

Mastery:
AQ, WM,
SET

Sandbach School English Curriculum: A story of human ambition, power and responsibility.



Year 8 English Curriculum Sequence

Intent: To continue to build on prior knowledge from KS2: students will cement connections between language choices and its implied meaning, with careful examination of how suspense and tension are created in stories.

HT1

Gothic Genre

HT2

**Extreme Sports
(Transactional
Writing)**

HT3 & HT4

The Boy In The Striped Pyjamas

HT5 + HT6

**Challenging Representations – Romeo
and Juliet**

Why teach Gothic Genre?

The *Gothic* immerses students in a rich literary tradition that captivates through its exploration of fear, mystery, and the supernatural. By studying classic and contemporary Gothic texts, pupils develop analytical skills as they examine how writers use language, structure, and imagery to evoke suspense and create atmosphere. The unit introduces key literary concepts, such as symbolism, motif, and archetype, while encouraging students to explore universal themes like human vulnerability, isolation, and the unknown. This foundational study not only builds students’ appreciation for genre and historical context but also develops their creative and analytical writing skills as they craft their own Gothic-inspired pieces. As a precursor to more advanced literature studies, this unit nurtures a love of reading and equips students with the tools to analyze complex texts with confidence and imagination

Why teach Sports?

A Year 8 unit on *Sports* offers students a dynamic and engaging way to explore how language and literature capture the excitement, challenges, and cultural significance of athletic pursuits. Through a range of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and media texts, students examine themes such as competition, teamwork, perseverance, and identity. This unit provides opportunities to analyze how writers and speakers craft persuasive and descriptive narratives, from sports journalism to motivational speeches, developing pupils’ critical and creative skills. Additionally, it fosters discussion around societal issues such as the portrayal of athletes, gender equality in sports, and the impact of sporting events on communities. By linking personal interests with academic study, this unit inspires a deeper appreciation for storytelling and rhetoric while building transferable skills in analysis, argumentation, and communication, all of which are foundational for GCSE success.

Why teach Boy in the Striped Pyjamas?

Boy in the Striped Pyjamas facilitates discussions around some key historical political and social issues humanity has faced. It draws attention to the horrific consequences of humans abusing their power to realise selfish ambitions, and forces us to question our responsibility toward one another. By teaching this at Transition Phase, it also begins to develop an interest in the World Wars and gives some insight into a key historical period of study, prior to Y8 students selecting their GCSE options

Why teach Challenging Representations?

Challenging Representations equips students with the critical tools to examine how gender is portrayed in the media and society, fostering an awareness of stereotypes, bias, and the impact of representation on identity and culture. By analysing a range of contemporary and historical texts, including advertisements, articles, and visual media, students develop the ability to deconstruct language and imagery, enhancing their media literacy and critical thinking skills. This unit provides a foundation for studying Romeo and Juliet, where pupils can explore the construction of gender roles in Shakespeare’s time and their relevance today. By drawing connections between modern and historical portrayals, students gain a nuanced understanding of how literature and media shape societal norms, encouraging them to engage with texts thoughtfully and challenge preconceptions, while honing skills essential for GCSE study.

National Curriculum Links

- Pupils will:
- develop an appreciation and love of reading, and read increasingly challenging material
 - read seminal world literature
 - read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction, a wide coverage of genres, historical periods, forms and authors
 - understand increasingly challenging texts through learning new vocabulary
 - read critically through studying setting, plot, and characterisation, and the effects of these
 - write accurately through writing for a wide range of purposes and audiences, including imaginative writing
 - apply their growing knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and text structure to their writing and selecting the appropriate form
 - draw on knowledge of literary and rhetorical devices from their reading and listening to enhance the impact of their writing plan, draft, edit and proof-read

National Curriculum Links

- Pupils will:
- understand and critically evaluate texts through reading in different ways for different purposes, summarising and synthesizing ideas and information, and evaluating their usefulness for particular purposes.
 - draw on knowledge of the purpose, audience for and context of the writing to inform
 - identify and interpret themes, ideas and information
 - seek evidence in the text to support a point of view, including justifying inferences with evidence
 - analyse a writer’s choice of vocabulary, form, grammatical and structural features, and evaluating their effectiveness and impact
 - make critical comparisons, referring to the contexts, themes, characterisation, style and literary quality of texts, and drawing on knowledge and skills from wider reading
 - consolidate and build on their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary through drawing on new vocabulary and grammatical constructions from their reading and listening, and using these consciously in their writing

National Curriculum Links

- Pupils will:
- develop an appreciation and love of reading, and read increasingly challenging material
 - read seminal world literature
 - make inferences using evidence
 - understand increasingly challenging texts
 - read critically through knowing how language presents meaning
 - read critically through studying setting, plot and characterisation, and the effects of these
 - speak confidently and effectively, giving short speeches and presentations
 - speak confidently and effectively, participating in formal debates and structured discussions

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Teaching Gothic Genre here supports:

- ACC in Y10/Y11
- Dorian Gray in Y12/Y13
- The Little Stranger in Y12/Y13
- Art: Gothic study in Y8
- Drama: Frankenstein in Y10
- Drama: History of Theatre in Y12

Teaching Sports here supports:

- Language Paper 2 (Y11)
- P.E.: Sports at Transition Phase and Qualifications Phase
- Travel and Adventure (Lang) in Y11
- Language Change in Y13
- English Language NEA in Y12/Y13

Teaching The Boy In The Striped Pyjamas here supports:

- Poetry in Y10
- War in Y9
- Spoken Language in Y9
- An Inspector Calls in Y10
- Power in Y11
- Protest and Prejudice in Y10

Teaching Challenging Representations here supports:

- Poetry in Y10 (context)
- Spoken Language in Y10
- AIC in Y10/11 (context)
- Power (Lang) in Y11
- Macbeth in Y10
- Love and Relationships in Y10
- Prejudice and Protest in Y10

Gothic Genre feeds from:

- KS2: Understanding range of texts
- KS2: Thematic links
- Crime and Detection in Y7

Extreme Sports feeds from:

- KS2: Understanding range of texts
- KS2: Thematic links

Challenging Representations feeds from:

- KS2: understanding range of texts
- Treasure Island in Y7

Challenging Representations feeds from:

- Myths and Legends in Y7
- Treasure Island in Y7
- Introduction to Shakespeare in Y7