

English Faculty Curriculum

Intent:

The English curriculum at Ridgewood High School is designed to support and empower all students in becoming confident and effective communicators. We understand the importance of reading, writing, speaking and listening. We recognise that such vital skills are necessary for pupils' daily exchanges within school, the wider society and preparing for the workplace. We teach the knowledge and skills required for our students to develop into critical thinkers who are able to read analytically and articulate ideas effectively, creatively and persuasively in both speech and writing.

Implementation:

The English faculty are a collaborative team. We plan, devise and review schemes of learning - taking care to adapt to whole school policies and pedagogical research and thinking.

Lesson planning takes into account that learning should be sequential, progressive and embedded into pupils' long-term memory. Each lesson begins with a 'Do Now' activity which will involve students having to think back to prior learning from days, weeks or months earlier. Other regular opportunities for retrieval practice occur through repetition of facts relating to texts, teachers' questioning skills, recollection of quotes, use of Educake for homework tasks and we also have 'flashback' lessons in Key Stage 4. This ensures that pupils are regularly drawing on prior knowledge. Assessments will show that mastery is incrementally improving.

We have, over the past few years, adopted a thematic, interleaving curriculum in which key themes and concepts reoccur across topics such as: rhetorical devices, context, narrative structures, subject terminology, academic register and descriptive devices. We also study the same author in Key Stage 3 as we do in Key Stage 4 - albeit different texts. This occurs with Charles Dickens and William Shakespeare. Such literary canons require extensive focus and in covering the context of 'Oliver Twist' in Key Stage 3 for example, pupils can utilise this learning in a sequential and progressive manner when later studying 'A Christmas Carol' in Year 11.

In English lessons, we encourage our learners to engage with language and to appreciate a writer's craft and the power of words. We hope to foster a genuine interest in vocabulary which can enrich pupils' experiences as independent readers and writers whilst also raising their cultural capital.

In every year group, students will encounter a range of texts from the literary heritage. Our texts across the curriculum represent different experiences, cultures and periods of history and come in the form of prose fiction, non-fiction, poetry and/or drama. Equally important is the development of writing skills. We seek to create writers who are imaginative, confident, engaging and technically accurate. We have a fortnightly grammatical focus throughout Key Stage 3 to ensure that the bedrock of literacy gained from Key Stage 2, is embedded and pupils are then able to confidently acknowledge such skills in writers' texts, whilst utilising them in their own writing right through to Key Stage 4.

Impact:

Outcomes within the English faculty are among the best in the school with results also being above national average.

Formative assessments include:

Regular use of teacher questioning, self and peer assessments, 'Do Now' activities, discussion/oracy tasks, cold calling, think, pair, share.

Quality of work:

High expectations across the department are reflected in student work. 'Beautiful Books' are an expectation and pupils are required to take pride in the presentation and quality of their work. Book looks have shown English are successful is instilling this routine. We regularly celebrate student work through the school's social media accounts. This seeks to increase student engagement and celebrate success. We also use Epraise, postcards, emails and telephone calls home to share and celebrate good work. Successful responses are also shared and used as model answers across the department to support marking and self-assessment.

English Faculty Assessment for KS3

Our curriculum revisits previous learning adding on new knowledge that is age and stage appropriate. We aim to move from concrete understanding to increasingly abstract understanding and higher order thinking. Our assessment practices are well established throughout the department. Each thematic unit develops a series of skills leading to the production of a significant written response. This is either an essay-based response testing reading skills or a piece of extended prose writing (creative, transactional or persuasive) in a range of forms across the key stage. Work is marked in accordance with the whole school marking policy. Close marking occurs once each half term at KS3 with pupils receiving personalised feedback. Each assessment task is carried out in timed conditions and access arrangements accounted for. Faculty moderation of assessment is carried out as part of monitoring to ensure assessment is standardised across all teaching groups. At each whole school data drop, English class teachers will provide a holistic judgment of students' current levels of attainment in English informed by performance in classwork and assessment tasks

English Faculty Assessment for KS4

We deliver a two-year GCSE course in both English Language and English Literature to all pupils in the cohort. Each half-term focuses on both courses. All units are structured around the GCSE English Language and English Literature assessment objectives in order to develop and embed the skills necessary for success in both subjects. Pupils are familiar with the language of the assessment objectives. Close summative marking occurs each half term at KS4. Students receive personalised feedback, marking sheets and work is standardised through departmental moderation sessions. Misconceptions identified in formative and summative assessments are expected to be ironed out in future lessons. Each assessment task is carried out in timed conditions and those with access arrangements have their needs catered for. At each whole school data drop point, English teachers will provide a holistic judgment of students' current levels of attainment in English informed by performance in classwork and assessment tasks.