



Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School

Educating Women of the Future

English Key Stage 3 Curriculum

	Topic/Big Question	Focus
Year 7	History of the English Language	This unit is a journey through the history of English Literature. We start in the mediaeval period with an introduction to Geoffrey Chaucer's 'Canterbury Tales' and then travel through time focusing on key pieces of literature and significant writers through the ages. The students are involved in analysing a range of writing by different authors and poets and have the opportunity to produce pieces of writing of their own in various styles.
	Creative Writing	This unit engages the students in looking at a range of writing in the fantasy genre and producing their own writing in this style. The focus here is on developing their toolkit of skills focusing on grammar, punctuation, spelling and vocabulary.
	Study of a Modern Novel	In this unit the students read and study a modern novel specifically written for children and young people. The choice of novel will be made by the class teacher and the current selection is: 'Skellig' (Almond), 'Daydreamer' (McEwan), 'Stone Cold' (Swindells), Holes (Sachar) and 'Haroun and the Sea of Stories' (Rushdie). They will focus on the plot, character, setting and themes and produce a piece of writing in response to the text.
	Poetry	In this unit students will study a range of poetry including ballads and narrative poetry. The focus will be on enjoyment and appreciation of this genre but they will also be taught some skills of analysis, building further on the skills developed during Key Stage 2. They will be introduced to some new linguistic tools which they will utilise to produce an analysis of a poem.
	Introduction to Shakespeare	In this unit, the students will be introduced to the life and works of William Shakespeare. They will learn about the playwright and his contextual influences as well as his theatre and dramatic devices. The focus will be on the comedy 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'; they will learn about the plot and character and have experience of reading and understanding Shakespeare's verse.

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Year 8	Study of a Shakespeare play	In this unit, we develop the learning acquired in Year 7 during the Introduction to Shakespeare unit. Students will study one Shakespeare play from the teacher's choice of 'Othello', 'Hamlet' or 'Macbeth' or 'The Merchant of Venice'. Here they will start to develop skills required for GCSE English Literature including analysing Shakespeare's language. They will write about a character using key extracts from the play.
	Short stories	In this unit, students study the short stories of Thomas Hardy, a writer from British literary heritage and one of our key authors. The stories are read and analysed within the context of the Victorian era. They then produce their own short stories in which they utilise some of the literary devices identified within Hardy's work. The focus is on developing vocabulary and accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
	Poetry	In this unit, we build on the skills of reading and analysing poetry developed in Year 7. The students study a range of poems representing different cultures. They will consider the poems from various perspectives, learn about the poets' contextual influences, learn new analytical tools and use them to produce an analysis of a poem. This provides a good grounding for skills required later in GCSE.
	Non fiction (Women)	In this unit, the students will read, discuss and analyse a range of non fiction texts by and about women. They will study some poetry by Maya Angelou, in particular the poem 'Phenomenal Woman' and will write their own version of the poem in response to this. We then look at the representation of women in Disney movies and discuss the extent to which this is stereotypical. They produce a piece of polemical writing in response to this study. This is early preparation for a key component of GCSE English Language.
	Study of a Modern Drama text	In this unit, students study a play written post 1900, either Russell's 'Blood Brothers' or Wilde's 'The Importance of Being Earnest'. They will learn about dramatic techniques and explore the plot, characters and social and historical context of the play. There will be many opportunities for discussion and reading in role. The final assessment will be a speaking and listening task in which they demonstrate their learning alongside their skills in oracy / spoken language.

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Year 9	Short Stories	At the start of Year 9, students read and study a range of short stories written by a diverse range of writers. They learn about the structure of a story arc and explore setting and characterisation. There will be a different focus with each story and a range of written tasks will be set. Students will carry out language analysis and be introduced to different narrative techniques.
	Poetry	Here we study a unit of poems from the AQA GCSE English Literature anthology on the theme of Relationships. This is the alternative option to the one taught for their GCSE. We will build on all the skills acquired during Year 7 and 8 to fully equip them for the demands of the GCSE poetry unit. They will learn to understand how the contextual influences of each poet impacts on the poem and apply their skills of analysis to a comparison of two poems from the selection.
	Victorian Literature	Although we do not actually start the GCSE Literature course until Year 10, we study a set text for the GCSE course here as a way of introducing the novel and providing background work on context. We read and analyse Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol' and practise GCSE style writing in response. We study the text within the broader context of Victorian literature and look at other works by Mary Seacole and Charlotte Bronte. Students carry out independent author studies.
	Study of a Shakespeare play	All students will study a Shakespearean comedy; 'Much Ado About Nothing' or 'Twelfth Night'. Building on skills and knowledge about Shakespeare developed in Years 7 and 8, they will read the text and get to know the plot and characters alongside relevant sociological and historical context. Their written work will be in the style of GCSE assessments and focus on analysis of extracts as well as a focus on a whole text theme or issue.
	Speeches	At the end of Year 9, students each write and present a speech for their GCSE Spoken Language assessment. They prepare by studying a range of speeches and identifying the use and effect of rhetorical devices then are encouraged to use these devices in their own writing.