## Teign School Curriculum Overview





**ENGLISH: KS3 CURRICULUM FROM 2021**

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| **Year**  | **Cycle 1 -12 Weeks****(10 weeks teaching, 1 week assessment, 1 impact week)** | **Cycle 2 -12 Weeks****(10 weeks teaching, 1 week assessment, 1 impact week** | **Cycle 3 -12 Weeks****(10 weeks teaching, 1 week assessment, 1 impact week** |
| **7** | * **This Year 7 curriculum has been taught since September 2021**
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|  | **Stories and Society: ‘Animal Farm’**We begin Year 7 English by reading a selection of **Aesop’s Fables** and European **fairy tales**. Many students will be familiar with these, from primary school or home, so they are able to bring their prior knowledge of similar stories with them into the classroom. Through these stories, we start to explore the concept of **authorial intent** and the idea that **texts can have** **functions** such as moral messages and societal comment. These deceptively simple texts are also a starting point for discussing the centrality of stories in society, and the way in which the sharing of stories connects us. When reading these texts, students are introduced to our approach to whole-class reading, in which all students participate and are **encouraged to read and speak audibly and confidently**. From here, we move on to reading and sharing George Orwell’s **‘Animal Farm’**, which was originally subtitled ‘A Fairy Story’. We read it initially as a story in its own right, and as we read we discuss characterisation, plot and ‘big ideas’ such as power, manipulation and tyranny as they arise, before later introducing **social and historical context** and the literary concept of **allegory**. Throughout the cycle, students are encouraged to develop personal responses to and opinions about the texts, while being introduced to some essential aspects of **academic writing**: in particular, the use of **hedging** to discuss ideas tentatively; the concept that texts may have **multiple interpretations**, and how to express opinions in writing without using the first person. | **Genre and Craft: The Gothic**While Cycle 1 explores authorial intention in the form of whole text moral messages and societal comment, Cycle 2 focuses on finer details of **the writer’s craft**: the **language, syntax and structures** used in narrative and descriptive writing in order to create meaning and engage readers. We start with the broad concept of **genre**, before focusing our attentions specifically on the gothic, its history and conventions. We read Susan Hill’s modern classic ghost story, **‘The Woman in Black,’** which exemplifies the gothic conventions, and we draw attention to specific aspects of the writer’s craft within the text to provide a model for students’ own gothic-inspired writing. Within this cycle, we explicitly teach aspects of **grammar, sentence structures and vocabulary**, revisiting and building on knowledge gained in primary school. This gives us the opportunity to re-teach, consolidate and develop the knowledge and skills required for accurate and precise writing. Towards the end of the cycle, we read Philip Pullman’s playscript version of Mary Shelley’s **‘Frankenstein’** to introduce this text and its original literary background, and to further develop whole-class approaches to reading.  | **Language and Influence: Shakespeare’s ‘Julius Caesar’ and Rhetoric**In Cycle 3, we continue to explore **the writer’s craft**, this time through the lens of **rhetoric**: using language to influence the opinions, perspectives and feelings of others. We approach this first through reading **Shakespeare’s** **‘Julius Caesar’** (using a combination of extracts and summary). Through reading this text, we return to and further explore ideas such as power, manipulation and tyranny, which we met in our Cycle 1 study of ‘Animal Farm’, and build on students’ knowledge of playscripts from Cycle 2 while increasing the challenge through reading Shakespeare’s verse. We follow this by reading several examples of famous orations from key moments in history, such as, **Martin Luther King’s ‘Dream’**, **Obama’s 2008 election speech** and **Amanda Gorman’s spoken word poem, ‘The Hill We Climb’**. Through this, we explore in more detail how these speakers and writers craft and structure their writing in compelling and persuasive ways, as models for students’ own writing.  As in Cycle 2, we continue to consolidate and further develop knowledge of **grammar, sentence structures and vocabulary** and the processes involved in writing. As an integral part of this, we teach specific **rhetorical devices and structures** such as repetition (anaphora, epistrophe and epizeuxis) and parallelism (isocolon and tricolon), deepening students’ understanding of sentence structures and sentence- and paragraph-level crafting. The rhetorical focus of this unit also invites an exploration of the **performative aspects of oration**, building on our approach to whole-class reading to encourage students to speak audibly, confidently and in a way that directly addresses and engages an audience.  |
| **8** | * **This Year 8 curriculum is being taught in 2022-23**
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| **The Best Words in the Best Order: Poetry**In Cycle 1, we build upon previous study of **the writer’s craft** in prose, and explore the craft and crafting of **verse** – in Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s words, ‘the best words in the best order.’ Students both read and write poetry, in order to explore **the connection between meaning and methods**, which is the basis of close literary analysis. We begin the cycle by reading a Young Adult verse novel, **Jason Reynolds’ ‘Long Way Down’**. This is engaging modern American text written with a strong 1st person voice, through which we introduce and discuss a range of literary and poetic methods. For example, we explore **figurative language** using the concept of *tenor, vehicle* and *ground* as a way to both create and analyse similes, metaphors and personification. Reynolds’ text also provides an opportunity to introduce, explore and embrace literary **ambiguity**, as this concept can be a barrier to students’ understanding and enjoyment in later study at KS4 and KS5. This novel is used as a springboard into our **Year 8 Poetry Anthology**, which includes a diverse range of poems chosen to exemplify different poetic features first encountered in ‘Long Way Down’, which students then explore in greater depth. Through studying the anthology, students develop their **academic writing**. Here, we return to Year 7 concepts of **hedging, interpretation** and a **formal writing style**, and build on this by introducing the use of **literary terms**, giving students a language with which to discuss the writer’s craft more precisely. Students also have structured opportunities to write their own, both in the classroom and through a poetry workshop, facilitated by a professional author. Through this, students are encouraged to get ‘under the skin’ of poetry from a writer’s perspective, and to develop their own writerly voices. This concept of **voice** is then central to Year 8 Cycle 2.  | **The Writer’s Craft: Monologues and Voice**Cycle 2 is centred on **monologues** and **strongly voiced 1st person narratives**. We ‘dip in’ to a wide range of texts – both whole texts and extracts from longer works – exposing students to multiple literary voices, and piquing their interest in texts that are often freely available in our library for them to explore further. Through reading and writing monologues and 1st person narratives, we explore the crafting of **voice** and **tone**, through **vocabulary**, **sentence structures**, and **punctuation**. This builds on work from Year 7 Cycles 2 and 3, and goes beyond accuracy to nuance: **tone** is a particularly subtle aspect of writing, requiring a deeper understanding of – and vocabulary for – emotions and reactions. We have found that students can struggle to identify tone in more complex texts, which can inhibit their comprehension and enjoyment. By foregrounding tone in this cycle, in both reading and writing, we hope to support students to develop their own written voices, and to identify meaning in others’ writing that might otherwise be hidden to them. This cycle also provides an opportunity to explore the differences – and overlaps – between **spoken and written language** and **registers**, building students’ knowledge of the relationship between ‘real life’ language and the language of constructed texts.  | **Shakespeare’s ‘Romeo and Juliet’**We end Year 8 by returning to Shakespeare and reading **‘Romeo and Juliet’**. This is a play that allows us to both strengthen and develop students’ understanding of **genre** and **tragedy**, first encountered through ‘Julius Caesar’ in Year 7. In this cycle, we build upon previous work on **academic writing,** and bring together knowledge from previous cycles to explore and express understanding of **themes**, characters and Shakespeare’s crafting of both language and structure.  |
| **9** | * **This Year 9 curriculum will be taught in 2023-24** *(some details TBC)*
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| **The Writer’s Craft: Short Stories**At the start of Year 9, we use the English and Media Centre’s ‘Iridescent Adolescent’ anthology of diverse short stories as a springboard to further develop students’ understanding of the writer’s craft, both through reading and writing. We focus particularly on the way in which writers **structure** short stories, in addition to building upon previous study of **vocabulary, figurative language, sentence structures, voice and tone.** In this cycle, students write short stories, using those in the anthology as ‘mentor texts’. Students build on earlier **academic writing** by writing analytically about both literary texts and their own, to continue to develop their understanding of the connections between meaning and methods, and to situate themselves as both writers and critical readers.  | **The Power of Language: Journalism**Where previous cycles focus primarily on fictional texts, here we turn our attention to real life examples of **non-fiction** writing that can make a difference in our world: journalism that seeks to expose and explain truths about society. This unit of study acts as a bridge between **authorial intent** in fiction, and the way in which non-fiction writing intends to inform and influence readers. Students will both read a range of journalistic articles *(choice of texts yet to be decided)*, and hone their use of the writing skills and wider knowledge required to write well in this genre. We build on the centrality of **audience** and **purpose** students first encountered in Year 7 Cycle 3 (rhetoric), but whereas there the focus was on an ostentatious crafting in a ‘high style’, here students develop a more **subtly authoritative writing voice**. The timing of this cycle is intended to coincide with the **BBC Young Reporter Competition**, which runs through February–March each year, so that students have a real-life opportunity to report a story or issue that is important to their lives and the world around them. Implicitly, this cycle lays the foundations for GCSE transactional writing, and an understanding of the non-fiction texts encountered in English Language, but far more broadly we use this as an opportunity to teach students that their ability to use language really can make them powerful, both in their own lives and the wider world.  | **Literature in Context: ‘An Inspector Calls’**In this final cycle of KS3, students encounter one of their GCSE texts – J**. B. Priestley’s ‘An Inspector Calls’** – for the first time, and this unit acts as a bridge between KS3 and KS4 study.Content in this cycle emerges from and further develops ideas sown and nurtured in earlier study. **Authorial intent** and **social comment** first encountered through Orwell’s ‘Animal Farm’ in Year 7 re-emerges here, in Priestley’s promotion of a more socially responsible society. Students’ knowledge of **playscripts**, developed through both Pullman’s adaptation of ‘Frankenstein’ and Shakespeare’s ‘Julius Caesar’ and ‘Romeo and Juliet’ is drawn upon to help them navigate and understand the subtleties of Priestley’s use of **stage** **directions** and **dialogue**. Students’ knowledge of **rhetoric** is required for an understanding of the Inspector’s parting speech, and they further develop their analytical reading and **academic writing** through exploration of Priestley’s themes, characterisation and use of structure. In addition to reading the play, students develop an understanding of the connection between literature and **context** by reading a range of extracts from both **Priestley’s ‘English Journey’** (non-fiction writing about society and struggle in 1930s England) and **Orwell’s ‘The Road to Wigan Pier,’** which itself was inspired by Priestley’s earlier work and social comment.  |
| **Students will progress to GCSE study of both English Literature and Language in Years 10–11.** For now, we are retaining a degree of flexibility for the shape of KS4, as the cohort first studying this curriculum will be taking GCSEs in Summer 2026: much may happen between now and then! This KS3 curriculum has been planned with the academic and scholarly discipline(s) of English, A Level study, and current GCSE and national curriculum requirements in mind. It is intended to provide a supportive, challenging and engaging continuation from KS2, and foundation to KS4 and beyond.  |