

Year 8 English Advice for Parents

Please look at 'The Big Picture' at the front of your child's red English book and on the website. This will inform you about the key topics that they will be studying this year and the way the subject is assessed in Year 8.

It is really important to foster a positive attitude towards English and the skills that they will learn throughout the school year. You can help us reinforce the message that by teaching Reading, Writing and 'Speaking and Listening' we are helping them acquire skills for life, not just for the classroom!

We teach the pupils for four 40 minute periods per week and our key areas of focus are:

- Reading skills (incorporating fiction and non-fiction texts)
- Writing skills
- Speaking and Listening
- Media Education
- Knowledge about Language



Reading Skills

We are keen to encourage an enthusiastic approach to reading and have selected a range of texts across the Key Stage as we aim to cater for different interests. In Year 8 they will read 'Harry Potter' as part of their 'New Experiences' unit and 'The Hobbit' or 'Greek Myths' as part of their 'Monsters' unit. In addition they will read extracts from a range of fiction and non-fiction texts.



There is a very strong link between reading at home and improved levels of vocabulary and more sophisticated expression. Please encourage reading at home: it can be fiction, biography, magazine articles or newspapers as long as the level of language challenges them.

Pupils have access to the Fullerton Library at allocated times and you should encourage them to use this resource to access a wider range of books for free.

Writing Skills

Pupils will be focusing on 'Personal Writing' in Year 8 to encourage more extended writing pieces. You can help your child by discussing ideas for their writing and encouraging them to self-edit their work. Encourage them to look at the success criteria for extended tasks and to address each one in order to maximise their marks. Pupils also have a 'Neatness' sheet at the front of their book which they can reference to ensure their work is of a suitable standard to submit.

However, while it is useful for parents to offer encouragement and reminders, it is important that the pupils complete their own work so that they can get the necessary feedback to help them improve.



Speaking and Listening

Pupils will complete tasks such as group discussions, role-plays and individual presentations in Year 8. These tasks, along with Reading and Writing tasks, contribute to their overall mark on the December and June reports.

If your child is preparing for an Individual Speaking and Listening task at home, you can encourage them to practice it for you and give them advice on how to improve using the success criteria either on the sheet in the front of their book or on the task sheet itself.



Media Education

This is a relatively new curriculum requirement. In Year 8 we will look at how a scene from a film compares to the version in the novel and why those differences occur. Pupils will also complete a newspaper unit. You can chat to you your child about features of a newspaper, types of newspaper, online news apps and current affairs as this general knowledge is beneficial when undertaking this unit.



Knowledge about Language (Including Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation)

There will be a 40 minute exam in November which tests pupils on parts of speech, paragraphing, punctuation, direct speech and some poetic terms. These will be briefly revised in term one through their 'New Experiences' unit. If you feel that your child makes frequent errors in their work it is important that you direct them to the Key Stage Three English language resources on the VLE and encourage them to access the Key Stage Three English information and tests on the BBC Bitesize website.

These skills are key to their written communication across the all subjects. Please encourage your child to check their work carefully and self-edit to ensure the work they hand in is accurate.

