

# English Language A-Level Transition Project March- September 2020

For those of you interested in studying English Language at A level, here's a quick summary of what the course entails – forget GCSE English Language – it's not like that at all!

## A Level English Language

### LITERATURE :

Study novels, plays and poems in detail

### LANGUAGE :

Study the way in which writers and speakers use language in texts from the 'real world', both WRITTEN and SPOKEN

## WHAT TYPES OF TEXTS WILL I STUDY?

### WRITTEN:

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### SPOKEN:

Phil: what's up Ben?  
Ben: nothing's up Dad  
Phil: if anything was bothering you son you would tell me?  
Ben: Dad even if I told you you would not understand  
Phil: try me son  
Ben: you're marrying Stella  
Phil: what's wrong with that son? I thought you was happy about it  
Ben: nothing  
(Stella butts in)  
Stella: how about we go to the park later?  
Ben: (to keep Stella happy) ok

TITLE OVER:

BIG FISH

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Young Dr. Bennett stands between the Wife's legs. She's flustered and sweating, but the doctor has a comforting bedside manner...

YOUNG DR. BENNETT  
Now, Mrs. Bloom, I'll need you to give me one good push. On three.  
One...

Suddenly, we hear a POP as a slimy mass of human being rockets into the doctor's unprepared hands. Bennett tries to hold tight, but the infant is slippery like a fish. It shoots up into air.

The NURSES and the Husband try to grab the baby, but no one can hold it. As the newborn sails upward TOWARDS CAMERA, we can see a GIGGLING SMILE on its face.

As it falls, the newborn knocks over a tray, which provides it a ramp to slide right out of the room. Everyone races after it.

## Topics for debate and investigation:

- Our language is being infected by words which enter the language like “twerking”.
- Texting is affecting people’s use of English language negatively.
- Men are more likely to interrupt people than women.
- The internet is improving spelling and punctuation because young people are reading more.

## The A Level Content **OCR**

RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENT

80% exam 20% coursework

- **Analyse** a text in context.
- **Compare and contrast** how language is used in two texts from different contexts.
- **Write about** a named language topic for a specific form, audience and purpose (e.g. magazine).

## The A Level Content



- ▶ **Analyse** a text using knowledge of how children aged 0-7 acquire language.
- ▶ **Analyse** a media text using your knowledge of power and gender, as well as technology.
- ▶ **Compare** two texts from different times, between 1600 and present day.

### **Non-examined unit (coursework):**

- ▶ Language investigation of 2000-2500 words
- ▶ Academic poster of 750-1000 words

## The Investigation

- How is language used by the editors of GQ and Cosmopolitan magazine to represent gender?



- How does Piers Morgan use language to challenge his guests on Good Morning Britain?
- How does Mark Hughes respond to challenging questions in post-match interviews?

## What does an English Language student look like?



- ▶ Is interested in articles in newspapers, web articles, magazines, speeches.
- ▶ Isn't daunted by the idea of analysing texts ranging from the script of “Dr Who”, to a transcript of a House of Commons debate or a child’s story.
- ▶ Enjoys the analysis of **how language works** in the texts at GCSE (though this really is **NOTHING** like GCSE English).
- ▶ Is keen to investigate and work independently.
- ▶ *We recommend students should have a 5 or above in English Language to perform well in this subject.*

## Why should I choose English Language?

- ▶ Skills of analysis and evaluation are developed to a high level and are **useful in many other subject areas**.
- ▶ Understanding how texts work means **you can use language more effectively yourself** (for example, in coursework and dissertations).
- ▶ Considering language **critically** helps ensure you make informed decisions in life.



## Writing tasks

To get a taste of the type of work you will be doing on the course, have a go at the following activities:

### **\*\*Write your own blog**

- Find a blogger online that writes about a topic you are interested in e.g. celebrities, fashion, football, food.

- Read at least 5 of their blog entries.
- Make a list of the language devices the blogger uses to engage the reader (e.g. humour, personal anecdotes) and find a quote as an example of each device.
- Now plan a blog of your own. This could just be one blog post or several, depending on how passionate you are. Choose a topic that really interests you, it can be something general like a sport, a hobby or a TV series, or it may be something very precise like the McDonalds drive thru or eyeliner. Plan to write approximately 500 words on your chosen topic per blog post.
- Now write your blog post (at least one but could be more). Remember to let your personality shine through your writing and to be creative with language, use the language devices you spotted in the blogs you collected.
- *Podcast - Extra challenge: now find a podcast that you enjoy. Listen to 2 or 3 episodes and make a list of strategies that the speakers use to engage their listeners.*
- *Podcast - Extra challenge: plan to make an episode for your own podcast, again on an issue that you are passionate about. You must plan first to ensure that you have enough to talk about for at least 5 minutes.*
- *Podcast - Extra challenge: record your own podcast, use the techniques you have observed to make it fun and entertaining.*

### **\*\*How does language represent us?**

- Pick a social or ethnic group e.g. immigrant workers, travellers, footballers, city bankers OR choose an individual e.g. Piers Morgan, Kim Kardashian, Peter Crouch, Gemma Collins.
- Collect at least 4 or 5 articles about this group or individual using online newspapers or your own newspapers/magazines.
- Read each article and consider how the language used in them represents the group/individual. Make annotations on the articles of any interesting language choices and what they suggest about the group/individual.
- Create a poster to summarise your findings. You can present this in whatever way suits you best, but the poster should clearly present what articles you have and where you collected them from; should include extracts from the articles; should include annotations and should include a summary of how you feel the group/individual have been presented.

**\*\*Do some research** Part of the course includes learning about topical issues that relate to the use of language, such as those on the slide here:

### Topics for debate and investigation:

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- Use online sources to research how true each of the statements above is.
- Collate your research into a word document.
- Summarise what you have discovered rather than just copying and pasting.
- Try to consider more than one source, there may be several sides to the arguments, include at least 2 of them for each statement.
- Use the recommended websites below to help if you are stuck, but start by using a Google search.

Here are some recommended websites to either help with your projects or to give you some wider reading:

E-magazine: <https://www.englishandmedia.co.uk/e-magazine/>

[www.englishbiz.co.uk](http://www.englishbiz.co.uk)

[www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/alevel/index.htm](http://www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/alevel/index.htm)

[www.universalteacher.org.uk](http://www.universalteacher.org.uk)

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-a-level-gce/english-language-h070-h470-from-2015/>

### **Research Tasks**

**PART 1:** Write a definition for each of the following terms used in language study (see websites below for help):

1. Genre
2. Lexis

3. Discourse structure
4. Semantics
5. Pragmatics
6. Phonology
7. Syntax
8. Grammar
9. Graphology
10. Multimodality
11. Exophoric reference
12. Cohesion
13. Collocation
14. Convergence
15. Intertextuality
16. Register

**PART 2:** Find a range of short texts from different genres and with different audiences and purposes (at least 5) based on a common theme (e.g. food, education, sport).

Create a poster to visually group these texts (annotate similarities and differences in a way you best see fit) according to their linguistic qualities and annotate their use of language.

You should annotate and find connections based on the following in each text: - How formal or informal are the language choices? - How do the texts use visual features (images, font, colour, layout)? - What content/information do the texts include? - How do the texts use facts and opinions? - How do the texts use adjectives or other word categories? - How do the texts use different sentence types: simple, compound, complex?

**EXTENSION:** You could also annotate some of the terms above, following your research.

WEBSITES YOU COULD USE TO SUPPORT YOUR LEARNING:

<http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-a-level-gce-english-language-h070-h470-from-2015/>

<http://www.universalteacher.org.uk/>

<http://www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/alevel/resources.htm>

