



## ST BIRINUS SCHOOL

### English in Year 8

Dear Parents and Carers,

First of all, a very warm welcome to Year 8 at St Birinus School and the SBS English Department. We hope your sons have enjoyed their first year 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 the second year of 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 8 English Outline

In Year 8 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 performance of 'Twelfth Night' or watching *Jaws*).

#### English Faculty Key Contacts:

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**Miss Julia Gibb**  
Key Stage Three Coordinator  
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#### Year 8 English Team:

**8A1:** Miss Emmalees Furze  
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**8A2:** Mr Sam Elliott

**8A3:** Miss Julia Gibb

**8B1:** Miss Hannah Rabey

**8B2:** Miss Julia Gibb

## The Year 8 Curriculum

The curriculum map for Year 8 in the academic year 2018/19 is as follows:

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
<b>The Art of Storytelling</b> - Narrative writing <u>Imaginative writing</u>	<b>Twelfth Night</b> - Reading unit - <u>Extended literary analysis</u>	<b>Media: Jaws</b> - Analysis of a scene - <u>Precise analysis of writer's methods</u>	<b>Poetry: Voices and Perspectives</b> - Poetry reading unit - <u>Extended literary analysis</u>	<b>Non-fiction texts</b> - Non-fiction article reading - <u>Precise analysis of writer's methods</u>	<b>Travel and Journeys</b> - Non-fiction article writing - <u>Writing for real-life applications</u>

### 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.

**The Art of Storytelling:** The opening to a story (five or six paragraphs) that uses a sophisticated, non-chronological narrative strategy.

**Twelfth Night:** An essay focused on the presentation of Malvolio over the course of the play.

**Media (Jaws):** Analyse a specific scene from Jaws, focusing on how symbolic codes, cinematographic codes and codes of sound create a narrative for the audience.

**Poetry (Perspectives and Voices):** An essay about one poem (challenge: comparison) students have studied exploring how poets use structure and perspective to convey their ideas.

**Non-fiction Texts:** An evaluation of the success of a particular article, using well-selected quotations and identifying a range of language techniques.

**Travel and Journeys:** Write an opinionative travel article maintaining a clear point of view, using a range of rhetorical devices for impact to create a personal voice.



## **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 8. 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.

## **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 Thursdays 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.

## **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.



## Year 8 Key Terminology

Over the course of Year 8 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 8 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

**Assonance:** When two or more words, close to one another repeat the same vowel sound, but start with different consonant sounds.

**Ballad:** A poem narrating a story in short stanzas. Traditional ballads are typically of unknown authorship, having been passed on orally from one generation to the next.

**Caesura:** A pause near the middle of a line of poetry.

**Catalyst:** Someone or something that speeds up or brings about an event in a story.

**Characterisation:** The creation or construction of a fictional character.

**Climax:** The point of highest tension in a plot.

**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.

**Consonance:** The recurrence of similar-sounding consonants close to each other.

**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.

**Dramatic irony:** When the audience knows something that the characters don't.

**Dramatic monologue:** A poem in the form of a speech or narrative by an imagined person, in which the speaker inadvertently reveals aspects of their character while describing a particular situation or series of events.

**Ellipsis:** When some parts of a sentence or event are omitted.

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

**Enjambment:** The continuation of a sentence without a pause beyond the end of a line, couplet, or stanza in poetry.



**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.

**Falling action:** The parts of a story after the climax and before the very end.

**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.

**Iambic pentameter:** a line of verse with five metrical feet, each consisting of one short (or unstressed) syllable followed by one long (or stressed) syllable, often used by Shakespeare and in poetry. For example, 'But soft! What light through yonder window breaks'.

**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!'

**Irony:** The use of words that are the opposite of what is meant.

**Juxtaposition:** Two things being seen or placed close together with contrasting effect.

**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').

**Prose:** The ordinary form of written or spoken language. It has no meter, pattern or rhyme to it.

**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.

**Sensory imagery:** Using the five senses to create a particular image or feeling for the reader.

**Sentence adverbial:** An adverb or adverbial phrase that expresses a writer's or speaker's attitude to the content of the sentence in which it occurs. For example, 'frankly', 'obviously'.

**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'.

**Soliloquy:** When a character speaks his/her thoughts aloud when alone on stage.

**Sonnet:** A poem of fourteen lines using any of a number of formal rhyme schemes, in English typically having ten syllables per line.

**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.

**Time adverbials:** A word that describes when, for how long, or how often a certain action happened. For example, 'earlier', 'after leaving the shop'.

**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'.

**Verse:** Writing arranged with a metrical rhythm, typically having a rhyme. Poetry is written in verse.

**Zoomorphism:** When animal attributes are given to non-animal objects, humans, and events; and animal features are ascribed to humans, gods, and other objects.



## **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 8 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/>

