

Curriculum Rationale and Overview (Scheme level)



Subject: English

Year group: Year 9

	Autumn	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
National Curriculum context	<i>Year 9 begins with Shakespeare's Romeo & Juliet. This immediately signals a transition into mature, secondary scholarship. Students scale up from analysing short, isolated scenes to tracking complex motifs across a five-act structure. By evaluating how characters function as constructs within a rigid patriarchal society, students build the stamina needed for their GCSE English Literature.</i> <i>The Introduction to Media Studies unit teaches students that a director 'writes' with a camera just as an author does with a pen. This allows for a wider application of analytical skills.</i> <i>The War Poetry unit introduces students to the magery of Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon as mentor texts. Students learn the strict mechanics of structural pacing using this to craft controlled, engaging narratives.</i> <i>Non-Fiction & Writer's Viewpoints focuses on rhetoric and the power of the spoken word. Students master DAMPFORST, writing structures, and paralinguistic performance features to deliver an original, formal persuasive speech. This unit serves as the official trial run for their statutory GCSE Spoken Language Endorsement (NEA).</i> <i>The year concludes with Victorian Crime, blending 19th-century detective fiction, dramatic poetry, and sensationalist broadsheet reporting. Students leave Year 9 with confidence in tackling the complex, multi-clause grammar of Victorian prose before their GCSE courses begin.</i>				

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Scheme of Learning Title:	Romeo & Juliet	Media	War poetry	Non-Fiction Viewpoints	Victorian Crime
Content <i>What will students know?</i>	Elizabethan Context: The concepts of the Patriarchal society, the Divine Right of Kings, the Great Chain of Being, astrological determinism (Fate vs. Free Will), and Elizabethan codes of honour. Dramatic Forms & Genre: The Aristotelian Tragedy (including <i>hamartia</i>, <i>hubris</i>, and <i>catharsis</i>). The structural framework of Freytag's Pyramid applied to drama, specifically identifying the technical turning point (Climax) in Act 3, Scene 1. Advanced Tier 3 terminology including <i>oxymorons</i>, <i>antithesis</i>, <i>motifs</i>, <i>soliloquies</i>, <i>asides</i>, <i>blank verse</i>, <i>prose</i>, and <i>sonnet form</i> used within dialogue.	Media Language Terminology: The exact definitions of key technical codes like <i>camera shots & angles</i>, <i>mise-en-scène</i>, <i>lighting</i>, <i>sound and editing</i> The Concept of Representation: How media texts construct versions of reality.	The Historical and Poetic Context: The shift from initial patriotic romanticism to the brutal, gritty realism of war. Advanced structural techniques. The requirements of a cohesive narrative paragraph, driven by an atmospheric topic sentence. Linguistic techniques to manipulate the reader's emotional response.	The explicit components of DAMPFOREST. Aristotle's modes of persuasion: <i>Ethos</i>, <i>Pathos</i> and <i>Logos</i>. The mechanics of oral delivery, including <i>vocal inflection</i>, <i>pitch modulation</i>, <i>deliberate pausing</i>, <i>eye contact</i>, <i>open posture</i>, <i>gesture mirroring</i>, and <i>spatial positioning</i>.	Victorian Context and Legal Realities: The birth of the modern police force, the geography of London, and Victorian anxieties surrounding evolutionary regression. The genres of detective fiction, gothic penny dreadfuls, and sensationalist broadsheet reporting. 19th-century syntactic frameworks.
<i>What will students understand?</i>	That the tragedy is a symptom of an unregulated generational feud and societal breakdown, rather than just a story about two teenagers. How Shakespeare deliberately manipulates structural pacing to amplify the feeling of claustrophobia and inevitable doom. The need to move beyond single-word analysis to tracking a <i>motif</i> across the entire text. That characters are not real people, but ideological constructs.	That every single frame of a film is a deliberate construct. How media literacy protects them as consumers, allowing them to critically decode subtle visual manipulations. The structure and career pathways available within the GCSE Media Studies specification.	That poetry provides a way to convey massive psychological horror using a few highly precise words. That narrative writing is an intentional, mechanical craft. How a topic sentence acts as a structural anchor in description. The difference between chaotic, uncontrolled writing and technical mastery.	That a successful speech relies as much on how it is delivered as it does on the written words. How to anticipate counter-arguments, understanding that a strong viewpoint is strengthened by acknowledging and dismantling opposing perspectives.	That the line between Victorian fact and fiction was highly fluid. That a journalist uses bias and language choices to frame a criminal just as deliberately as a novelist constructs a villain. How this unit removes the entry barriers for GCSE English Language by providing familiarity with Victorian writing styles.

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<i>What will students be able to do?</i>	Deconstruct complex, multi-layered Elizabethan verse. Track a theme or motif across different acts of the play. Synthesise contextual knowledge seamlessly into analysis. Construct a sustained, multi-paragraph essay that presents a coherent thesis regarding the play as a whole.	Analyse the effect of technical codes. Deconstruct a moving-image extract frame-by-frame, taking detailed analytical notes. Write a structured media analysis essay evaluating the intended effect of directorial choices.	Deconstruct a poem's imagery and re-purpose it into prose descriptions. Write controlled paragraphs that start with topic sentences. Vary sentence lengths and structures intentionally. Use sophisticated punctuation to demonstrate technical mastery.	Deconstruct a writer's bias or perspective, tracking how tone shifts across a piece. Use DAMPFORST techniques in an original speech. Control physical and vocal paralinguistic features under pressure. Listen critically and respond adaptively to questions.	Interpret both 19th-century factual reporting and fictional narratives. Use advanced, authentic 19th-century sentence structures. Write from a distinct historical viewpoint, avoiding modern colloquialisms.
<i>How will they be formally assessed?</i>	Autumn 1 - Analytical Reading Students will evaluate how Shakespeare uses language, metre, or dramatic irony to construct tension or character relationships in a specific moment (e.g. the Act 1, Scene 5 shared sonnet, or the Act 3, Scene 1 fight scene). Autumn 2 - Analytical Reading Students answer an essay question evaluating a theme or character arc across the entire play (e.g., "Explore how Shakespeare presents the theme of conflict in the play as a whole.").	Analytical Assessment Students will watch a short, unstudied 2-minute film clip three times (e.g., a high-tension sequence from a thriller or dystopian film). The Prompt: Analyse how the director uses media language to create a sense of danger/tension in the clip.	Creative Narrative Writing The Prompt: Using a selected stanza, write a first-person narrative capturing a sudden, high-stakes moment of crisis or survival.	GCSE Spoken Language Mock Assessment (NEA Endorsement) The Task: Deliver a 3-to-4-minute formal persuasive speech on an issue of personal passion or societal importance, followed by a live Q&A session with the class.	Victorian Writing Mastery Students will be given a choice of two writing prompts that mirror the dual requirements of the GCSE specifications: Option A (Fiction Focus): Write the opening of a gothic detective narrative set in the smog-choked streets of Victorian London. Option B (Non-Fiction Focus): Write a broadsheet newspaper article reporting on a recent, shocking crime in the metropolis.

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Blended Learning Opportunities (yr 7 - 9)	Students practice digital essay planning, dragging and dropping relevant textual evidence from different acts into a structured, colour-coded thesis map before writing. Students use digital flashcards to independently memorise key quotations and Tier 3 vocabulary definitions, tracking their retrieval accuracy scores week-by-week. Students complete evaluation and comparison tasks on the play and its characters, using their chromebooks - this allows more flexibility than writing in exercise books.	Students insert a short film clip link into Google Slides and take screenshots of specific frames. They use digital arrows and callout boxes to annotate the <i>mise-en-scène</i> and camera choices directly onto the static frames. Teachers post an audio track of a movie scene on Google Classroom with the video completely blacked out. Students use their Chromebooks to listen and write a paragraph analysing <i>only</i> the sound design.	Teachers distribute a poorly paced, dull paragraph about a soldier going over the top. Students use the digital editing tools to rewrite it. Using Google Docs' "Suggesting" mode, mixed-ability pairs take turns acting as "Line Editors". One student writes a sentence, and their partner suggests where to upgrade a generic verb or insert a semi-colon/em-dash to enhance the structural tension.	Once drafts are finalised, students paste their speech text into a free online teleprompter on their Chromebooks. They practice reading their work at varying speeds, learning to pace their sentences and synchronise their breathing with the scrolling text. Students insert their speech text onto a shared Google Slide deck. Using Mote, they record audio clips of themselves delivering specific lines in different emotional tones, assessing which vocal inflection sounds more authoritative.	Students use their Chromebooks to navigate digitised, real-life 19th-century newspaper archives. They find a real Victorian crime report, crop the text, and paste it into a Google Doc to act as their blueprint for a non-fiction writing task. Teachers upload a digital spreadsheet via Google Classroom containing "19th-century clause fragments" (e.g., <i>Amidst the swirling vortex of the London fog... / ...the phantom figure vanished.</i>). Students drag, drop, and rearrange these elements on screen, inserting correct semicolons and dashes to master complex sentence building blocks physically before drafting.
Literacy/Numeracy /Personal Development	Mastering academic verbs of intent (e.g., <i>Shakespeare exemplifies, encapsulates, subverts, scrutinises</i>). Moving beyond basic transitions to sophisticated connective phrases (e.g., <i>"While initially presented as... this later manifests as..."</i>). Mapping the play's structural arc. Personal Development (SMSC) Exploring the toxic nature of toxic masculinity, pride, and unresolved family feuds, initiating vital	Translating secure knowledge of literary devices into visual media equivalents. Counting the number of camera cuts per minute to calculate the mathematical acceleration of a scene's pacing. Personal Development (SMSC)	Explicitly teaching Tier 2/3 words related to conflict, trauma, and atmosphere. Mastering the use of complex sentences to elevate prose structure. Learning how punctuation marks dictate the speed at which a text is read.	Moving away from colloquial phrasing to adopt high-status, formal discourse markers. Designing sentences specifically for the ear rather than the eye. Learning how to present statistics persuasively. Personal Development	Syntactic Elongation: Teaching students how to construct long, formal periodic sentences. Explicit vocabulary mapping of Victorian terms. Breaking down Latinate and Greek roots of Victorian vocabulary to aid structural decoding.

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	modern discussions on knife crime, gang culture, and the importance of open communication. Deconstructing the difference between superficial infatuation (<i>Rosaline</i>) and profound, mature emotional connection (<i>Juliet</i>), linking to healthy relationship education (RSE).	Empowering students to be critical thinkers. Providing a bridge to a high-value options subject, opening up aspirations toward creative industries, digital marketing, journalism, and film production.	Personal Development (SMSC) Fostering historical empathy for the physical and psychological sacrifices of a generation. Critically examining how language can be weaponised (propaganda), encouraging students to value truth and objective reporting over manipulation.	(SMSC) Empowering students with the tools of democratic debate. Directly tackling the fear of public speaking through scaffolded practice, building personal confidence, resilience, and emotional maturity.	Personal Development (SMSC) Exploring how the extreme poverty of the Victorian East End fueled criminal networks, prompting empathetic discussions on the root causes of crime, class divides, and social justice today.
<i>Links to Prior learning</i>	From Year 7 "The Tempest": The foundational knowledge of verse vs prose, dramatic irony, and basic staging conventions established in Year 7 are revisited. From Year 7 "The Curious Incident..." & Year 8 "Non-Fictional Heroes": Students move from using the pyramid to <i>plan</i> their own writing to using it as a diagnostic tool to critique Shakespeare's structural architecture. From Year 8 "Fictional Villains": Students will look at characters like Tybalt or Lord Capulet and evaluate whether they are archetypal "villains" or products of a rigid, patriarchal honour system.	From Year 8 "Fictional Villains": Students will see how the concept of <i>physiognomy</i> and visual shorthand for villainy transfers from 19th-century prose descriptions directly onto the screen via costume design, low-angle lighting, and menacing soundtracks. From Year 8 "Frankenstein" (Summer Drama Unit): Connects to stagecraft. The concepts of <i>proxemics</i> (how close characters stand to each other) and physical blocking learned on the stage in Year 8 are directly applied here to how a director positions characters within a camera frame.	From Year 7 "Poetry Through the Ages" & Year 8 "Post-Colonial Voices": Students take their understanding of stanzas, line breaks, and poetic imagery and learn how to use these in their own prose writing. From Year 7 "The Curious Incident..." & Year 8 "Great Expectations": Students build on the narrative mechanics taught in Year 7 and the Dickensian character/voice creation in Year 8. From Year 9 "Romeo & Juliet": Connects to the theme of conflict and structural turning points.	From Year 7 "The Giver" & Year 8 "Non-Fictional Heroes": The basic DAMPFORST structures learned in Year 7 and the mechanical paragraphing/journalistic structures mastered in Year 8 are combined through speech.	From Year 8 "Great Expectations": Students return to the foggy, industrial landscapes of London and the gothic atmosphere of Satis House, transferring those structural settings straight into their own writing.

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		Students discover that “What? How? Why?” is a universal decoding tool that works just as effectively on a modern movie screen.			
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