



ST BIRINUS SCHOOL

English in Year 7

Dear Parents and Carers,

First of all, a very warm welcome to St Birinus School and the SBS English Department. We hope your sons have enjoyed their first days at St Birinus and are as excited for the year ahead as we are! From their very first English lesson your sons will embark on a two year programme of study which has been meticulously designed to foster a love of the subject and prepare them for Key Stage 4 and life beyond.

If you have any queries, concerns or would simply like to get in touch please feel free to do so using the key contact information below. We look forward to meeting you soon and celebrating your sons' success in this subject.

Kind regards,

Miss Julia Gibb - Key Stage 3 Coordinator

Year 7 English Outline

In Year 7 your son will have six English lessons per fortnight. One of these lessons will take place in the library and will involve a mix of silent reading, reading aloud to a member of staff, and comprehension and writing activities. In the other five lessons a fortnight your son will explore a range of themes and ideas to enable him to develop the skills required when tackling challenging texts. We also foster engagement through the use of creative writing, debate and drama in the classroom.

We thoroughly appreciate any support you can give your sons to promote engagement in our subject and aid their progress. We hope that by giving a clear outline of the units that your sons will cover this academic year parents and carers will be able to take an informed interest in what they are learning and even find activities to do at home that can extend their learning (for example, taking your son to see a play version of 'Great Expectations' or finding a film he can watch about Greek myths).

English Faculty Key Contacts:

Miss Hannah Rabey
Head of English
hrabey@st-birinus.oxon.sch.uk

Mr Samuel Elliott
Second in English
sellott@st-birinus.oxon.sch.uk

Miss Julia Gibb
Key Stage Three Coordinator
jgibb@st-birinus.oxon.sch.uk

Year 7 English Team:

7A1: Mr Samuel Elliott
7A2: Miss Julia Gibb
7A3: Miss Emmalees Furze
7B1: Miss Emmalees Furze
(efurze@st-birinus.oxon.sch.uk)
7B2: Miss Julia Gibb

Programme of study

Progress

In English, your son's progress will be carefully monitored to ensure he is making expected, or above expected rates of progress. If your son requires additional support, we will utilise a range of intervention strategies to ensure that he is able to meet his potential by the end of Year 7. We will also run an English club once a week during a lunch time, supported by our Key Stage 4 ambassadors and prefects where students can receive extra guidance with any aspects of English that they would like to develop.

Extra-Curricular Opportunities

From September and over the course of the year your son will be presented with many opportunities to enjoy and explore English outside of the classroom. This will involve opportunities to go on trips to the theatre, the Book Club and the Debating Society as well as opportunities to take a leadership role within the subject. For any trips letters will be sent home and parents will be emailed throughout the year.

Book Club meets in Room 1 on a Monday Lunchtime (you can bring your lunch with you) and is run by Miss Furze. It comprises of discussion about a range of reading materials and genres in a fun and relaxed atmosphere with a lovely group of students from all year groups. During the summer term they also shadow the Carnegie Award and so get to experience a whole range of different types of novels in a sociable and enjoyable way. If your son is interested in joining he just needs to turn up to Room 1 on a Monday lunchtime after he has got his lunch. Any queries please don't hesitate to contact Miss Furze.

The Debating Society meets on a Wednesday at 3:15-4:30pm in Room 5 and is led by Mr Elliott and Miss Gibb. In this club your sons will be able to learn the art of formal debating with a group of our wonderful students across different year groups. Absolutely no prior experience is necessary! Previous debate topics have included: 'Should computer science be compulsory at GCSE?', 'Should tax be increased on sugary drinks to help combat obesity?' and even 'Should drivers be required to report it if they run over a cat?!' If your son is interested in joining this club he can come along to Room 5 on Wednesday and see what it's all about. Equally if your son would be interested in simply observing the debate for a few weeks before having a go that's not a problem at all, we would love to have him along! Any queries please don't hesitate to contact Mr Elliott or Miss Gibb.



The Year 7 Curriculum

The curriculum map for Year 7 in the academic year 2018/19 is as follows:

Term 1:	Term 2:	Term 3:	Term 4:	Term 5:	Term 6:
'Expressions of Self' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-fiction speech writing - Writing for real-life applications 	Media: 'Wildlife' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of representation - Precise analysis of writer's methods 	Poetry: 'The Natural World' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poetry reading unit - Extended literary analysis 	'The Gothic' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Descriptive writing outcome - Supported by extract-based reading - Imaginative writing 	<i>Great Expectations</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 19th Century fiction reading - Extended literary analysis 	Greek Myths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Descriptive writing outcome - Supported by extract-based reading - Imaginative writing

Assessment

There will be two formative assessments and one summative assessment during each term, mirroring the style of question that your son will experience in Key Stage 4.

Expressions of Self: To write a persuasive speech from a clear point of view (challenge: maintaining a clear line of argument), using rhetorical devices for impact.

Media (Wildlife): A response that analyses the use of codes and conventions in the representation of animals in a charity advert.

Poetry (The Natural World): An analytical response (challenge: essay) about one poem students have studied (challenge: comparison) exploring how the poet presents nature using figurative language and sound effects.

The Gothic: Descriptive opening of a gothic horror story (five to six paragraphs) focusing on a Gothic atmosphere and a threatening presence.

Great Expectations: An essay exploring the presentation of a particular character in an extract (challenge: consider the way characters are used in the extract to convey ideas, e.g. social class).

Greek Myths: A newspaper article which involves students creating their own Greek myths and using all of the genre conventions of a newspaper in a sophisticated and engaging manner.



Homework

In English homework will be set on a weekly basis. It will be set on Show My Homework and the class teacher will also explain the task to students in lesson time (students will receive their login information in the first few weeks of Term 1).

We believe that homework not only provides an excellent opportunity to consolidate and stretch the learning that happens in lesson time, but also promotes independence and responsibility in our students – skills which are crucial to success at GCSE and beyond. Therefore, meeting homework deadlines is essential and every teacher in English will expect deadlines to be met without exception. If a student does not hand in a piece of homework on time an automatic hour-long after school faculty detention will be issued. These will take place on Tuesdays in Room 4 from 3:15-4:15 and parents will be informed. In very exceptional circumstances, where a student or parent has also taken the time to speak to their teacher before the lesson, a deadline extension may be granted. We thank you in advance for your support with this.

Year 7 Key Terminology

Over the course of Year 7 your son will be learning terminology that can be used to analyse both language and literature. Gaining a good grasp of English terminology is a fantastic way to gain confidence in the subject and begin to write about language and literature in a sophisticated manner. Furthermore, good understanding of terminology is essential for success at GCSE. We believe that integrating terminology into our engaging and dynamic schemes of learning is the best way for our students to learn it and our units provide multiple opportunities for revision throughout the year. However, any extra revision that you could do with your son at home would be very beneficial and aid their progress in this subject.

Year 7 Key Terminology Glossary

Adjective: A word that describes a noun. For example, 'the beautiful flowers'.

Alliteration: The repetition of the same letter at the beginning of words. For example, 'big blue balloon'.

Anecdote: a short amusing or interesting story about a real incident or person

Characterisation: The creation or construction of a fictional character.

Colloquialism: A word or phrase that is informal and used in ordinary or familiar conversation.

Connotation: An association attached to a particular word or phrase. For example, 'red rose' has connotations of love and romance.

Counter-argument: an argument or set of reasons put forward to oppose an idea or theory developed in another argument.

Denotation: The literal or primary meaning of a word, in contrast to the feelings or ideas that the word suggests

Direct address: The use of the name of the person who is being directly spoken to to draw their attention to what is being said.

Emotive language: The use of words or phrases that are used to evoke a particular emotion in the reader/audience.



Exposition: The insertion of important background information within a story; for example, information about the setting, characters' backstories, prior plot events, historical context, etc.

Foreshadowing: Words, phrases or events that give the reader a hint of something that is going to happen without revealing the story or spoiling the suspense.

Genre: A particular category of writing or film or television. For example, horror, sci-fi, fantasy.

Hyperbole: The use of deliberate exaggeration for effect.

Imagery: The use of words to create a picture or "image" in the mind of the reader. Images can relate to any of the senses and includes metaphors, similes and personification.

Imperative: A verb which is a command. For example, 'Run!', 'Stop!', 'Don't do that!'

Litotes: ironic understatement. For example, 'not a bad singer' or 'not unhappy'.

Metaphor: A comparison of one thing to another to make the description more vivid. The metaphor states that something is something else. For example, 'he is a cheeky monkey'.

Modal verb: A verb that expresses necessity or possibility. For example, 'should', 'could', 'may', 'might'.

Motif: A recurring symbol which takes on a figurative meaning. We see them in books, films, and poems.

Noun: A word used to name a person, place or thing. For example, 'cat', 'John', 'Paris', 'love'.

Onomatopoeia: When a word sounds like the thing or process it describes. For example, 'Bang! Crash!'

Pathetic fallacy: Giving human feelings or emotions to inanimate objects or nature. Often it describes the use of the weather to create a particular mood. For example, 'the sombre clouds darkened our mood'.

Personification: Giving human feelings or emotions an inanimate object. Personification is a type of metaphor where human qualities are given to things or abstract ideas. For example, 'the mist crept silently over the moor'.

Plosives: a consonant sound that is followed by a sudden release of air. In English plosive sounds are 't, k, p, d, g, b'.

Plot: The sequence of events in a poem, play or novel that make up the main storyline.

Pronoun: a word that can function as a noun phrase used by itself and that refers either to the participants in the discourse (for example, 'I, you') or to someone or something mentioned elsewhere in the discourse (for example, 'she, it, this').

Protagonist: The main character or speaker in a poem, play or novel.

Quatrain: a stanza of four lines.

Repetition: The repeating of a word or phrase for a particular effect.

Rhetorical questions: A question asked in order to create a dramatic effect or to make a point rather than to get an answer.



Rhyme: Correspondence of sound between words or the endings of words, especially when these are used at the ends of lines of poetry.

Rhythm: The pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of poetry.

Rising action: The series of events that begin immediately after the exposition (introduction) of the story and build up to the climax.

Rule of three: A writing principle that suggests that a trio of events, characters or words is more humorous, satisfying, or effective than other numbers in engaging the reader.

Semantic field: A related set of words linked by topic or meaning. For example, the semantic field of the sea would include, 'ocean', 'waves', 'storm', 'ship', 'tide' etc.

Setting: The time, place or mood where the events of a story are set.

Simile: The comparison of one thing to another in order to make the description more vivid, usually using 'like' or 'as'. For example, 'it was as light as a feather'.

Stanza: The blocks of lines into which a poem is divided (sometimes referred to as verses).

Symbolism: The use of objects, colours, sounds and places as symbols. For example, snakes are common symbols of temptation and evil.

Theme: The central idea or ideas that a writer explores through a text. For example, love, conflict, power.

Tension: Keeping an audience or reader in suspense.

Topic sentences: a sentence that expresses the main idea of the paragraph in which it occurs.

Tone: The writer's creation of an atmosphere or feeling that runs through a text. For example, sadness, gloom, joy, regret or anger.

Verb: A word used to describe an action, state, or occurrence, and forming the main part of a sentence. For example, 'walk', 'walking', 'walked'.



Key Stage 3 Suggested Reading

At St Birinus we believe that reading for pleasure is fundamental to promoting students' success in English and indeed across other subjects. Furthermore, there is a difference in reading performance equivalent to just over a year's schooling between young people who never read for enjoyment and those who read for up to 30 minutes per day (OECD, 2010). It is also clear that reading for pleasure can also have a profound impact on children's wellbeing and studies have shown that those who read for pleasure have higher levels of self-esteem and a greater ability to cope with difficult situations (Billington, 2015). Therefore, we would like to ask you to support your son by encouraging reading at home and taking opportunities to discuss what you son is reading with him.

With this in mind, we have compiled a list of books which are suitable for students in Year 7 and which we believe are engaging and exciting for boys aged 11 and over.

Suggested Reading by Genre

Action and Adventure

A Series of Unfortunate Events – Lemony Snicket
Alex Rider series – Anthony Horowitz
Artemis Fowl – Eoin Colfer
The Hunger Games trilogy – Suzanne Collins
The Maze Runner series- James Dashner
Cherub series – Robert Muchamore
Wind on Fire trilogy – William Nicholson
Young Bond series – Charlie Higson

Fantasy

Chronicles of Ancient Darkness (Wolf Brother) series – Michelle Paver
Harry Potter series – JK Rowling
His Dark Materials (Northern Lights) series – Phillip Pullman
Percy Jackson series – Rick Riordan
The Knife of Never Letting Go – Patrick Ness

Crime and Detective Stories

Murder in Midwinter – Fleur Hitchcock
Sherlock Holmes series – Andrew Lane
Skulduggery Pleasant – Derek Landy
The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time – Mark Haddon
Young Millions – F. Cottrell-Boyce

Ghost and Horror Stories

Cirque du Freak series – Darren Shan
Coraline – Neil Gaiman
The Enemy series – Charlie Higson

Historical Stories

The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas – John Boyne
The Diary of a Young Girl – Anne Frank
The Roman Mysteries series – Caroline Lawrence
War Horse – Michael Morpurgo



Sports Stories

Extra Time – Morris Gleitzman

Foul Play series – Tom Palmer

Jamie Johnson series (starts with Kick Off) – Dan Freedman

Total Football series – Alan Gibbons

Humorous Stories

Diary of a Wimpy Kid series – Jeff Kinney

The Boy in a Dress – David Walliams

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy series – Douglas Adams

Tom Gates series – Liz Pichon

Life, Love and Relationships Stories

Boy and Going Solo – Roald Dahl

Holes – Louis Sachar

The Fault in our Stars – John Green

Wonder – RJ Palacio

Stories for a Challenge!

Animal Farm – George Orwell

Great Expectations – Charles Dickens

Lord of the Flies – William Golding

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes – Arthur Conan Doyle

The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings – JRR Tolkien

Treasure Island – Robert Louis Stevenson

War of the Worlds – HG Wells

Suggested Reading Support Activities

- Choose a book that you and your son can enjoy together, take it in turns to read a page each.
- Ask your son to create a book review when they have finished a book – we would love to receive any and put them on display in the English classrooms and the library.
- Ask your son to create a storyboard of a book they have enjoyed.
- Ask your son to take an online quiz such as on:
 - <https://www.goodreads.com/quizzes>
 - <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books/quizzes/>
 - <https://www.penguin.co.uk/articles/find-your-next-read/games-and-activities/2017/dec/ultimate-book-quiz/>

