

15 November 2024



RIDGEWOOD
SCHOOL

Barnsley Road, Doncaster
DN5 7UB
01302 783939

Dear Parent/Carer,

In each of my Friday letters this half term, as well as providing key updates, I intend to include a 'spotlight' on each curriculum area so that you have a greater understanding of the key knowledge that your son/daughter will gain throughout their time at Ridgewood School. Initially, the letters will cover the EBacc subjects before moving on to the wider curriculum in the new year. The first subject spotlight is on English.

English Faculty

The English Faculty have an ambitious vision of ensuring all of our students become independent and curious readers, writers and thinkers. The English team are dedicated to nurturing a passion for literature, enthusiasm for writing and an appreciation of diversity. Lessons are designed to allow students to develop a critical voice, inspire creativity and nurture an open-minded approach to the world around them. The curriculum and teaching in English lessons aims to increase students' aspiration by providing opportunities to study a range of topics, texts and themes that explore important social and political issues affecting young people today.

In Year 7, students begin by exploring the novel 'Ghost Boys' by Jewell Parker Rhodes, before moving on to discover a range of Shakespearean heroes and villains. From January, they begin creative writing, and this is followed by a focus on non-fiction texts learning about a selection of inspiring individuals. In the summer term, student's study 'women in literature', and finish the year with a speaking and listening focus on story telling.

In Year 8, students start the year studying the novel 'Sawbones' by Catherine Johnson before going on to explore 'The Origins of Tragedy' with a focus on Shakespeare's Othello. From January, they study Gothic Fiction followed by War Writing, allowing them to develop creative writing skills throughout. After Easter, students consider a range of 'Leading Ladies' in Non-Fiction writing and finally complete a speaking and listening topic focussed on opening a restaurant. All speaking and listening units will provide students with the skills to discuss topics of their own interest in a more formal setting, as well as understanding the importance of communication when working in groups to achieve a common end goal, similar to working as a team in any future careers they aspire to.

In Year 9 students begin the year studying 19th century novel extracts, before moving on to narrative writing. They then go on to study Romeo and Juliet, a range of war poems and An Inspector Calls by J. B. Priestley. The final few topics of Y9 prepare them specifically for their GCSE studies in Year 10 and 11. Students will push their analysis skills even further when looking at texts they will continue to examine up until their GCSE examinations and become experts in crafting well-structured essays.

Across Y10 and 11, all students study for 2 GCSEs in English Language (Eduqas) and English Literature AQA; including A Christmas Carol, Macbeth and an anthology of power and conflict poetry. All of the examinations are completed at the end of Y11. A range of revision guides are available to purchase from the school on Parent Pay.

In the Sixth Form, the English Faculty offer both English Language and English Literature at A Level. The Language course includes the study of meanings and representations, language and diversity, child language development and the opportunity to complete an independent investigation. The Literature course includes the study of Othello, pre-1900 poetry, The Great Gatsby, Feminine Gospels, Handmaid's Tale, unseen prose and poetry and A streetcar Named Desire.



'Prepare for the road ahead'

Respect

Responsibility

Resilience

Outside of the curriculum, the English Faculty contribute to the wider development of the students with a range of opportunities such as bringing theatre performances into school and our new opportunity to contribute to a published anthology of creative writing.

If you have any queries about the English curriculum, please do not hesitate to use the 'contact us' facility on the school website, for the attention of Mr Westmoreland, Curriculum Leader - English.

Training Day – Friday 6 December

As a reminder, Friday 6 December is a staff INSET day and we will be closed to students. All students should return as normal on Monday 9 December.

Christmas Jumper Day

On Friday 13 December, we will be taking part in Save the Children's Christmas Jumper Day. Save the Children makes sure children are kept safe, healthy and learning, with the aim to change their future for good.

On this day, students can wear a Christmas jumper, if they have one. If they do not have a Christmas jumper, please do not feel obliged to purchase one. Students can instead wear other non-uniform clothes. We would welcome voluntary donations of £1 for the charity. Donations will be collected at the gate as students arrive.

We look forward to celebrating the spirit of Christmas, whilst raising money for such a worthy cause and want to thank you in advance for your support of such an important charity.

Last Day of Term – Friday 20 December

As in previous years, the school term will finish at 12.30pm on Friday 20 December. The school buses will be available at 12.30pm. For any student in receipt of free school meals, a grab bag will be provided for their lunch, and students should collect this from the dining hall before they leave school.

Yours faithfully



Andy Bridge
Headteacher