



St Mary Redcliffe
and Temple School

English Language



English Language

Exam board: AQA

Specification no.: 7701 (AS) / 7702 (A Level)

This is a two year linear A level course - The AS content forms the first half of the A level content and can be assessed at the end of Year 12 to provide an AS Level qualification if the student is dropping the subject and believes they can get a strong grade. Otherwise the two years of content are assessed at the end of Year 13 to give the A level grade.

Course Delivery:

The course is taught so far as possible through the practical exploration of written and spoken language, to discover the issues and principles which it raises. Students will reinforce their understanding of theory through practical tasks which develop their own writing skills, and will learn to evaluate the suitability of language and style to an audience and genre through reflecting on one's work.

Course Content:

A Level

1 Language, the Individual and Society

This section has two parts.

a) **Representation and Meaning in Texts:**

This section will build on your GCSE Skills as you learn to explore how texts create representations through language choices.

How are people, places and ideas represented? How do people write for specific readers? How do texts make implications? How does the context affect the meaning of a text? How do texts manipulate readers?

You will learn a range of linguistic frameworks and concepts to analyse and compare texts.

- b) **Child Language Acquisition**– Language is one of the most advanced skills that humans learn, yet no one quite knows how we learn to speak. Do we learn from imitation? Or is there some ‘software’ built in? Do humans have special problem-solving skills that allows us to learn language? This section will teach you the various proposed theories about how we learn to speak, and you will look at a variety of actual transcripts to see the stages and concepts in child language acquisition. This links very well with Psychology and Health & Social Care.

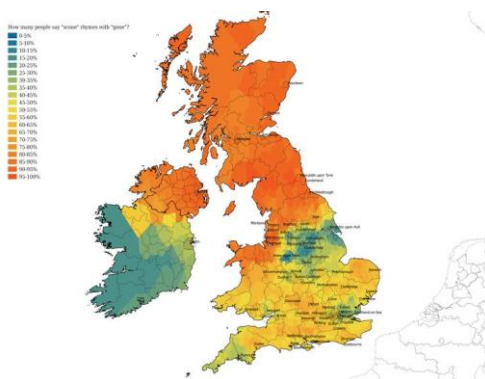


2 Language Diversity and Change

This section again has two sections.

- a) **Diversity and Change** – this is a fascinating area of the course where we look at how language varies geographically and socially. *How do people in the Northeast and the South-West speak differently? Why do they use Standard English and Received Pronunciation on the news? Do men and women speak the*

same language? How can you even measure this? You will also study how the English language changes over time, and how it changes in different regions and locations in different ways. This is a great introduction to sociolinguistics.



- b) **Discourses** – you may have seen that the English language is often in the news – *is too much slang spoken in schools? Is political correctness going too far? Is texting ruining the English Language? Are there too many Americanisms in the English language today?* This section looks at the patterns and themes found in the media when people write about language. What patterns of language are used when discussing these issues? There is also a creative writing

element in this section where you will be asked to use these patterns or 'discourses' in your own article writing.

3 Language in Action

This is the coursework or Non Exam Assessed section (NEA).

Students often ask if there is any creative writing in the course and this is your chance to do some. You have to complete:

- **a language investigation** (2,000 words) where you can investigate an area of your choice, [from the way boys and girls toys are marketed to the language of WW2 propaganda messages](#), for example.

- **a piece of original writing and commentary** (750 words each). You chose to write in any recognised genre, [from dystopian fiction to travel writing](#), after researching the style. You then comment on your own creative writing.



FAQs

What texts do I study?

You will study mainly short extracts or text – including transcripts of people speaking in real life.

Is there any creative writing?

There is creative writing in the NEA/coursework and in the Discourses section. There will also be chances to write creatively in class.

Is it like GCSE English Language?

There are some aspects similar to GCSE but the difference is that you will be looking at how real language works in real time, rather than just studying texts themselves.

Why is this course good for me?

You will learn a lot about the way we use language – you will never look at language the same way again. You will learn some very rigorous methods for analysing language, and you will also learn a lot of concepts and theories about language use.

Entry requirements:

Grade 6 in English Language and 5 in English Literature.

Skills & personal qualities required / developed by course:

To get the best from the course, students will need to enjoy discussing language issues and be willing to comment on the texts that we read. Student need to be able to read language in an analytical frame of mind. The requirement for written coursework tasks requires students to have a degree of flair, creativity and technical accuracy in written English.

Recommended reading / websites:

Bill Bryson – Mother Tongue.

Graeme Rosedale - Sociolinguistics

David Crystal – Words, Words, Words.

<http://www.teachrealenglish.org/>

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/accents-attitudes-and-identity-an-introduction-to-sociolinguistics> (a great introduction to aspects of the course)

For further information:

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