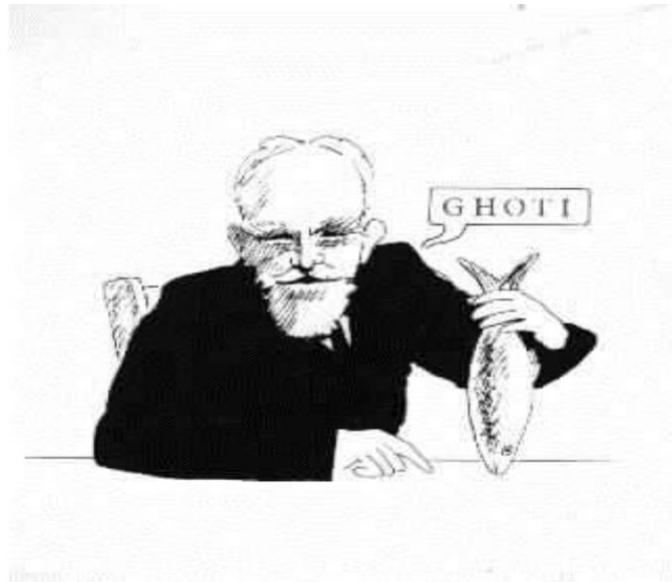


The Burgate School and Sixth Form

A Level English Language



enough women nation

Welcome to the Sixth Form English Department!

This booklet will provide you with an overview of your new course and details of an Induction Task to be completed over the summer.

Please have a good look through it so that you know what to expect in September and have a go at the tasks...

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Introduction:

Congratulations for choosing to study English Language at A Level. You have chosen to study a course that will not only build upon your skills developed at GCSE, but also will encourage you to think critically and prepare for whatever your next steps may be.

This booklet is broken down into two key sections covering aspects of Language that you might like to investigate and think about. Each section contains wider reading recommendations, possible research questions and some activities to help you make a strong start in September.

Prepare to think a little differently about the world!

English Language Progression:

Welcome to English Language! English Language covers a wide range of topics and you may find this initially quite daunting. However, the field of English Language is varied and wide, and as a result, lots of people like discussing it! Hopefully this guide will help you with some starting points to ease the transition from GCSEs to A Level.

Course details: AQA English Language

<https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/specifications/AQA-7701-7702-SP-2015.PDF>

Paper 1: Language, the Individual and Society

What's assessed?

- Textual Variations and representations
- Children's language development (age 0-11)
- Methods of language analysis are integrated into the activities

How will it be assessed?

Written exam – 2 hours 30
minutes 100 marks
40% of the A-Level

Questions?

Section A: Textual Variations and Representations. Two texts (one contemporary and one older text) linked by topic or theme.

- A question requiring analysis of an older text (25 marks)
- A question requiring analysis of a second text (25 marks)
- A question requiring comparison of the two texts (20 marks)

Section B: Children's Language Development. A discursive essay on children's language development, with a choice of two questions where the data provided will focus on spoken, written or multimodal language (30 marks)

Paper 2: Language Diversity and Change

What's assessed?

- Language diversity and change
- Language discourses
- Writing skills
- Methods of language analysis are integrated into the activities

How will it be assessed?

Written exam – 2 hours
30 minutes 100 marks
40% of the A-Level

Questions?

Section A: Diversity and Change. One question from a choice of two:

- Either – an evaluative essay on language diversity (30 marks)
- Or: an evaluative essay on language change (30 marks)

Section B: Language Discourses. Two texts about a topic linked to the study of diversity and change.

- A question requiring analysis of how the texts use language to present ideas, attitudes and opinions (40 marks)
- A directed writing task linked to the same topic and the ideas in the texts (30 marks)

Non-Examined Assessment

What's assessed?

Language
Investigation
Original
Writing

Methods of language analysis are integrated into the activities

How will it be assessed?

Word count:

3,500 words

100 marks

20% of A-Level

Assessed by

teachers

Moderated

by AQA

Tasks?

A language investigation (2,000 words excluding data)

A piece of original writing and commentary (1,500 words total)

From GCSE to A Level:

Although every college/sixth form is different, the shift from GCSE to A Level is often based upon the idea of independence. In English Language the expectations will most likely be that you will take on a greater responsibility for your learning. What this means is that you will have to come up with your own opinions and ideas about texts, discuss ideas without prompting and complete essays with fewer restrictions on how you approach the question compared with GCSE. You will be expected to complete work independently and quite often in advance of each lesson. You may also be required to deliver things such as short presentations and participate in seminars (discussion and debate-based learning).

Kit List

In order to be prepared for your English A Level, these are some things you'll need to have with you:

Files/folders. You'll probably need two – one for each teacher. You may also want to put some dividers in each and definitely some plastic wallets to store handouts, etc.

Highlighters

Fine line felt-tips for annotation

Post-its

File paper

Memory stick. You can store other students' research and presentations this way, as well as your own.

Most students like to use a laptop for coursework and some students use them for their notes. (You don't NEED one).

Expectations

You will be expected to equip yourself for intelligent and active involvement in every lesson.

You will be given homework from each teacher once a week. This could range from essay writing to shorter written tasks; research; or preparation for the next lesson.

You should expect to work ONE HOUR in private study for every ONE HOUR lesson attended, i.e. 9 hours per fortnight.

If you are unable to attend a lesson for any reason, it is vital that you explain your absence and catch up on the work you have missed.

Exploring the course content

The most challenging aspect of A Level English Language is getting to grips with the huge amount of terminology that you will be expected to know and use accurately.

The aim here is to introduce you to the many ways of looking at language in use, both spoken and written. This is **very different** from how it is done at GCSE. You will use new **methods of language analysis** to explore audience, purpose, genre, mode and representation. This will involve analysing and investigating a variety of texts taken from everyday sources.

Task 1:

The methods we will use to analyse language are called **“Language Levels”**

The following areas of language form the basis of study:

1. **Lexis and Semantics** (Vocabulary and meanings)
2. **Pragmatics** (Context and implied meanings)
3. **Grammar and syntax** (How language is organised at sentence, clause, phrase and word level)
4. **Phonetics, phonology and prosodics** (How speech sounds and effects are labelled and analysed)
5. **Graphology** (The visual aspects of texts)
6. **Discourse** (How longer stretches of communication are organised in a variety of modes and contexts)

Use Seneca at <https://www.senecalearning.com/> to introduce yourself to some of the terminology used within these frameworks.

Start by creating a working glossary document so that you can collect all the key terms you learn in one place, making it easier to revise in the future.

<https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/AQA-7701-7702-GLOSSARY.PDF>

Don't be put off by the amount of terminology in this document – by the end of the course, you will be able to use everything confidently.

Task 2:

Radio 4's 'Word of Mouth' programme:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qtnz/episodes/player>

Available on BBC iPlayer. In this half hourly programme, Michael Rosen discusses various sorts of language from broad areas, such as the use of slang and language linked to gender identity, to more niche areas such as the naming of diseases and clichés in football commentary

Ted Talks:

https://www.ted.com/playlists/228/how_language_changes_over_time

For each of the talks, make notes about the following questions and then choose one of the following topics to investigate in more depth:

Txting is killing language. JK!!!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are your views on the way that texting (and social media in general) has influenced language?• What are the key differences between the way we use language in speech and the way we use it in language?• Look at the way the speaker discusses the use of the phrase 'LOL.'• How far do you agree with his assertion that the role of 'LOL' has changed? Do you still use this technique? <p>Investigation: What are the key features of the way you use language in text messages and social media? What affects the way you use language in these situations?</p>
Go ahead, make up new words!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How far do you agree with the idea that we are pre-programmed to apply certain grammatical rules such as plurals?• According to the talk, what are the different ways of creating new words?• Look at the new words that have been added to the Oxford English Dictionary (google 'new words list' and they will appear). What methods have been used? <p>Investigation: Try to create a new word and see if you can track its usage. Think about the gap you are trying to fill and how you will get the word to spread around different speakers.</p>
How language transformed humanity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How essential is language to social learning?• Pagel presents an argument for a global language. What are your thoughts about creating a single global language? What are the potential benefits of such a situation? What are the potential downsides to this

	<p>situation?</p> <p>Investigation: Pagel discusses the idea that language is subversive and that there are certain words you cannot say. Discuss the words that are considered 'dangerous' or 'taboo' in modern society. How has this changed over time? Are there words that could be used 50 years ago that are considered inappropriate now? Why has this changed?</p>
<p>What our language habits reveal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the different types of verb that Pinker discusses? • Why might speakers choose to use euphemistic or metaphorical phrases for certain events or ideas? • Pinker discusses the use of language to create implicature (implying meaning but not saying it directly). In what ways have you used or heard implicature in different settings or situations? <p>Investigation: Look at different political speeches and identify how language has been used to convey or reinforce certain ideologies or values. How do politicians use implicature to affect the audience's response? What values do they assume their audiences hold?</p>
<p>Don't kill your language!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This talk is in a different language with subtitles. What were your initial responses to this? Did this make you less likely to want to engage with the talk? What do you think that reveals about the way we respond to different languages? • To what extent do you feel that language is an important part of culture? • What might make someone give up their native tongue in favour of a different language? <p>Investigation: Research a country that has English as a primary language alongside other national languages – e.g. South Africa, Jamaica or Singapore. How does this country use English? How did English arrive in the country? What effects has English had on the native languages?</p>
<p>What makes a word real?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In your opinion, when should a word be added to the standard dictionary? What criteria do you think it should fulfil before it is added? • Do you think any words should be banished? What criteria would a word have to fulfil in order for it to be threatened with 'banishment'? • Can you write a definition of what makes a word real? <p>Investigation: Select three new slang words that you think your English teacher needs to know in order to be able to communicate effectively with your age group. Prepare the dictionary definitions for your words along with examples of them in use.</p> <p>Justify why you have selected these words over any others.</p>

What is a snollygoster?

- How important is it that the debates in Parliament are available for people to read?
- How important are titles for a profession?
- To what extent do you agree with Forsyth's view that reality shapes words more than words shape reality?

Investigation: Visit <https://hansard.parliament.uk/> and look at the ways in which language is used in Parliament. Which elements of language use are particularly interesting?

Recommended Reading:

There are a lot of books written about English Language. Some of the most accessible include:



Authors: Marcello Giovanelli (Series Editor), Gary Ives, John Keen, Raj Rana, Rachel Rudman

Publisher: [Cambridge University Press](http://www.cambridge.org)

ISBN-13: 978-1-1074-6558-9

Rediscover Grammar David Crystal

Your own copy of this will be really useful – a recommended read over the summer, as a detailed knowledge of grammar is essential at A Level.

The Cambridge Encyclopaedia of Language David Crystal

Includes lots of fascinating stuff on all sorts of language related topics. Worth dipping into if you have a spare 5 minutes. Don't be put off by the size - it is very readable.

Language and Society (Living Language series) Susan Cockcroft

Comprehensive coverage of major theories of language and social context.

David Crystal: *The Story of English in 100 Words*; *How Language Works*; *The English Language: A Guided Tour of the Language* (in fact, most books by this author are accessible and interesting. Have a look in your local library for them.)

Bill Bryson: *Mother Tongue*

Recommended Websites

[E-magazine](#) brilliant for exam preparation

www.englishbiz.co.uk useful section on grammar

www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/alevel/index.htm

www.englishlangsfx.blogspot.com postings of topical language debates and links to other useful sites

www.universalteacher.org.uk covers all the basic topics

Recommended Blogs

There are also some really useful blogs to have a look at:

- <https://blog.oxforddictionaries.com/> - gives some interesting insights into new words and the changing uses of existing words.
- <http://flashfictiononline.com/main/> - useful website for looking at short pieces of creative writing. This will prove useful as you start preparing for coursework.
- <https://www.theguardian.com/media/mind-your-language> - interesting blog that looks at attitudes towards the ways in which language is used.

Essay writing

One of the biggest fears that many students have is the first assignment or essay that they get. Whilst this is a daunting experience, be assured that you are on a course which will be guiding you on how to improve your writing. No-one is expecting you to write perfectly from day one. Here are a few pointers to help with this:

Make sure that you have checked exactly what is required of you for the essay itself – details such as if there is a word-count requirement and specifics such as what areas of the text you are focusing on.

Speak to your teachers – they are there to help and will be able to guide you.

Plan and prepare – you must give yourself plenty of time to think and to write.

Plan out your time and do not leave it until the last minute.

Review and edit – once you have finished writing you must always give yourself a good amount of time to check through your response for both aspects such as SPEC checking but also checking that you have covered the question properly.

Understand the Assessment Objectives:

Assessment objectives are the different skills that the examiner is going to judge in your work. It is helpful to know what they are from the start of your course in order to gain marks and write successful responses. The actual assessment objectives are more detailed than below but here they are in brief:

AO1	Apply appropriate methods of language analysis, using terminology.
AO2	Demonstrate critical understanding of concepts and issues relevant to language use.
AO3	Analyse and evaluate contextual/language factors and how they are associated with meaning.
AO4	Connections/wider reading
AO5	Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways.

Summer project – Language Scrapbook:

Task 3:

The joy about studying English Language is that **it is everywhere**.

1. As part of your summer work, start a ‘scrapbook’ where you collect different examples of language. Annotate the examples looking at how they use language to meet the demands of the **different audiences, forms and functions of the text**.

For example:

The image shows a train ticket with several callout boxes pointing to specific parts of the text:

- Jargon – language unique to this type of text. Demonstrates the cost of the ticket and implies that it is cheaper than other types.** (Points to 'Off-Peak Single')
- Abbreviations due to limited size of** (Points to '05-Jnr-15')
- Colours are typical of this text type and are the same regardless of the train company.** (Points to the orange background)
- Implied legal language showing the authority of the ticket. Hints at the power behind the people who issue and check tickets.** (Points to 'Valid for one journey from Waford Junction To Coventry')

The expectation will be that you bring these scrapbooks to your first lesson back in September.

2. Pick 3 social or ethnic group e.g. Polish immigrant workers, travellers, City bankers OR an individual e.g. The Duchess of Cambridge, Kim Kardashian, Simon Cowell (!).

Collect a series of 3-4 articles about these groups or individuals, using online archives or your own newspaper and magazine sources. Reflect on how language is used to represent these groups/individuals. Be ready to present your findings to the rest of the class in September.