



SMWCA English Curriculum Intent



At St Margaret Ward, Voice is central to the English curriculum as it empowers students to develop their individuality, think critically, and communicate authentically. In both written and spoken forms, voice allows students to express their perspectives, engage with diverse texts, and contribute meaningfully to discussions and to society.

Our drive to foster students' voice helps them take ownership of their ideas and create meaningful, original work. It also builds critical thinking by helping students analyse and respond to different voices within the texts that they read and analyse. Importantly, voice supports inclusion, giving all students, regardless of background, space to share their experiences and identities.

In short, voice empowers students to be confident, thoughtful, and engaged communicators – skills that are crucial both in and beyond the classroom.

Year 7 – The Origins of Story-telling and the English Language

Year 7 focuses on the origins of story-telling, the oral tradition, and the beginnings of Western literature, moving from Greek mythology and classical literature, through to middle-English and the development of the English language.

All of these texts, with their tales of mythical beasts, mighty battles and unusual characters, are an engaging introduction to English. The focus upon stories with a moral supports the students' development of Lasallian values.

1 - Autumn Term	Curriculum threads
<p>An Introduction to Myths and Legends (Aesop's fables, extracts from Stephen Fry's <i>Mythos</i>, and Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i>)</p> <p>Key tasks: Inference task based on a short story; Write a narrative; Formal debate.</p>	<p>Fiction prose Summarising ideas Inference Exploring language Narrative writing Sentence structure and grammar Debating</p>
2 - Spring Term	Curriculum threads
<p>Homer's <i>Odyssey</i> (retold by Gillian Cross)</p> <p>Including: Analysis of language; Write a persuasive letter; Group discussion.</p>	<p>Novel Summarising ideas Exploring language Descriptive writing Persuasive writing Vocabulary Group discussion</p>
3 - Summer Term	Curriculum threads
<p><i>Beowulf</i> (extracts from Seamus Heaney's translation)</p> <p>Including: Write a vivid description; Evaluating a point of view; Formal presentation.</p>	<p>Poetry Evaluating ideas Descriptive writing Sentence structure and grammar Presenting and public speaking</p>

Year 8 – Shakespeare, Rhetoric and Romanticism

In Year 8 the chronological study of literature continues, focusing on Shakespeare, Rhetoric and Romanticism. We examine key historical events and perspectives which have directly impacted English literature, thinking and culture.

1 - Autumn Term	Curriculum threads
<p>Shakespeare's <i>Macbeth</i> (whole text)</p> <p>Including: An introduction to Shakespeare; The conventions of tragedy (Aristotle's <i>Poetics</i>); Descriptive writing based on the play.</p>	<p>Shakespeare play Exploring language Exploring structure Writing to describe Vocabulary Paragraphing Debating Performing</p>
2 - Spring Term	Curriculum threads
<p>Rhetoric (selected speeches spanning history, including Martin Luther King, Malala Yousafzai)</p> <p>Including: The conventions of persuasion (Aristotle's <i>Rhetoric</i>); Write a persuasive speech on an important issue; Formal presentation of a speech to the class.</p>	<p>Non-fiction prose Exploring language Persuasive writing Conjunctions and discourse markers Paragraphing Presenting and public speaking</p>
3 - Summer Term	Curriculum threads
<p>Romanticism (including Romantic poetry by Blake, Wordsworth and Byron, extracts from Mary Shelley's <i>Frankenstein</i> and Grimm's fairy tales)</p> <p>Including: Writing a poem and a narrative; Analysing a writer's choices; Formal presentation.</p>	<p>Poetry Fiction prose Comparing viewpoints Writing poetry Narrative writing Sentence structure and grammar Presenting and public speaking</p>

Year 9 – The Victorian Era to the Present Day

Year 9 continues the chronological exploration of literature, from the moralistic and Gothic tales of the Victorian era, through to contemporary poetry.

As citizens of the world it is important that students are exposed to, and understand, the issues and concerns that people from a variety of backgrounds and cultures face. The Year 9 curriculum in particular is structured to enable students to learn important lessons about prejudice, and to understand that, despite their different experiences, all humans are equal. This exploration of morality supports our Lasallian values.

1 - Autumn Term	Curriculum threads
19th Century Literature: <i>A Christmas Carol</i> by Charles Dickens (Whole novel) Including: Persuasive writing; Opinion piece writing; Group discussion.	Novel Fiction prose Literary thesis Writing to express a point of view Sentence structure and grammar Group discussion
Mini-unit: Reading for Pleasure <i>The Crossing</i> by Manjeet Mann	
2 - Spring Term	Curriculum threads
19th Century Literature: Gothic Short Stories (Edgar Allen Poe and H G Wells) Including: Write a short gothic description; Write a gothic short narrative; Formal presentation.	Fiction prose Exploring language Exploring structure Evaluating ideas Writing to describe Narrative writing Sentence structure and grammar Presenting and public speaking
3 - Summer Term	Curriculum threads
Poetry of Power and Conflict (WW1 – 21st century) Including: Write a newspaper article (using bias); Formal debate; Comparative essay.	Poetry Non-fiction prose Comparing viewpoints Writing to express a point of view Conjunctions and discourse markers Paragraphing Debating

Year 10 and 11 - The GCSE Course

Students follow the AQA GCSE English Language and Literature courses. At this point, the teaching of Language and Literature is separated into two distinct courses, since we have found that this helps students to gain a better understanding of the nuanced requirements of each course.

In Language, reading and writing are taught through high-quality fiction and literary non-fiction extracts, drawing upon a wide range of sources in order that students gain an understanding of the English language and its uses in the modern world. In Literature, texts have been chosen from the AQA syllabus list that build upon students' prior learning in Years 7-9.

Year 10 Language

1 - Autumn Term
Explorations in creative reading and writing (fiction)
2 - Spring Term
Spoken Language and Writing Skills
3 - Summer Term
Writers' viewpoints and perspectives (non-fiction)

Year 10 Literature

1 - Autumn Term
Shakespeare – <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
2 - Spring Term
19 th Century Novel - <i>Jekyll and Hyde</i>
3 - Summer Term
Modern drama/ prose – <i>An Inspector Calls</i>

Year 11 Language

1 - Autumn Term
Explorations in creative reading and writing (fiction)
2 - Spring Term
Writers' viewpoints and perspectives (non-fiction)
3 - Summer Term
Revision/ exam preparation

Year 11 Literature

1 - Autumn Term
Poetry – Unseen and Anthology – <i>Love and Relationships</i>
2 - Spring Term
Revision of all texts
3 - Summer Term
Revision of all texts

Year 12 and 13 – the A-Level Course

Students follow the AQA A English Literature A-Level syllabus, following Option 2 (Modern Times) for Paper 2. The text choices again build upon the prior learning of the students, enabling them to draw upon the wealth of cultural, literary and linguistic knowledge that they have gained throughout their time as English students at SMWCA.

Year 12

1 - Autumn Term
Shakespeare: <i>Othello</i> Modern drama: Tennessee Williams' <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i>
2 - Spring Term
19th Century Prose: Emily Bronte's <i>Wuthering Heights</i> 21st Century Poetry: Carol-Ann Duffy's <i>Feminine Gospels</i> or Owen Sheers' <i>Skirrid Hill</i>
3 - Summer Term
Anthology Poetry (Love Through the Ages) and Unseen Poetry 20th Century Prose: Margaret Atwood's <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i>

Year 13

1 - Autumn Term
Non-Examined Assessment (coursework) and Unseen Prose 20th Century Prose: Margaret Atwood's <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i>
2 - Spring Term
Revision of all texts and exam practise
3 - Summer Term
Revision of all texts and exam practise

Homework

Students across all year groups are provided with weekly 'Prep' in the following formats:

- **Key Stage 3 and 4:** Prep booklets with guided vocabulary and comprehension tasks that are linked to the unit currently being studied.
- **Key Stage 5:** Regular research, wider reading articles and literary essays, in addition to independent reading and study of all set texts.