

Key Stage 3 Curriculum Overview, from September 2021
Upton Hall School FCJ English Department

	Fiction Reading	Shakespeare	Poetry	Fiction Writing	Non-Fiction Writing	Speaking and Listening
Year 7	Classic Option: 'Private Peaceful' by Michael Morpurgo	'A Midsummer Night's Dream'	Poetry from different cultures A collection of poetry written by seminal poets from a diverse range of cultures, including the Caribbean Islands, India, South Africa and Vietnam. The unit studies how the poetry has been shaped by its social and political contexts.	Ghost Stories The conventions of the genre are taught through Wells' 'The Red Room', Dickens' ghost stories and other pre-1914 extracts and the moving image, before students write their own stories and design their visual narrative storyboard.	Newspapers A range of journalistic styles and formats are taught through analysis of contemporary newspapers and online writing conventions.	Oral story-telling Pupils read a number of oral stories from across the world in preparation for writing and performing their own.
	Contemporary Option: 'The Girl of Ink and Stars' by Kiran Millwood Hargrave					
Year 8	'Jane Eyre' by Charlotte Brontë	'The Tempest'	Love poetry A selection of pre and post 1914 love poetry is taught, with an emphasis on the writing conventions of the love sonnet.	Stories with a twist A range of pre-1914 and post-1914 options are taught to enable pupils to apply the rules of this classic narrative structure.	Magazines A range of magazine non-fiction text types are taught through the analysis of contemporary comment and online writing conventions.	Greek Myths Pupils read a number of classic myths in preparation for writing and performing either a historical or contemporary version of a traditional myth.
	Contemporary Option: 'Rooftoppers' by Katherine Rundell					
Year 9: GCSE Unit	Pre-1914 Prose and Contemporary Play A collection of short stories from 'The Sherlock Holmes' canon by Arthur Conan-Doyle and the NT stage adaptation of 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time.'	'Romeo and Juliet'	Parent and child poetry A selection of pre and post 1914 poetry exploring the relationship between parent and child across the ages.	Bildungsroman and World Literature A range of pre-1914 and post-1914 writers from across the world are taught in preparation for pupils writing a short rites-of-passage story.	Travel Writing A range of brochure, Rough Guide and travel journalism formats are taught to enable pupils to write in the style of their choice on the summer examination.	GCSE English Literature Component 1 Section B English Literature Poetry Anthology: 'Dulce et Decorum Est' 'Valentine' 'Living Space' Extract from 'The Prelude'

Despite extensive reform to G.C.S.E. and the introduction of the poetry anthology and the externally examined Shakespeare text for G.C.S.E. English Literature, the department still firmly believe in the importance of maintaining a 3-year Key Stage Three course. The two main reasons being that accumulation of English skills in reading and writing needs to be carefully structured through the steer of age-appropriate texts and writing formats. G.C.S.E. literature texts are themed towards an adult audience both in terms of issues and conceptual understanding and pupils require the emerging maturity of the **Year 10** student to engage with them.

Curriculum rationale

Fiction Reading: Two options for the novel are offered in **Year 7 and 8** to enable some degree of teacher autonomy; this is important in a subjective / personalised subject. It also enables teaching staff to modify the curriculum to meet the needs of specific learners. For example, if students have experienced a bereavement or trauma, 'Private Peaceful' can be substituted for the second option. Whilst we believe in the lifelong benefit of studying **classically written novels** with **universal resonance**, it is also **equally** important to offer students the most up-to-date and well-written successes on the market. Pupils need to know and feel that writing for a YA audience is a living and thriving industry. Across the two years, pupils will be able to experience both. Whereas, in **Year 9** all students study the collection of Conan-Doyle stories. With its complex academic and historical vocabulary, the compelling structure of the crime genre provides an excellent introduction to the challenges of reading Victorian literature and its historical context, examined at G.C.S.E. We are also excited to introduce the contemporary play 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time' into our unit on detective fiction. It is a text that celebrates diversity and challenges our prejudices and also demonstrates how post-modern theatre methods have developed in an experimental way, helping the students to see how plays studied later in the curriculum, such as the mid-20th century plays 'An Inspector Calls' [**Year 11**] and 'A Streetcar named desire' [**Year 13**] began to reform 19th conventions of Realism. **Shakespeare:** We are 'The Department of Shakespeare'. Shakespeare has been set as an external exam at G.C.S.E. since 2015 and whilst the inclusion of a Shakespeare text in every year is due to the real need to prepare students for the academic rigour of accessing his historical / poetic /mythological language, all staff believe passionately in its power to use drama to explore the human condition. 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' **Year 7** and 'The Tempest' **Year 8** are excellent comedic introductions, which can be taught on two levels of challenge – the exploration of romantic relationships and their resolutions in fantastical settings. 'Romeo and Juliet' with its spectacular dramatic set-piece scenes is the perfect text thematically for the teenage concerns about love, loyalty and the transgression of parental control. It is excellent thematic and generic preparation for the study of '**Much Ado About Nothing in Year 10**'. **Poetry:** Poetry provides the greatest level of challenge for students entering the school, as poetry is not taught academically in primary school. However, we set the expectation and level of challenge high from the very beginning of **Year 7**, where the poetry from different cultures and the poets' intent is studied in light of the poems specific social, political and historical contexts. In **Year 8** we begin to introduce the theme of love and how the classic forms of ballads and sonnets are manipulated to create meaning. A complex poetic method that is not touched on in Year 7, as the poetry studied in the previous year is in free verse or uses irregular line lengths to enhance thematic content. Teaching students how to write sonnets in **Year 8** provides an excellent basis for deeper analysis in **Year 9**, when poetic techniques are introduced to enable students to analyse how language form and structure are used to explore the theme of parent / child relationships. KS3 therefore, has prepared them fully to study the different aspects of poetic analysis in the **G.C.S.E. anthology**. **Fiction writing:** Due to its creative nature, this is perhaps the hardest skill to teach students and prepare for G.C.S.E. task, when they expected to write a clearly structured story in time. In **Year 7** the components parts of generic story-telling and the art of descriptive writing using complex and arresting vocabulary is introduced through the genre of Victorian ghost writing, whilst symbolism, foreshadowing and endings are developed through the excellent pre-1914 French short story with a twist, 'The Necklace' in **Year 8**. Again the **Bildungsroman** genre provides the perfect inspiration for the teenage concern with identity and diversity in **Year 9** students. The collection of short stories from around the globe, widens the students' perception of what it means to grow up in different cultures and the challenging short story the Joyce's 'Eveline' is an excellent introduction to how the 'stream of consciousness' technique can be used to control the structure of a complete story in just 45 minutes of writing time. **Non-fiction** text types examined at G.C.S.E. are introduced sequentially according to their challenge, starting with letter and report writing in **Year 7**, through to the more entertaining style and the challenge of comment writing in **Year 8**, enabling them to bring these skills together in the review writing, focusing on travel in **Year 9**, when the students are ready for the stylistic devices of irony, sarcasm and wit taught through the literary writing of Bill Bryson. The "dryness" of the content is enlivened in Year 7 and Year 8 through the collaborative working of groups to produce a newspaper and magazine. Creativity, performance, public speaking and a celebration of story-telling all come together in **Year 7 and Year 8** in the summer term, when the grounds are used as the perfect backdrop to exhibit pupils' oral story-telling in the Summer Term.

The 7th lesson in a fortnight is systematically used for the explicit teaching of SPaG. All staff must work through the graduated spelling test banks for Year 7-9 and the "boardwork" resources for the explicit teaching of grammar, its key terms, principles and application. Links to SPaG lessons are drawn out in curriculum lessons.

Assessment

The impact of the curriculum is measured in its most systematic form through standardised literacy testing in reading, spelling and a moderated free-writing task every September. In Year 7 this is done through GL assessment. Curriculum assessment is standardised across the department through the Assessment Booklets, which assess the full range of English tasks in reading (close extract analysis, analytical and comparative essays, creative interpretations) and writing (first and third person fiction, generic pieces, "missing" novel chapters and all the non-fiction text types). Stretch and challenge options are built into the assessment of each unit of work, enabling our accelerated learners to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of untaught English Literature texts or to demonstrate more advanced writing skills and evidence of authorial craft.