



The Henrietta Barnett School

English



Authenticity - Kindness - Curiosity
Connection - Endeavour

Year 7

We nurture creativity and introduce students to a range of stimulating literature. We aim to foster confidence in responding sensitively and analytically both orally and in writing. We enrich and challenge students by providing a variety of workshops and theatre visits. Students begin the year by reading a selection of diverse short stories, culminating in the writing of their own original short story. They do a 'Challenging Read' project, which encourages them to try something outside their comfort zone, culminating in a talk to the class. They study the novel 'Animal Farm', followed by Poetry on the theme of 'Identity'. They explore the Shakespeare play 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and enjoy many linked creative activities. They also cover non-fiction reading and writing on the theme of 'Food'

Year 8

We further develop students' writing and oral skills and appreciation of a range of challenging literature. Set texts include 'Of Mice and Men', 'Macbeth' and 'The Crucible', as well as selections from Chaucer's 'The Canterbury Tales'. A unit on Nineteenth-Century Mystery stories stimulates high-quality creative writing. Students also compete in the inter-form public speaking ('Solo Speech') competition.

Year 9

We consolidate the skills taught in Year 7 and Year 8 to ensure that students are confident in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Group project work encourages collaboration and independence. We emphasise close analysis of texts and essay technique to prepare students for GCSE. Students are introduced to challenging classic literature through an in-depth study of 'Pride and Prejudice' by Jane Austen. The Shakespeare text is 'Hamlet'. Students read a selection of non-fiction texts on the theme of 'Education' which supports them in taking part in a series of debates on this theme. Once again, they also prepare for the Solo Speech competition. The year culminates in an exploration of Dystopian Literature which involves a group reading task as well as a creative response.

English GCSE

Students study two GCSEs: English Language and English Literature. We follow the AQA syllabus. Both GCSEs are entirely assessed by external examinations in Year 11. In our English lessons we foster a collaborative, exploratory atmosphere, encouraging students to participate actively in discussions and to read for pleasure well beyond the syllabus. For the English Literature course, students study 'Romeo and Juliet' by William Shakespeare, 'Jane Eyre' by Charlotte Bronte, 'Lord of the Flies' by William Golding, and the 'Love and Relationships' cluster from the AQA poetry anthology. They explore the literary techniques used in these texts, and learn how to apply their analytical skills to unseen poems. For the English Language course, students learn to critically approach unseen extracts of both fiction and non-fiction. Students also complete the Spoken Language Endorsement: an internally assessed individual speech.

English Literature A Level

The English Literature A Level is a popular course which provides students with the opportunity to read widely across a range of genres and periods, as well as to pursue their own reading preferences. We follow the EdExcel syllabus which is assessed externally at the end of Year 13. Students study three papers: Drama, Prose and Poetry. The set texts include 'A Streetcar Named Desire' by Tennessee Williams, 'Othello' by William Shakespeare, 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles' by Thomas Hardy, 'Wuthering Heights' by Emily Bronte, 'Mrs Dalloway' by Virginia Woolf, the 'Poems of the Decade' anthology, and a selection of Romantic Poetry. Lessons are very student-led, with high levels of discussion and debate. Students are encouraged to prepare for lessons by conducting their own reading and research. In Year 13, students relish the opportunity to complete an extended essay for which they have an entirely free choice of two texts to compare.