



Department  
for Education

# English

**Programme of study for Key Stage 4**

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## Purpose of study

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. It is a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding language provides access to the whole curriculum. Through being taught to write and speak fluently, pupils learn to communicate their ideas and emotions to others; through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, spiritually and socially. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to read and write fluently and confidently, are, in every sense, disenfranchised.

## Aims

The overarching aim for English in the National Curriculum is to promote high standards of literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the written and spoken word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The National Curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

## Attainment targets

By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

## Subject content

### Reading

Pupils should be taught to:

- increase the breadth of their reading through:
  - studying high-quality, challenging, whole texts in detail including:
    - two plays by Shakespeare
    - representative Romantic poetry
    - a nineteenth-century novel
    - representative poetry of the First World War
    - British fiction, poetry or drama since the First World War
    - seminal world literature, written in English
  - choosing and reading books independently, including high-quality non-fiction, for challenge, interest and enjoyment
  - re-reading books encountered earlier to increase familiarity with them and provide a basis for making comparisons.
  
- read for understanding through:
  - building on the grammatical knowledge and vocabulary acquired at Key Stage 3 to support their comprehension of any texts studied
  - considering the structure and overall messages of the text, including the author's purposes
  - distinguishing between main and subsidiary themes, and summarising texts
  - synthesising information from more than one text and recognising common threads and differences
  - scanning extended text for specific information, and reading several texts to gather wider information
  - supporting a point of view by referring to evidence in the text and to context, and distinguishing between what is stated and what is implied
  - drawing on the wider personal, social and historical contexts of texts and authors and using this information to support comprehension,

- read critically through:
  - drawing on their wider reading to inform current reading, including (but not limited to) reading undertaken at Key Stage 3
  - comparing information in the text with prior knowledge, recognising the possibility of different reactions to a text, distinguishing between evidenced and non-evidenced statements, recognising bias and abuse of evidence, and forming their own arguments and opinions
  - evaluating how vocabulary choices contribute to effectiveness
  - applying their knowledge of grammar to evaluate effects created in literature and non-fiction and using appropriate grammatical terminology to discuss or write about their evaluation
  - evaluating plot and structural features, and analysing and explaining how form, layout and presentation contribute to effectiveness and impact
  - evaluating the literary features that contribute to the quality and effectiveness of a text and understanding how subtlety, ambiguity and allusion are achieved
  - analysing the ways that great dramatists make their works effective on stage
  - drawing analytically on critics' interpretations of texts
  - comparing two or more texts with respect to the above.

## Writing

Pupils should be taught to:

- write accurately, fluently, effectively and at length through:
  - drawing on knowledge from reading and listening to write for pleasure, to experiment with different genres, and to write with increasing independence and creativity
  - arranging information and ideas in a sensible order, maintaining a consistent point of view, avoiding ambiguity and using organisational features (such as paragraphs) to improve clarity and coherence
  - drawing on rhetorical and other devices to enhance impact, giving appropriate emphasis to key points, ordering arguments compellingly, and citing appropriate evidence and selecting quotations to support views
  - using a wide range of vocabulary, and grammatical and structural features, for deliberate effect
  - using Standard English with accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling.
  
- plan, draft, edit and proof-read confidently and effectively.

## Grammar and vocabulary

Pupils should be taught to:

- consolidate and build on their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary through:
  - extending and applying the grammatical knowledge set out in previous key stages to analyse more challenging texts
  - making confident use, in their own writing and speech, of new vocabulary and grammatical constructions from their reading and listening
  - understanding the ways that grammar and vocabulary can change between spoken and written language, formal and informal registers, Standard English and other varieties of English, and through historical changes in the English language
  - using Standard English confidently in their own writing and speech
  - discussing reading, writing and spoken language with precise and confident use of linguistic and literary terminology.

## Spoken English

Pupils should be taught to:

- speak confidently and effectively including through:
  - having opportunities to use Standard English in a range of formal and informal contexts
  - giving speeches and making presentations to argue, inform and entertain, using language for emotional appeal and impact, taking account of an audience and adjusting intonation, tone of voice and pace of delivery for effect
  - participating in formal debates and structured discussions on topics of interest and contested issues, organising points compellingly.



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