

'It matters not what someone is born, but what they grow to be.' - J.K. Rowling,
'Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire'

English at Noel-Baker

At Noel-Baker Academy, our team of dedicated and experienced English specialists preside over a bespoke knowledge rich curriculum that truly champions 'the best which has been thought and said' in English. Our curriculum is challenging and rigorous and aims to build the cultural capital that pupils need to succeed in life.

English is more than just a subject: it is the gateway to all other learning. English will help students to access all of the other subjects across the curriculum. It will open more doors and opportunities in school and in life than any other subject.

Year 7 English

Unit 1 – Beowulf and Chaucer: The Origins of Language: this unit provides pupils with an overview of the development of the English language. They will learn about the origin of many of our words and see how the English language has evolved over time with a particular focus on Beowulf and Chaucer. This is the fundamental language knowledge that underpins all further language study at KS3 and KS4.

Unit 2 – Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet and the Sonnets of the Renaissance: this unit provides pupils with an introduction to Shakespeare and the Renaissance period. Pupils will learn about the key contextual information necessary for a rich understanding of the play, 'Romeo and Juliet'. This includes addressing important political and social issues in Elizabethan England as well as investigating Shakespeare's life and the inspiration for some of his famous sonnets. This is then built upon in Year 8 where pupils study Shakespeare's 'Richard III'.

Unit 3 – Frankenstein: Exploring the Concept of Evil: this unit provides pupils with an introduction to the Gothic genre of literature. Other key concepts are also introduced such as, the Romantic emphasis of the 'sublime' power of nature. Furthermore, key contextual information is addressed including the life and times of Mary Shelley and early Victorian notions of good vs. evil.

Unit 4 – Homer's 'The Odyssey' and Other Epics, Myths and Legends: in this final unit of Year 7, pupils are able to engage with ancient Greek mythology, making links to its influence in English works of literature and engaging with the necessary contextual information of Ancient Greece that supports an accomplished reading of the chosen texts.

Year 8 English

Unit 1 – Shakespeare's Richard III: Politics, Propaganda and Poetic Licence: this unit provides pupils with the vital Shakespearean context needed for both KS3 and KS4 study. Pupils will discover the fascinating political backdrop to the play as well as Shakespeare's use of poetic licence in his famed portrayal of the villain, Richard III.

Unit 2 – Mastering the art of Rhetoric: this unit provides pupils with the foundational knowledge necessary for persuasive speaking and writing. Pupils will begin by investigating the ideas of Ancient Greek philosophers and rhetoricians such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle before analysing a range of modern rhetoric from celebrated speakers such as Winston Churchill and Michelle Obama.

Unit 3 – The Romantics and The Enlightenment: Humanity’s Changing Relationship with the World: this unit provides pupils with the understanding necessary to appreciate the enormous impact of Romanticism and The Age of Enlightenment on English literature. Pupils will study the works of ‘The Big Six’ Romantic poets as well as their female contemporaries and discover the contextual factors that motivated them to write.

Unit 4 – Stevenson’s Jekyll & Hyde: Investigating Crime, Punishment and the Duality of Human Nature: in this final unit of Year 8, pupils will engage with Stevenson’s ‘Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde’. They will make links between their earlier study of The Gothic and the Victorian Era and more complex ideas such as the nature versus the supernatural and the duality of man.

Year 9 English

Unit 1 – Conceptions of Morality in Dr Faustus and World Literature: this unit provides pupils with an overview of Aesop’s fables before tracing the theme of morality through Christopher Marlowe’s ‘Dr Faustus’. Pupils also have the opportunity to analyse a selection of excerpts from other key texts around the world.

Unit 2 – She-Wolves and the Female Voice Through Time: this unit provides pupils with a range of literature either written by or featuring a strong female voice. The texts have been selected over a broad timeline and feature poetry, play scripts, novels and speeches. Pupils will engage with the idea of witchcraft, and analyse texts by Christine de Pizan, Mary Wollstonecraft and George Bernard Shaw. Finally, pupils will discover the speeches that changed history, including excerpts from Emmeline Pankhurst, Rosa Parks and Eleanor Roosevelt.

Unit 3 – Orwell’s Animal Farm and Dystopian Literature: this unit provides pupils with the opportunity to study Orwell’s ‘Animal Farm’ and to engage with other dystopian literature. Pupils will make links between the fascinating political backdrop that inspired Orwell’s writing and the text itself. They will also read excerpts from other renowned dystopian novels and analyse the writer’s craft.

Unit 4 – English Language and Literature Through Time: A Synoptic Re-telling: in this unit students will be challenged to use and build upon their accumulated knowledge of KS3 English Language and Literature. Students will re-visit and cement understanding of core concepts, knowledge, ideas and skills by studying the key literary periods, genres, writers and texts that they have encountered so far. The unit draws together and builds upon the strands of language and literature previously studied to help develop the schema formed during Key Stage 3.

Key stage 4 English

Pupils will sit both AQA English Language and AQA English Literature GCSEs at the end of year 11. The GCSE courses provide pupils with access to a broad range of texts from the literary canon, building on their knowledge from Key Stage 3.

English Language Overview

Language Paper 1 (1 hour 45 minutes)	Language Paper 2 (1 hour 45 minutes)
<p>Section A (Reading) 1 hour</p> <p>This section will give pupils one literature fiction extract (drawn from either the 20th or 21st century) to read before they answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 short form question (1 x 4 marks) • 2 longer form questions (2 x 8 marks) • 1 extended question (1 x 20 marks) 	<p>Section A (Reading) 1 hour</p> <p>This section will give pupils one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text (drawn from the 19th century, and either the 20th or 21st century) to read before they answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 short form question (1 x 4 marks) • 2 longer form questions (1 x 8, 1 x 12 marks) • extended question (1 x 16 marks)
<p>Section B (Writing) 45 minutes</p> <p>In this section, pupils will be expected to write their own creative text, inspired by the topic that they have responded to in section A to demonstrate their narrative and descriptive skills in response to a written prompt, scenario or visual image.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 extended writing question (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy) 	<p>Section B (Writing) 45 minutes</p> <p>In this section, pupils will be expected to produce a written text to a specified audience, purpose and form in which they give their own perspective on the theme that has been introduced to them in section A.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 extended writing question (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy)

Non-examination Assessment: Spoken Language

As part of studying English Language, pupils will also complete a spoken language assessment which tests a pupil's ability in:

- presenting
- responding to questions and feedback
- use of Standard English

This is a speech/presentation given by pupils in lessons and is marked by class teachers. Pupils receive a separate certificate indicating either a pass, merit or distinction.

English Literature Overview

Literature Paper 1 (1 hour 45 minutes)	Literature Paper 2 (2 hours 15 minutes)
<p>Section A (Romeo and Juliet)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> students will answer one question on 'Romeo and Juliet'. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole. 	<p>Section A (An Inspector Calls)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> students will answer one essay question from a choice of two on 'An Inspector Calls'.
<p>Section B (A Christmas Carol)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> students will answer one question on 'A Christmas Carol'. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole. 	<p>Section B (Power and Conflict Poetry Anthology)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> students will answer one comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from the Power and Conflict poetry anthology cluster.
/	<p>Section C (Unseen Poetry)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.

In Year 10 and Year 11, pupils are given a bespoke diet of the following units relating to the two GCSEs studied at the end of Year 11.

English Language

Unit 1 – Language Paper 1 Reading: Pupils engage with a variety of high quality 20th and 21st century fiction extracts.

Unit 2 – Language Paper 1 Writing: Pupils learn how to plan and structure their own creative writing, embedding a variety of techniques effectively.

Unit 3 – Language Paper 2 Reading: Pupils engage with a variety of high quality non-fiction texts taken from either the 19th, 20th or 21st centuries.

Unit 4 – Language Paper 2 Writing: Pupils learn how to plan and structure a range of their own non-fiction texts embedding a variety of techniques effectively.

Unit 5 – Spoken Language: Pupils prepare and deliver a short speech before answering questions on their chosen subject.

English Literature

Unit 1 – Charles Dickens’ ‘A Christmas Carol’: pupils read the text, making notes on their own personal copy to support revision. They also study the relevant context of the novel.

Unit 2 – William Shakespeare’s ‘Macbeth’: pupils read the text, making notes on their own personal copy to support revision. They also study the relevant context of the play.

Unit 3 – J.B. Priestley’s ‘An Inspector Calls’: pupils read the text, making notes on their own personal copy to support revision. They also study the relevant context of the play.

Unit 4 – AQA Power and Conflict Poetry Anthology and Unseen Poetry: pupils read each poem, making notes on their own personal copy of the anthology to support revision. Notes and annotations will include the context for each poem.

English Enrichment activities

At Noel-Baker, we offer a broad range of co-curricular opportunities linked to the English Curriculum. This year, the following after school clubs are available:

- Journalism and Photography Club (with An Academy Blog launched during Open Evening 2021)
- Book Club (every Friday in the brand new library)
- Homework Club
- Drama Club
- Diversity and Culture Club
- Spelling Bee Club
- School Newsletter Club

We also offer pupils the opportunity to attend a range of different trips during their time here including: the theatre, the National War Museum, Shakespeare’s Globe/birthplace and others.

Further studies and career progression

A good English GCSE in either Language or Literature is extremely desirable for 6th forms and colleges. Most academic courses list a good pass in English as a prerequisite for entry onto the course. A Levels in English are held in equally high regard. A broad range of career pathways are open to those with a degree in English or a related discipline like Creative Writing. For example:

- Digital copywriter
- Editorial assistant
- English as a foreign language teacher
- Lexicographer
- Magazine/newspaper journalist
- Publishing copy-editor/proof-reader

- Secondary school teacher
- Web content manager
- Writer