

Year 12 Topics

In Year 12 English Language we teach the following topics over the course of the year. Each topic draws on prior learning from previous years and builds on understanding from the KS3/KS4 programmes of study. Each topic develops and deepens the core knowledge that will underpin all areas of the curriculum at KS5 and onward into undergraduate courses.

Teacher A

Teacher B

Topic	Rationale	Knowledge acquisition	Key vocabulary	Skills and enrichment
Language Varieties TEACHER A <i>Autumn HT1 and HT2; Spring HT3</i>	Students will begin their A Level course by exploring sociolinguistic aspects of language use. Students will understand that language is an essential component of identity and that we belong to a variety of social groups that can influence our use of language. They will learn how to structure an evaluative response, drawing upon	<i>Geographical varieties of English</i> - Regional dialects, origins, variations in lexis/grammar/phonology - Case studies e.g. cockney rhyming slang, Geordie - Reasons for changes in accent/dialect over time - Attitudes to geographical varieties and theories (e.g. Giles, Neuliep and Speten Hansen etc) - Linguistic examples	<i>Core vocabulary</i> <i>Received pronunciation (RP), idiolect, sociolect, convergence, divergence, code switching/mixing, dialect, accent, dialect levelling, idiomatic phrase, restricted lexis</i> identity, standard English, slang, dialect, taboo, neologisms, register, receive pronunciation (RP), accent, idiomatic phrases, social mobility, multiple negation, plural marking, unmarked plurality, syntax, dialect levelling. idiolect, sociolect, unmarked by person	- Evaluative skills in relation to the theories and viewpoints covered (AO1) - Analytical skills when examining examples of language use in case studies and data (AO1) - Planning and structural skills when responding to an exam question (AO1) - Developing a coherent line of argument to 'guide the reader' when responding to exam questions (AO1) - Developing an ability to compare and contrast theoretical knowledge for evaluative purposes (AO1/AO2) - Developing the skills required to analyse language at word, sentence and whole-text level whilst applying the language levels (AO1) Enrichment - E-Magazine subscription. - Audio/video podcasts.
		<i>Language and age</i> - Different types of linguistic age (chronological/biological/social) - Appropriate theories related to age and language (e.g. Eckert, Bigham et al)	tags, linguistic maturation, multiple negation, informality, formality, convergence and divergence	

	linguistic and theoretical knowledge. This provides a foundation for the evaluative approach to CLA and the opinion pieces for Paper 2 Q3 and 4. Why this? Why Now? This unit establishes an understanding of language use in the world around us. Students begin their A Level learning with an appreciation of the fact that language use is heavily dependent on context.	• Language of children and slang • ‘Teenspeak’ and attitudes towards it • Influence of technology on language and age • Linguistic examples		○ Outside speakers, educational visits when possible and appropriate.
		<i>Language and gender</i> • Theories related to language and gender (e.g. deficit, difference and dominance etc) with detailed understanding of the circumstances of the studies for evaluative purposes • Secure knowledge of theorists (e.g. Lakoff, Tannen, Cheshire et al) • Examples of gendered language – links to case studies and specific quotations for illustrative purposes • Understanding of attitudes towards language and gender (and gendered language in particular)	representation, stereotype, hedges, super polite forms, empty adjectives, tag questions, mitigated imperatives	
		<i>Language and occupation</i> • Theories related to language and occupation (e.g. Giles’ Accommodation Theory) with detailed understanding of the circumstances of the studies for evaluative purposes	codes, restricted lexis, convergence and divergence, occupational register, acronyms, jargon, politeness markers, imperatives and mitigated imperatives, modal verbs, standard English, pronouns	

		• Knowledge of linguistic examples of codes, convergence/divergence, occupational register, acronyms • Understanding of attitudes towards language and occupation e.g. jargon, office-speak etc		
		<i>Language and sexuality</i> • Understanding how language can be used to suggest gender (e.g. terms of address) • Understand the case study of Polari with examples for illustrative purposes • Understanding of attitudes towards language reflecting sexuality	Polari, gender-neutral, pronoun, term of address, Lavender Languages	
		<i>Language and ethnicity</i> • Understanding how language can be used to represent ethnicity • Case studies and examples of language used to suggest ethnic identity (e.g. Gary Ives in Bradford) • Understanding of attitudes towards language and ethnicity • Illustrative examples of features of language and ethnicity (e.g. 'Jafaican')	code-switching, code-mixing, resistance identity, Multicultural London English (MLE), Creole, super-standard forms, patois, British Black English (BBE), Multicultural Urban British English (MUBE), linguistic appropriacy, ethnolects, ethnocentricity	

Meanings and representations TEACHER B <i>Autumn HT1 and 2</i>	Students will build upon their knowledge of analysing non-fiction texts at GCSE (Paper 2). They will be introduced to the analytical frameworks required to explore unseen non-literary texts, commenting on features of language and context. This unit is placed at the start of the long-term plan so that we can ensure that basic concepts and terms are embedded as foundational knowledge. It also connects to	<i>Text producers and receivers</i> Understanding of the ways that aspects of purpose, audience and genre can be linked to linguistic choices	<i>Core vocabulary</i> <i>Text producer/receiver, mode, representation, language levels, lexis, grammar, discourse structure, synthetic personalisation, declaratives, imperatives, phonology, intertextuality</i> discourse event, text producer, text receiver, primary and secondary purpose, implied reader, actual reader, discourse community, modes, oppositional view, blended-mode texts, genre, intertextuality, register, situation of use, representation, pragmatics, graphology, multimodal texts, deixis, politeness strategies, negative and positive face, discourse structure, narrative structure, alliteration, assonance	- Evaluative skills in relation to the language studied (AO1) - Analytical skills related to the application of language levels (AO1) - Analytical writing skills utilising and incorporating accurate linguistic terminology (AO1) - Analytical skills related to the evaluation of contextual factors and the ways that they influence meanings (AO3) - Analytical skills related to the evaluation of meanings created (AO1/AO3) - Comparative reading/analytical skills related to the linguistic features and contextual factors related to the unseen texts (AO1/AO3/AO4) Enrichment - E-Magazine subscription. - Audio/video podcasts. - Outside speakers, educational visits when possible and appropriate.
		<i>Lexical, semantic, grammatical analysis</i> Understanding of the ways that lexis and semantic language levels can be applied to a variety of unseen texts	word classes, lexis, noun, verb, adjective, adverb, pronoun, determiners, conjunctions, lexical/semantic field, collocation, antonyms, synonyms, dysphemism, hyponyms,	

	the study of opinion pieces later in the course, as well as the coursework component (language Investigation, original writing commentary).		metaphors, grammar, morphology, syntax, prefix, suffix, noun and verb phrases, modifiers, qualifiers, auxiliary verbs, clauses, active and passive voice, subordinate clauses, embedded clause, declarative, imperative, exclamation, orthographic sentence	
	Why this? Why now?	<i>Phonetics, phonology and prosodics</i> Understanding of the basic components of the sound system and how they can be used to create meanings in unseen texts	phonology, phonetics, prosodics, International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), heterophones, homophones, consonants, vowels, articulators, diphthongs, sound iconicity, sibilance, alliteration, assonance, lexical/non-lexical onomatopoeia	
	We use Paper 1A as a 'springboard' into the rest of the course. This is the unit which bears the most resemblance to GCSE English (GCSE English Language P2), and it allows us to establish the language levels as a framework for analysis.	<i>Graphological analysis</i> Understanding how multimodal texts use presentational aspects to create meanings in unseen texts	layout, iconography, symbol, multimodal texts	
		<i>Pragmatics</i> - Understanding the importance of contextual factors to the creation of meaning - Understanding of the pragmatic principles of cooperation, politeness and deixis	embodied knowledge, schema, co-text, cooperative principle, conversational maxims, implicature, positive and negative face needs (Goffman), face-threatening acts, deixis (personal, spatial, temporal, proximal, distal)	
		<i>Discourse and structural analysis</i>	Labov's narrative categories, internal and external evaluation,	

		Understanding of the ways that structural features can be used to create meanings in unseen texts	Goodwin's story structure, turn-taking, adjacency pair, preferred and dispreferred response, insertion sequence, filler, false start, repair, skip-connector, ellipsis, speaker support	
		Textual variations and representations - Understanding the ways in which texts can vary according to purpose, audience, genre, mode, tone, context and register - Understanding the representation of individuals and groups through the use of language in unseen texts - Understanding point of comparison and contrast in unseen texts	audience, purpose, genre, mode, formality, register, subtext, metaphor, implied meaning, audience positioning, synthetic personalisation, grammatical patterning, discourse marker, tag question, representation, stereotypes, ideology, linguistic relativity, reappropriation, stigmatising	
Topic	Rationale	Knowledge acquisition	Key vocabulary	Skills and enrichment
NEA/coursework preparation Teacher A (Language investigation) <i>Spring HT3/4</i>	Students will be introduced to the key conventions of a language investigation. This will be the students' first experience of completing coursework in English (it is not part of the GCSE course), and much of the	Language investigation - Understanding how to design a language investigation, paying attention to minimising variables. - Understanding how to collect and process data analytically. - Understanding how to evaluate data and arrive at tentative conclusions. - Understanding how to present a language investigation in a suitably academic and formal style.	Core vocabulary <i>Genre/function/user/theory based investigation, methodology, transcription, prosody, ethics, observer's paradox, variable, bibliography</i> data, variables, introduction, methodology, analysis, evaluation, lexis, semantics, pragmatics, graphology, discourse structure, grammar, phonology, context	- Organisational and planning skills – strategic thinking to design the coursework - Formal writing skills to write academically about the data analysed (AO1) - Analytical skills, utilising and integrating suitable language levels (AO1) - Independent learning skills to carry out wider reading and research (AO1) - Analytical skills related to the application of suitable theoretical knowledge (AO2). - Analytical and evaluative skills related to the consideration of contextual factors (AO3).

	challenge arises from the requirement for them to work independently. This unit builds on the linguistic knowledge gained so far on the course. Why this? Why now? Having established the methods of analysis as well as a range of linguistic contexts, students can begin to explore language use in the world around them. This also allows time for planning, data collection and redrafting.	• Understanding how to apply relevant theoretical knowledge.		Enrichment ○ E-Magazine subscription. ○ Audio/video podcasts. ○ Outside speakers, educational visits when possible and appropriate.
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NEA/coursework preparation Teacher B (Original writing and commentary) <i>Spring HT3/4</i>	Students will be introduced to the key conventions of specific types of writing (writing to persuade and/or inform). They will explore style models and experiment with the application of their knowledge of generic conventions. They will build upon their knowledge of linguistic analysis when preparing the commentary. Much of the challenge arises from the requirement for students to complete this unit independently. Why this? Why now?	Original writing and commentary • Understanding the generic and stylistic conventions found in a range of texts (storytelling, persuasion, information). • Understanding how to analyse these generic styles and conventions with reference to appropriate language levels. • Understanding how to reflect analytically on the language choices made when creating a piece of original writing that is related to the style model chosen.	Core vocabulary <i>Rhetoric, tricolon, inclusive pronouns, pun, superlative, ethos building, expert testimony, pathos, logos, comparative adjective, sensory imagery, first-person narration, evaluative adjectives, extended metaphor, anecdote, cultural loanwords, critique</i> conventions, register, style model, commentary, lexis, semantics, pragmatics, discourse structure, phonology, graphology, grammar, syntax, purpose, audience, genre, context	• Organisational skills related to the drafting of a piece of original writing (AO1, AO5) • Analytical skills related to the analysis of style models (AO1, AO3, AO5). • Creative writing skills related to the drafting of original writing and commentaries (AO1, AO3, AO4, AO5). • Written accuracy (AO1). • Evaluative skills related to the redrafting of work independently and to the consideration of effects created (AO1, AO3, AO4, AO5). • Comparative/analytical skills when considering the success of the original writing in terms of its reproduction of the features of the style model (AO4) Enrichment ○ E-Magazine subscription. ○ Audio/video podcasts. ○ Outside speakers, educational visits when possible and appropriate.
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	Having established the analytical framework for linguistic analysis (language levels), students can use this knowledge to deconstruct a text before creating their own version. This introduces AO5 which will also appear in Paper 2 Section B (Q4) later in the course.			
Language discourses Teacher A <i>Spring HT4/Summer HT5</i>	Students will develop their knowledge of the ways in which language can be used to debate and discuss linguistic topics. This will draw upon theoretical and contextual knowledge, as well as their	Language discourses (reading) - Understanding the generic and stylistic conventions found in a range of opinion pieces (e.g. speeches, articles, web pages, blogs). - Understanding of methods of representation. - Understanding of the ways that language and contextual factors contribute to the creation of meanings	Core vocabulary <i>(reading) discourse marker, audience positioning, ideology, textual cohesion, antithesis, generic convention, register</i> <i>(writing) counter argument and rebuttal, cause and effect connectives, premise-based framing, analogy, concession, authoritative verbs, modal verbs, hypophora</i>	- Analytical skills related to the application of the knowledge of language levels and relevant terminology (AO1) - Analytical skills related to the application of contextual knowledge and consideration of meanings (AO3) - Comparative/analytical skills (AO4) - Creative writing skills (AO5) - Writing skills related to presenting theoretical content for a non-specialist audience (AO2/AO5)

	understanding of stylistic features and conventions in a range of opinion pieces. This unit connects to the earlier, foundational, unit on Paper 1A (Meanings and Representations). Why this? Why now? Having established an understanding of methods of analysing unseen texts, students can now apply this knowledge to texts with a linguistic focus. This also builds on knowledge established through the study of language varieties.	<i>Language discourses (writing)</i> • Understanding of the generic and stylistic conventions found in a range of opinion pieces (e.g. speeches, articles, web pages, blogs). • Understanding of methods of representation. • Understanding of the ways that language and contextual factors can contribute to the creation of meanings.	audience, purpose, genre, mode, formality, register, subtext, metaphor, implied meaning, audience positioning, synthetic personalisation, grammatical patterning, discourse marker, tag question, representation, stereotypes, ideology	Enrichment ○ E-Magazine subscription. ○ Audio/video podcasts. ○ Outside speakers, educational visits when possible and appropriate.
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Topic	Rationale	Knowledge acquisition	Key vocabulary	Skills and enrichment
Language Change Teacher B* <i>*This content will lead into the autumn term of Year 13</i> <i>Summer HT5 and HT6</i>	It is important for students to understand how aspects of language (orthography, morphology, semantics etc) have developed over time as well as anticipating the future evolution of the language. In this unit, students will develop their understanding of the ways that language changes over time as well as the reasons for these changes. It	Language change - Understanding the ways that the English language has changed over time. - Understanding the reasons why language changes. - Understanding the debates about language change.	Core vocabulary <i>prescriptivism, descriptivism, neologism, inkhorn terms, amelioration, pejoration, standardisation, loan words, orthography, compounding, clipping, blending, assimilation, omission, pedant</i> prescriptivism, descriptivism, synchronic change, lexical change, neologisms, loan words, coinage, compounding, clipping, blending, acronym, initialism, affixation, conversion/functional shift, eponym, back formation, endangered words, lexical loss, Inkhorn Controversy, inkhorn terms, change from above/below, semantic change, neosemy, generalisation/broadening, specialising/narrowing,	- Analytical and evaluative skills in relation to the exploration of theories and linguistic exemplification (AO1/AO2) - Analytical skills in applying a range of appropriate and relevant language levels (AO1). - Analytical and evaluative skills in applying linguistic knowledge to exemplification. - Wider reading re: causes and factors related to language change (AO2) Enrichment ○ E-Magazine subscription. ○ Audio/video podcasts. ○ Outside speakers, educational visits when possible and appropriate.

	emphasises the importance of English, and, it takes account of the social, historical and technological reasons for change. Furthermore, it is hoped that students will participate in the great debates surrounding developments in the English language. Why this? Why now? Having explored language in the modern world (language varieties), we look at the history of language development as well as its causes and the debates		amelioration, pejoration, weakening/bleaching, metaphor, euphemism, polysemy, external/internal factors, orthography, spelling reform, grammatical change, grammar pedants, stative verb, standardisation, 'damp spoon syndrome', 'crumbling castle', 'infectious disease', assimilation, omission, neatenening/regularisation, random fluctuation/cultural transmission, diffusion and S-curve, substratum v borrowing	
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	arising from this change. Aspects of this unit can be more challenging (e.g. orthographical, morphological development), so it is studied later in the year.			
Child Language Acquisition Teacher A* <i>*This content will lead into the autumn term of Year 13</i> <i>Summer HT5 and HT6</i>	We can understand our own language use by tracing its acquisition throughout childhood. Students will develop their understanding of the ways that children learn to speak, read and write. They will explore the theoretical debates related to this topic, evaluating data and concepts with precision. This unit builds	Child Language Acquisition - Understanding the ways in which children learn to talk and the related theories surrounding language acquisition. - Understanding environmental factors influencing language development (speech, reading, writing). - Understanding the importance of early reading to literacy development/how children learn to read. - Understanding the stages of writing development in relation to handwriting, spelling, lexis, grammar.	Core vocabulary – spoken language <i>Nativism, behaviourism, social interactionism, operant conditioning, consonant cluster, virtuous error, critical period, scaffolding, cognitive development, IRF (initiation, response, feedback), paralinguistics, usage-based linguistics</i> Spoken language communicative competence, proto words, pre-verbal, holophrastic, two-word stage, telegraphic/post-telegraphic, cooing, babbling, paralinguistics, reduplicated words, diminutives, addition, substitution,	- Analytical skills related to the application of language levels and appropriate linguistic/grammatical knowledge when exploring spoken/written data (AO1). - Analytical and evaluative skills when applying knowledge of a range of theories and concepts related to child acquisition of language (AO1/AO2). Enrichment ○ E-Magazine subscription. ○ Audio/video podcasts. ○ Outside speakers, educational visits when possible and appropriate.

	on the students' knowledge of linguistic analysis and theoretical evaluation (covered earlier in Language Varieties and Textual Meanings and Variations). Why this? Why now? Having established the significance of language to our identity, we explore our own acquisition of language. This is a more in depth and potentially challenging unit, so it is studied later in the course. Furthermore, it draws upon the analytical and theoretical knowledge that		assimilation, deletion, consonant cluster reductions, content words, grammatical words, nativist, behaviourist, operant conditioning, positive/negative reinforcement, LAD (Language Acquisition Device), tabula rasa, universal grammar, virtuous errors, critical period, cognitive development, LASS (Language Acquisition Support System), scaffolding, egocentricity, object permanence, MKO (More Knowledgeable Other), zone of proximal development, usage based linguistics, CDS (Child Directed Speech), expansion, recast, mitigated imperatives, politeness features, IRF (Initiation, Response, Feedback), over and underextension, hyponym, hypernym, Wug test, free and bound morphemes, MLU (Mean length of utterance), copula verb, negative acquisition Core vocabulary – literacy <i>Phonics, oracy, literacy, synthetic phonics, analytic phonics, onset and rime, gross and fine motor skills, directionality, under and overgeneralisation, cursive, print and casual cursive script</i>	
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	has already been established in relation to Paper 1A and language varieties.		<i>Reading and written language</i> grapheme, phoneme, look and say approach, phonic approach, synthetic/analytic phonics, onset/rime, reading scheme, oracy, literacy, tripod grip, gross and fine motor skills, directionality, emergent writing, spelling stages, creative v rule based models or writing skill acquisition, genre, audience, purpose, genre-based literacy, expressive/poetic/transactional writing, cursive, print, casual cursive script, homonyms, homophones, undergeneralisation, overgeneralisation, omission, substitution, transposition, insertion, digraphs	
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