



Summer School

English Language



Summer activities – English Language

You should study this course if you are interested in finding out how language works and in analysing the importance of social context on how we express ourselves. How does our gender, age, social class, region, job or nationality affect our use of English?

The course will help you to develop your communication skills, both in speech and writing, as well as help you to increase your analytical and evaluative skills. It will get you to consider the nuances of human communication and how it develops with age and changes over time. Whilst there is an element of creativity involved in the coursework, this is not a creative writing course.

Instead, you will learn about a wide range of interesting linguistic topics, and will be expected to discuss, analyse and evaluate both language itself and many of its associated concepts and theories. It's a challenging and diverse course, which our current students love!

What our English Language students say:

“Classroom experiences are dynamic; they are packed with learning, but carried out with enthusiasm and vigour. You almost forget you are being taught.” Libby, ex-Rye Hills

“My teacher explains everything well and is very supportive. She makes sure I know where I am and I feel I learn a lot in lesson.” Lizzie, ex-Laurence Jackson

“I think that it is challenging however very interesting at the same time. There is always extra support available which is very helpful.” Jacob, ex-Sacred Heart

“English Language at A Level is much more diverse and challenging than GCSE English Language. The course is flexible to individual needs due to the wide range of topics and the relative freedom with coursework.” Chris, ex-Caedmon College

What makes a good English student?

- You should have a good command of English yourself and be able to write clearly and fluently. You should have a keen interest in finding out how language works.
- You will be expected to use language effectively and be able to comment on how other people use language too.
- A willingness to engage in discussions about language would be a major benefit.
- Whilst there are many new things about the A level that you will never have done at GCSE, being a confident reader, being prepared to learn lots of key terminology and enjoying deconstructing language use in unseen texts, from blog posts and web forums through to broadsheet newspaper articles, is a major advantage too.

Additional reading

Websites that you can look at include:

The Ling Space

<https://www.youtube.com/user/thelingspace>

Stephen Fry's Planet Word

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b015h1xb>

AQA website

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/as-and-a-level/english-language-7701-7702>

Universal Teacher

<http://www.universalteacher.org.uk/contents.htm#langua>

Mind Your Language

<https://www.theguardian.com/media/mind-your-language>

Content

This is a two-year course and over that period you will develop your understanding of different linguistic study methods and the importance of things like audience, purpose and wider context in the production of language. The areas to be studied are as follows:

Textual variations and representations: analysing and comparing texts

Children's language development (0-11 years): exploring how children learn to speak, read and write

Exploring ideas around language diversity e.g., how language is used in relation to your: **gender, region, ethnicity, social class and groups, occupation, nationality**

Considering **how and why language has changed over time** and continues to change now

Creating a piece of **original writing**, using professional texts as style models and evaluating your writing process.

An independent investigation into language use on a topic of your choice

Practical Tasks

1. Here is a list of podcasts that would be really useful as an introduction to the nature of English Language. Why not try a different one each week of the summer holidays and make a set of notes on the important points you learn?

Fry's English Delight

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01fmkym/p01fmk00>

The History of English

<https://historyofenglishpodcast.com/>

A Way with Words

<https://www.waywordradio.org/>

The World in Words

<https://www.pri.org/categories/world-words>

The Battle for English

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000gkv4>

2. Find out a definition of the terms 'idiolect', 'sociolect' and 'familect'. Create a spider diagram for each, listing words, phrases and unique features of your own idiolect, sociolects and familect. Get your family to join in with this one!
3. Keep a scrapbook of articles you read about language and how language use is sometimes judged or stereotyped. *The Guardian's* 'Mind Your Language' section is a great starting point, or you might like to search for some language blogs – just make sure they are professional and well-written to avoid learning about inaccurate ideas. You might like to search for articles that consider how technology has affected language, how political correctness has affected language, or how the speech of people from different regions of the UK is judged by others.
4. Dialect case study: research some words, meanings of words and common phrases (idioms) that are regularly used in your regional dialect. Choose a second one to compare to your own, such as Geordie, Scouse or a Scottish dialect such as Glaswegian.

Whilst these tasks aren't compulsory, they will get you into the right mindset for becoming an A level linguist 😊