

English

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Curriculum Rationale

Our vision within the English Faculty at Dean Trust Ardwick is to ensure that all pupils become: fluent and articulate speakers; conceptual and creative thinkers; keen and critical readers; accurate and expressive writers. Our goal is to provide the highest quality teaching and learning of a curriculum specifically designed to maximise progress and ensure that all pupils can enjoy, succeed and excel in English.

The Threshold Concepts in English have been developed collaboratively with English specialists from across the Trust and are used to assess the pupils throughout KS3. They encompass both the core “Knowledge” and “Skills” we believe are essential to empower our pupils to become purposeful, global citizens.

Our Threshold “Skills” are tracked down from the GCSE English Assessment Objectives: inference and deduction, analysis of writer’s methods, evaluation, comparison, and effective, meaningful communication. Our “Threshold Knowledge” is the culmination of a long process of collaborative discourse from subject specialists within our Faculty at Dean Trust Ardwick. Our “Knowledge” encompasses a rich and diverse array of fiction (drama, poetry, prose) and non-fiction texts, the methods through which writers convey meaning, and the historical, social, and economic contexts in which texts are written and received.

As such, the English Curriculum at Dean Trust Ardwick is knowledge-rich and exposes pupils to a wide-ranging and culturally diverse array of material which spans some of the best that has been thought and said in the English language. The application and mastery of the skills at KS3 centres around varied and diverse texts which are chosen both in terms of the pathways to canonical texts, their contexts, and their ability to impart cultural knowledge to enable pupils to formulate their own valuable opinions in modern society. There is infinite knowledge that we could choose to impart to our pupils, however our decisions are consistently underpinned by our core purpose as a school: to empower all pupils to find their purpose and thrive as citizens of the world.

Curriculum Overview

Pupils coming to Dean Trust Adwick in Year 7 often have a good grounding in written communication and a thorough knowledge of inference skills. However, the “Threshold Concepts” which require mastery at a secondary level, although building on the KS2 curriculum, demand that pupils have a much more thorough and detailed understanding of how to critically analyse the methods that writers use. As such, the KS3 curriculum is designed to firstly introduce these concepts in year 7, and then build on these throughout KS3 by exposing pupils to incrementally more challenging texts.

KS3 Curriculum

The English Curriculum at KS3 is structured to assess the same Threshold Concepts across the three years, which are then taken forward into the KS4 curriculum. However, the complexity of the concepts and skills increase as pupils progress. Each unit culminates in a “Reading” and a “Writing” assessment, which assesses to what extent pupils have mastered the Threshold Concepts of that Unit.

- Unit 1 for each Year Group focuses on inference and how pupils can comment on writer's methods. In Year 7 pupils start by exploring the concept of a narrative- their differences and diversities- across time. Year 8, similarly, explore literature across time with a focus on the "Supernatural". Both of these units include various forms of writing- prose, poetry and drama- exploring how writers have told and continue to tell stories about the world around them. They embed an understanding of context and a grounding in generic "literary" ideas. In Year 9 the focus shifts slightly, as pupils study how Shakespeare wrote as a form of social commentary through the text of Macbeth.
- Unit 2 for each Year Group focuses on the skill of evaluation. Building on pupils' prior knowledge of writer's methods, pupils in Year 7 move on to explore the text of A Monster Calls focusing on characterisation. Year 8 pupils move on to explore drama and the text of Blood Brothers and in Year 9 pupils explore Of Mice and Men. Within each of these, pupils will be accessing the rich and diverse contexts in which these texts were written and received.
- In Unit 3 pupils are focusing the comparison of writer's methods and perspectives. The three units at the end of the year centre around thematic non-fiction extracts. Year 7 focuses on how writers have commented on and changed society, Year 8 around war and conflict, and Year 9 centres around the diversity of modern society and how pupils can have a meaningful voice and opinion.

KS3 Writing: Each unit throughout the year also focuses on writing (imaginative communication, spelling, and grammar) which is interleaved into the study of literature to enable pupils to develop their written communication. Further to this, Unit 3 also offers pupils the opportunity to express themselves through Spoken Language; Unit 3 culminates in a project in which pupils express their opinions through speeches. Also integrated into our offer at KS3 is reading for pleasure. Reading for pleasure is prioritised to encourage pupils to develop a love for learning. Year 7 and 8 take part in the Accelerated Reader programme with a dedicated English period each week taught in the Library.

KS4 Curriculum

The curriculum at KS3 is designed to give pupils a meaningful and thorough grounding in the "Skills" and "Knowledge" concepts they need to be successful at KS4. By KS4 the Threshold Concepts become the GCSE Assessment objectives and pupils are able to access the unseen and set text elements of their exams with critical proficiency. The curriculum in KS4 interleaves both Literature and Language throughout the two years and combines vigorous in class weekly assessment with mock exams to ensure that pupils are fully prepared to be successful at the end of the two years.

English Language:

Paper 1: Explorations in creative reading and writing

Paper 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

English Literature: (Texts: Macbeth, A Christmas Carol, An Inspector Calls, Power and Conflict Poetry)

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel

Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry