two sections.

- Section A: Diversity and change – choice of two evaluative essays on either language diversity (gender, occupation, regional variation etc) or language change.
- Section B: Language discourses – two texts linked to diversity/change topic, one analysis question and one directed writing task linked to the same topic.

Non-exam assessment – a language investigation (2000 words) and a piece of original writing with a commentary totalling (1500 words in total – 750 words each).

How the course is assessed

Paper 1 & Paper 2: 2 exams of 2 hours 30 minutes each = 80% of A Level
Language investigation & creative writing = 20% of A Level.

Both NEA submitted and terminal exams taken in Summer 2021.

Copy of the syllabus or a link to it

[A-level English 7702 | Specification | AQA](#)

Access details to VLE, blogs, resources areas etc

iLesson/English/Key Stage 5/A Level English Language tab

<http://www.bl.uk/>

<http://englishlangsfx.blogspot.co.uk/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/language>

<http://modern-english.co.uk/>

How the course is delivered

At A level, students are taught through paired teaching: one teacher will cover one exam and the other will cover the second exam. You will be required to attend nine teaching hours per fortnight: all nine lessons will be preparation for the two exams, plus there will be tutorial sessions to help support the NEA unit. Independent study will consist of students collecting and analysing their own data in the form of transcripts of speech, non-fiction texts like leaflets, recipes, newspaper articles etc.

Departmental expectations

English Language offers you an accessible and stimulating course in which you will engage with a variety of spoken and written texts. It is essential that you engage with all aspects of your study in order to maximise your understanding. Any absences will require you to obtain work missed and be fully prepared for the ensuing lessons. Homework must be completed on time, as many lessons will require this as a prerequisite to contributing during the next lesson. Study requires an independent approach to analysing and commenting on texts, thus providing a firm foundation for study in Higher Education. It requires you to respond creatively to texts, both in coursework and examined units, whilst in addition, expecting a high level of commitment to work and to reading beyond the classroom, and an ability to meet strict deadlines.

Your success on this course will depend upon your willingness to engage in group discussions, to be involved in debates and to be enthusiastic about fulfilling your potential. You will need to be prepared to undertake presentations to your student group and to be willing to contribute significantly to the learning environment.

The A level learning environment is very different to the one you have experienced at GCSE, and as such, your own approaches will need to be different. Achieving well at an advanced level involves taking responsibility for your own learning, working independently and meeting all deadlines.



How the course is taught over two years

Year 12:

- Introduction to studying language at an advanced level – key concepts, methods of language analysis, advanced grammar
- Units to be covered – Children’s language development, Language Diversity (Gender, Age, Sexuality, Regional variation, Occupation), Language Change
- NEA – Original writing/start investigation before Summer holidays

Year 13:

- Complete course content
- Revise all exam topics/concepts
- Textual analysis
- Finish NEA folder by early Spring term

Area for recording target grades & modules etc

Why did I choose to study English Language?		What are my expectations of the course?		What do I want to do after A level study? What grade do I need to achieve at A level?	
GCSE grade: English Literature	GCSE grade: English Language	Target grade	Summer assessment band	Mock exam grade	Mock exam grade
Student comments: What areas do I need to improve to achieve my target grade?					

SUMMER TASKS

Part 1: A key skills task

Aim – to promote a commitment to working at an advanced level through the utilisation of independent study and the adoption of an in-depth approach.

English Language:

1. Examine the two texts that follow on the next page. They are both NHS Public Health notices from the same time period around the Covid epidemic.

For each one work out and write down the following information:

Genre – What type of text is it? Does it follow any typical genre patterns?

Purpose – Why was it written? What response does the writer want from the audience?

Audience – Who has it been written for?

Context – Where is it from? Who wrote it? What was happening at the time that might affect the language use?

2. Annotate both texts carefully. Find interesting **language and graphological features** that they both use to create meanings and achieve their intended purpose. Also consider how they are adapted to reach different audiences.

Here is a reminder of the sort of analysis we discussed in the Taster Session and what you should aim for in analysing the two texts that follow on the next page.

Let's analyse this poster

Context: UK goes into lockdown as a result of Covid-19

Audience: British public

Purpose:
to instruct/advise/warn
to concisely remind
public about the
importance of lockdown.

Mode:
Multi-modal – is a
written text – poster –
but uses visual imagery
and layout to convey a
message. May appear
in print (leaflet) but also
likely to appear on the
T.V.



Symbol:
Crown emblem lends
authority to the
message – it is official

Typeface and Colours:

Black has connotations of authority and seriousness. Red has connotations of danger. Both set an appropriate tone for a 'warning'.

Graphology: Use of red and yellow stripe signals a warning message.

Use of downward arrows lends sense of urgency and forces reader through the message.

Syntax/Grammar & Lexis:

Use of imperative verbs, 'stay', 'protect' and 'save' – a clear and unambiguous message. Effect of triplet structure. Emotive lexis – protect...



Part 2: A grammar task

Aim – to provide a grounding in grammatical understanding as the foundation for textual analysis at A level.

Log onto www.cybergrammar.co.uk or other online source and revise the definitions of **nouns**, **pronouns**, **adjectives**, **verbs**, **adverbs** and **conjunctions**. You will need to provide evidence of revision resources or notes in the first lesson in September.

Then, have a look at the text below:

The fig tree is living on borrowed time. It has been a dozen years now since we dug a deep hole on the terrace and lowered the roots into the light, stony soil they love best. Now 30ft high and almost as wide, the tree teases us with never-ripening fruits, or bombards the garden with jam-like falling bombs as the mood takes it. It has quickly become a monster, producing too much shade and in autumn an avalanche of sodden brown leaves.

Whether the tree survives the garden redesign or not, the fig is a fruit I longingly look forward to all year, for eating with burrata, baking in a figgy version of tarte tatin or simmering into jam. (Fresh goat's cheese, white as snow, and warm fig jam are a gift from the gods.) This week I dipped ridiculously ripe figs into an autumnal game broth, roasted the fruit whole with marsala and served them warm, with melting seed-freckled ice cream.

If I was planning to serve a fig ice cream on its own, with perhaps a hazelnut-studded biscotti at its side, then I might make my special custard, chill it, and churn with the crushed figs in my ice-cream machine whose main use seems to be exactly this. But this edited version can be made without stirring custard or possessing a machine. It must have a good four hours in the freezer, with the occasional stir to push it in the direction of the creamy texture you get with an ice-cream machine. You will not be disappointed.

List 5 nouns from the text:

List 6 adjectives:

List 2 adverbs:

List a personal pronoun:

List 3 verbs:

List the conjunctions used:

Then, pick one phrase from the extract and comment on how the use of 1 or 2 individual words helps to make the recipe seem more appealing. (3-5 sentences maximum).

Part 3: Forensic Linguistics : “Language Fingerprints”

As you learn more about language use, you'll start to see that everybody has their own unique language style. Lots of things influence this – where we're from, how old we are, the type of work we do and our interests, our family backgrounds and our own individual personalities – but we all have what's called an idiolect (an individual language style). It's not quite the same as a fingerprint, but there are some similarities. And while detectives can use fingerprints to track down individuals, forensic linguists can also use this idea of individual language style to identify people, or aspects of a person's background.

This activity – a very simplified version of the kind of analysis forensic linguists do sometimes - puts you in the role of a language detective trying to solve a crime. The police need your help to work out who might have sent an abusive social media message from an anonymous account to a local politician. They have three suspects in custody and your job is to offer a view on which one you think is most likely to have sent the message, based on possible language clues.

Read Exhibit 1 below. This is the abusive message that the police are investigating. Is there anything that stands out in this message as being potentially interesting about how language is being used? Annotate or make a list of any significant findings.

Exhibit 1: the abusive message

Hope your really proud of yourself for what you done but you gotta no that one day your gonna get payback!!! We have had enough of politicians like you not listening to us, you should of listened!!! Watch your back

Social media messages about the same issue which were used to identify three suspects. Read through these in turn, again making a note of anything that strikes you as interesting about how language is being used.

Suspect 1's social media message

I don't like what's been happening in this area since the new housing development started. This used to be a nice place to live!!! I'm so disappointed in are local representatives for not sticking up for us!!!

Suspect 2's social media message

When are local councillors gonna realise that they should of been standing up for us and not for they're mates in the big building firms, these people are gonna make a fortune from this

Suspect 3's social media message

Your joking! Are they seriously going to build 200 new houses on the fields up by the hospital?! That is crazy. There's not enough facilities for the rest of us at the moment. Madness!!!

Based on this small amount of data, have you got any suggestions about who might have sent the abusive message? Write a short police report explaining your thoughts. Try to pin your thinking down to specific bits of language evidence in the data.

We will share findings and name the guilty culprit in your first week of lessons in Year 12!

Pre-reading/research

Reading around areas that we study will help with accessing the highest grades at A Level. TED talks, University research papers and articles from reputable sources like science magazines are great places to look. Topics we will cover during the course:

Paper 1

- Introduction to language study
- Grammar in use
- How language creates meaning & representation
- Children's language development – speech, reading & writing

Paper 2

- Language change – historical change over 400 years, current English Language issues, models of World Englishes, future of English.
- Language & gender
- Language & age
- Language & occupation
- Language & social class
- Regional variation: accent & dialects of UK

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