ENGLISH – CURRICULUM OVERVIEW 2020/21

TOPIC TITLE	TOPIC OVERVIEW	KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS	ASSESSMENT	WIDER LINKS
YEAR 8 Term 1: **No Man Should Be An Island** *'There is no frigate like a book'*	**In this first unit students will:** • Develop students' understanding of the impact of social and historical context on the writer's choices. • With a particular focus on Of Mice and Men, the students will consider how writers use their writing to both reflect and comment on issues within society and how they are influenced in their own writing. • Students will reinforce and develop their understanding of narrative structure by examining how foreshadowing and the circular narrative structure are used to convey meaning. They will experiment with structure in their own writing. • Through the exploration of the symbolism in the novella, we will teach students how symbolism can be used at a word, character and structural level in order to signify meaning. • As the unit develops, we will extend this exploration of symbolism across a range of multicultural poetry and non-fiction texts, all of which examine the relationship between people and places. By doing so, we aim to provide models of techniques that the students can use to craft their own writing. **Explore key questions:** ➢ How has the writer's message been influenced by time and place? ➢ How is the text used to reflect and critique society? ➢ What does being subtle mean and when should we be subtle in our writing? ➢ How do writers, including us, use symbolism at a word, character and structural level?	**Key knowledge** • Reinforcement of Freytag's pyramid and different types of literary conflict • Characterisation, including flat and round characters • Circular narrative • Foreshadowing • Symbolism • Conventions of descriptive writing • Conventions of travel writing **Key skills** • Core reading and writing skills • Strategies for planning • Descriptive writing skills • Poetry comparison	Weekly knowledge retention tests will take place fortnightly testing retention of the knowledge organiser. Students will complete three assessments per term designed to assess their progress against the aims of the unit and the development of their core reading and writing skills. Task 1, writing assessment: Write a description of a character based on a picture stimulus. Draw on techniques used by Steinbeck. Task 2, reading assessment: To what extent do you agree with the view that 'Steinbeck presents Curley's Wife as a sympathetic character'? Task 3, writing assessment: Using an image as stimulus, describe a setting.	This particular novella has been chosen to extend students range of reading beyond the British Isles and explore the ramifications of intolerance, isolation and a lack of compassion within society.

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YEAR 8 Term 2: **Honour and Reputation**	**In this second unit, students will:** • Explore the conventions of a Shakespearean comedy. It is our intention through this unit to build upon students' understanding of Shakespearean texts (begun in Year 7 with Tragedy - Romeo and Juliet) and to develop a deeper understanding of the nature of a play. • Many students find the complexity and unfamiliarity of Shakespearean language intimidating. By exploring the text through the lens of a romantic comedy, we aim to demystify the text and encourage the students to make predictions by drawing upon their understanding of the conventions of the genre and to remember that plays, no matter how old, are always about people. The themes directly connect to the human experience and situations we may have, or will encounter in our lives: power, family drama, relationships, love and feuds. • By considering the abstract concept of honour, students will begin to reflect on whether the time and context in which we read a text affects our understanding of its message. • As the unit develops, students will encounter a range of non-fiction texts from different times that examine the issues of gender, marriage, family and honour. In doing so, we aim to develop students' ability to compare writer's viewpoints and perspectives and examine the factors that might influence these perspectives. **Explore key questions:** ➢ How does the time in which we read affect our understanding of message? ➢ How does the nature of a play alter the message and allow for interpretation? ➢ How do writers use stagecraft to depict their plot, character and theme? ➢ What are the conventions of a Shakespearean comedy? ➢ What does Shakespeare suggest about the nature of honour?	**Key knowledge** • The conventions of a Shakespearean comedy. • The conventions of romantic comedies. • Elements of stage craft • Conventions of transactional writing • Rhetorical devices **Key skills** • Continue to develop core reading and writing skills • Acting in role • Structuring an essay • Structuring and delivering a speech	Weekly knowledge retention tests will take place fortnightly testing retention of the knowledge organiser. Students will complete three assessments per term designed to assess their progress against the aims of the unit and the development of their core reading and writing skills. Task 1, reading assessment: Starting with this extract, explain how Shakespeare presents the relationship between Beatrice and Benedick. Task 2, writing assessment: Viewpoint speech in role of character. Task 3, reading assessment: Starting with this extract, explore how Shakespeare presents attitudes towards women in 'Much Ado About Nothing'.	History: Theatre in Shakespeare's England. Marriage and relationships in Elizabethan England. Life Skills: Debate skills, exploration of gender and cultural conventions such as marriage.

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YEAR 8 Term 3: **Gods and Mortals**	**In this third unit, students will:** • Examine a range of classical myths and Biblical stories. Greek and Norse myths are captivating stories, replete with noble heroes, grotesque monsters and capricious gods. Classical mythology is not only interesting, but it is also the foundation of allusion and character genesis in literature. They often use clichés and stereotypes and there are typical sets of characters that appear in many tales: a brave knight, a king, a witch, a chief or prince. These character archetypes often embody the virtues and inverse of those virtues, with the story of Narcissus containing a lesson about self-love. • Through the study and independent research of classical mythology, we aim to spark students' curiosity about language since many English words are derived from characters and events found within and these everyday idioms take on new depth when you discover the story behind them. The influence doesn't stop at language, either- the themes present in the original tales are timeless. Writers and creatives often look to ancient Greece for inspiration, before offering a new take on millenia-old narratives. • By studying ancient mythologies alongside both literary fiction and non-fiction texts that allude to these mythologies, we aim to equip students the tools they need fully to engage with the culture they consume. Throughout the unit, students will be given opportunities to use these myths as a source of inspiration for their own writing, adding another layer of story for their readers to engage with. **Key questions** ➢ Why are classical mythology and biblical stories important in English? ➢ What do we mean by stock characters? ➢ How are character archetypes used to represent moral values? ➢ Why might writers use allusions in their writing?	**Key knowledge** • Wide range of mythological and biblical allusions • Etymology of language • Reinforcement of Freytag's pyramid, seven basic plots and Hero's Journey • Character archetypes and stock characters • Conventions of a parable • Conventions of descriptive writing **Key skills** • Continue to develop core reading and writing skills • Poetry comparison • Descriptive writing skills • Narrative writing skills	Weekly knowledge retention tests will take place fortnightly testing retention of the knowledge organiser. Students will complete three assessments per term designed to assess their progress against the aims of the unit and the development of their core reading and writing skills. Task 1, writing assessment: description of a monster Task 2, reading assessment: Compare how two of the poets you have studied use traditional mythic icons to make points about modern life. Task 3, writing assessment: Write a narrative transforming a traditional myth to add a modern spin.	Life skills: Discussion of common timeless themes and moral dilemmas. Classical mythology explores: family disputes, destiny, pride and betrayal, which are still relevant to modern audiences. e.g. Debate: Plastic surgery debate linked to Narcissus myth