ENGLISH

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW KS3 & KS4

OUR CURRICULUM INTENT

At TFA, our Key Stage 3 curriculum is designed to be the intellectual powerhouse of the English journey. We reject the notion of KS3 as a holding ground before GCSE and instead view Years 7–9 as the critical period in which students develop the knowledge, cultural literacy, disciplinary thinking and confidence required to flourish as readers, writers and communicators.

CURRICULUM JOURNEY: Year 7 Intellectual Journey

Students begin their secondary English journey by establishing the foundations of disciplinary reading and writing. Through fiction, poetry and literary heritage, they develop the knowledge and confidence to become thoughtful readers and effective communicators. As they progress through the year, students explore how writers create character, setting and atmosphere while considering ideas of belonging, identity, courage and social responsibility. They begin to understand how literature reflects both individual experiences and the wider world.

Year 8 Intellectual Journey

Building upon the strong foundations established in Year 7, students explore how language can influence individuals, shape societies and challenge injustice. Through rhetoric, political allegory, poetry and Shakespeare, they investigate conflict in its many forms and consider how writers represent power, relationships and human experience. Students become increasingly analytical, evaluating different viewpoints and recognising the enduring relevance of literature.

Our KS3 curriculum is deliberately sequenced so that students move from securing the foundations of reading and literary understanding in Year 7, to exploring rhetoric, conflict and society in Year 8, before engaging with increasingly sophisticated ideas of justice, morality, power and responsibility in Year 9. Through carefully selected literary and non-fiction texts, students revisit and deepen key disciplinary knowledge whilst developing analytical precision, academic vocabulary and intellectual independence.

Reading remains at the heart of the curriculum. Students encounter ambitious whole texts, rich vocabulary and increasingly demanding concepts through expert teacher guidance, explicit instruction and meaningful classroom dialogue. Every unit develops students' ability to read critically, write with purpose and communicate confidently.

By the end of Year 9, students should not simply be GCSE-ready. They should be culturally aware, intellectually curious, articulate young people who understand that literature enables us to understand ourselves, others and the world around us.

	AUTUMN 1	AUTUMN 2	SPRING 1	SPRING 2	SUMMER 1	SUMMER 2
YEAR 7	**Introduction to Fiction: Building Reading Foundations**	**Poetry about Place and Home: Voices of Belonging**	**Mystery and Deduction (Sherlock Holmes Short Stories)**	**Victorian Childhood: Society and Social Change**	**Courage, Identity and the Supernatural (The Twisted Tree)**	**Introduction to Fiction: Building Reading Foundations**
YEAR 8	**The Art of Rhetoric: Language that Influences**	**Power, Propaganda and Control (Animal Farm)**	**War and Conflict: Voices from the Front Line**	**Love, Fate and Conflict (Romeo and Juliet)**	**The Art of Rhetoric: Language that Influences**	**Power, Propaganda and Control (Animal Farm)**

YEAR 9

Year 9 serves as the bridge between Key Stage 3 and GCSE. Students engage with increasingly demanding texts that explore justice, prejudice, fear, morality and responsibility. They develop greater independence as readers by constructing increasingly sophisticated interpretations, evaluating writers' methods and making connections across literature. Through explicit teaching of disciplinary knowledge, students prepare for the conceptual and analytical demands of GCSE study.

	AUTUMN 1	AUTUMN 2	SPRING 1	SPRING 2	SUMMER 1	SUMMER 2
YEAR 9	**Fear and the Unknown (The Woman in Black)**		**Justice, Prejudice and Society (The Merchant of Venice)**		**Mind and Morality: Disturbed Characters**	**Loyalty, Family and Responsibility (A View from the Bridge)**

YEAR 10

Year 10 marks the transition from Key Stage 3 into GCSE English, where students begin to apply the knowledge, analytical skills and disciplinary thinking developed throughout Years 7–9 to the demands of the AQA English Language and English Literature courses. Through the study of Macbeth, A Christmas Carol, An Inspector Calls, the Love and Relationships anthology, Unseen Poetry and English Language, students explore enduring ideas about ambition, morality, responsibility, relationships and the power of language.

The curriculum is deliberately sequenced to develop deep literary knowledge alongside the explicit teaching of GCSE assessment objectives. Students learn how writers craft meaning across a range of genres while developing increasingly sophisticated analytical writing and confident communication.

Interleaving is embedded throughout the curriculum to strengthen long-term memory and deepen understanding. Students regularly revisit previously taught texts, themes, vocabulary and examination skills through retrieval practice, comparative analysis and cumulative writing. The integration of Literature and Language enables students to recognise connections across the curriculum, applying knowledge flexibly in both analytical and creative contexts. By the end of Year 10, students have secured the foundational knowledge and examination skills required to enter Year 11 as increasingly independent, reflective and resilient learners, ready to refine and master the GCSE curriculum.

	AUTUMN 1	AUTUMN 2	SPRING 1	SPRING 2	SUMMER 1	SUMMER 2
YEAR 10	**Ambition and Power (Macbeth)** **Crafting Imaginative Writing (Language Paper 1 Question 5)**		**Redemption and Social Responsibility (A Christmas Carol)** **Reading Like a Critic (Language Paper 1 Questions 1–4 based on ACC and Unseen Extracts)**		**Social Responsibility and Writer's Craft (An Inspector Calls Key Ideas & Benchmarks of Brilliance – Language Paper 2 Question 5 Speeches)**	**Love, Relationships and Personal Voice (Love and Relationships Poetry, Unseen Poetry & Speech Creation)**

YEAR 11

As the culmination of the five-year English journey, Year 11 challenges students to consolidate and apply the knowledge, skills and disciplinary thinking developed throughout KS3 and KS4. Through the study of Macbeth, A Christmas Carol, the Love and Relationships anthology, Unseen Poetry and the full AQA English Language course, students revisit the enduring concepts of ambition, responsibility, relationships, morality and the power of language whilst refining their analytical, interpretative and communicative skills.

The curriculum is deliberately structured around retrieval, interleaving and deliberate practice. Students revisit previously taught texts and concepts in increasingly demanding contexts, strengthening long-term memory and developing the confidence to transfer knowledge across English Literature and English Language. Through regular examination practice, comparative analysis and explicit teaching of examination strategies, students learn to synthesise knowledge, evaluate alternative interpretations and communicate with increasing precision.

Rolling revision is viewed not simply as repetition, but as an opportunity for mastery, reflection and refinement. By revisiting the curriculum through multiple lenses, students deepen their understanding of writers' methods, strengthen their disciplinary knowledge and develop the resilience and independence required for examination success. By the end of Year 11, students leave The Forest Academy as confident readers, thoughtful writers and articulate communicators, equipped with the knowledge, cultural understanding and critical thinking skills to flourish beyond GCSE.

	AUTUMN 1	AUTUMN 2	SPRING 1	SPRING 2	SUMMER 1	SUMMER 2
YEAR 11	**Ambition and Power (Macbeth)** **Crafting Imaginative Writing (Language Paper 1 Question 5)**	**Ambition and Power (Macbeth)** **Power, Redemption and Analytical Reading (Macbeth & Language Paper 1 Questions 1–4 through A Christmas Carol)**	**Love, Loss and Comparison (Love and Relationships Poetry, Unseen Poetry & Language Paper 2 Questions 1–4: Comparison Skills)**	**Redemption and Mastery (A Christmas Carol & Language Paper 1 Questions 1–5)**	**Rolling Revision: Mastering English Language and Literature**	**Examinations**

GCSE QUALIFICATION | English Language / English Literature

English Language	English Literature
PAPER 1 • Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing 8700/1 | 1h 45m | 50% | 80 marks	**PAPER 1 • Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel** 8702/1 | 1h 45m | 40% | 64 marks
PAPER 2 • Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives 8700/2 | 1h 45m | 50% | 80 marks	**PAPER 2 • Modern Texts and Poetry** 8702/2 | 2h 15m | 60% | 96 marks
Spoken Language Endorsement This is a compulsory part of the AQA GCSE English Language course. It assesses students' ability to speak and listen effectively in a formal setting and is reported separately from the GCSE English Language grade. Grades awarded: Distinction / Merit / Pass / Not Classified	

OFFICIAL GCSE SPECIFICATION LINK

www.aqa.org.uk