

Curriculum Intent

The overall intent of the English curriculum at The Albion Academy is to develop skilled and knowledgeable literary critics who can engage with challenging texts as part of an endeavor to explore the 'human condition'. Our curriculum develops pupils' essential skills and knowledge in all aspects of communication, whilst also fostering a love of reading and writing for pleasure. Our ultimate aim is for our students to leave us with a secure understanding of how to read efficiently and critically, write fluently and purposefully, and speak confidently and powerfully –to give them the best chances of success in further education and in all aspects of life.

The curriculum is designed to equip pupils with the set of skills and knowledge that will give them the best chances of success in the future study, whilst also holistically developing pupils' communication skills to prepare them for life beyond school. Our curriculum ensures that our students become confident readers, writers and speakers who have the necessary skills and knowledge to engage critically with texts they will encounter in all aspects of life, from ingredients lists on the packaging of their groceries to university research papers. Our English curriculum aims to promote the intellectual, emotional, social, and cultural development of pupils by giving them the chance to experience a multitude of different perspectives and voices, along with the opportunity to experiment with their own voice, both written and oral.

Students' reading and literacy skills are developed by studying a sequence of schemes of work that have been carefully designed to continuously interleave both knowledge and skills. Our curriculum is thematic and develops the depth and nuance of knowledge over time. For example, when students join the academy in Year 7, they begin by studying the narrative 'Wolves of Willoughby Chase', exploring characterisation of protagonists and antagonists in the text. In Year 8, students study the specific conventions of the characterisation of a gothic antagonist (in 'Dracula'). By Year 9, students explore the nuances of a tragic hero and debate the morality of John Proctor in 'The Crucible'.

On entry, our students typically have reading skills that are below the national average. We have therefore designed our curriculum to ensure that students rapidly develop these skills so that they are in line with or above national average. We do this by carefully selecting challenging, ambitious texts that support the acquisition of sophisticated comprehension and decoding skills. This is complimented by our Directed Reading programme, which allows students to read a number of ambitious texts during Form Time. We also explicitly teach challenging Tier 2 vocabulary through our schemes of work, to equip students with the vocabulary needed to engage with sophisticated texts in future study and outside of school.

The same is true for writing skills: students typically enter our school with writing skills that are below national average. We have therefore adapted our curriculum to ensure that writing is prioritised as much as reading, and that students have ample opportunity to develop the confidence and skill to write fluently and purposefully.

All students will study the content outlined in the scheme of learning which has been constructed based on the following principles:

Challenge: All will study a wide range of high-quality, challenging texts and writing forms including plays, non-fiction, novels and poetry from the Elizabethan era to the present day.

Coherence: The curriculum is carefully sequenced according to themes, ideas, and concepts whilst introducing a variety of literary genres and forms, including different writing forms. In Year 8 students study the epistolary writing within the challenging text of 'Dracula', and in Year 9 students study the more complex literary method of allegory in the play 'The Crucible'.

Mastery: We want our students to be able to link new knowledge to previously taught content and understand the different ways they connect. This is achieved through 'Do now' activities at the start of lessons and the embedding of 'core knowledge' over time. The aim is that students understand a key foundation of knowledge thoroughly before exploring more complex ideas.

Adaptability: All students study the same texts and engage with similar resources. However, teachers adapt lessons according to the specific needs of their class. This ensures that the 'core knowledge' remains at the centre of each lesson whilst also ensuring that different needs are catered for.

Representation: All will encounter texts which offer both a mirror and a window to the rich and multi-layered experiences of the world we live in, seeing both themselves in their learning, and also explore the world as a whole and

other cultures. In Year 7, students study the poetry of the First World War, which considers the experiences of war over one hundred years ago. In Year 8 students study 'Social Justice' poetry in which they consider the difficult situations that individuals across the world and across the decades face and overcome, and in Year 9 students will study a non-fiction scheme of work which explores the experiences of minority groups in the modern world.

Education with character: Through the curriculum, students are given many opportunities to share, reflect and learn about each other's lives whilst recognising common shared experiences. In Key Stage 3 students study the changing roles of women within society. For example, students are given the opportunity to discuss the subjugation of women within a patriarchal society in texts such as 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', 'I am Malala' and 'The Crucible'.