



Aylsham High School

*Part of the Aylsham Learning Federation
It takes a Whole Community to Educate a Child*

January 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Key Stage 3 English Home/School Booklet

This week, your child has received a new home/school booklet to help them with their English studies throughout key stage 3. I am writing to tell you about its content so that you are aware of what it is and how you might use it at home. The booklet is available to view online on the school website: www.aylshamhigh.com/english

What is the booklet for?

You will already know that students at Aylsham High are expected to revise and learn what we term 'core knowledge' in the different subjects that they study. The difficulty we have always faced in English is what we consider to be 'core' – there are so many facets of literature and language that we need to consider.

After much research and discussion amongst staff and students, we have decided to focus on vocabulary at key stage 3. Specifically, words that students can learn and utilise to express themselves when talking about the texts we read in class as well as other texts they read independently. This vocabulary is crucial for their language analysis, but also for their articulation in the world in general and will directly impact their ability to perform at their best at key stage 4.

What is in the booklet?

To help embed this vocabulary the booklet contains a variety of activities, which ask students to make links between stories and characters using key vocabulary. The same words are used from year 7 to 9, but in different contexts according to the books studied. Activities are book-specific, but sometimes involve comparing characters or ideas from year 9 all the way back to those studied in year 8 or even year 7. We hope that by embedding this vocabulary across key stage 3, and by incorporating elements of retrieval, the students will gradually develop confidence in using the words later on.

Please be assured that all of the new vocabulary will be taught explicitly in your child's English lessons, so they will be confident in its use at home.



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How can I use the booklet?

Your child will use the booklet primarily in their English lessons but on occasion they will bring it home to complete activities. We will inform you via SIMS Parent as we would for any homework if there is an activity to be completed at home.

We hope that the booklet provides you with an idea of what we do at key stage 3, and prompts discussions at home about English. You might look at a particular theme being studied and link in other books, films, or television programmes that share that theme. You might listen out and look for the key words popping up in other areas of life. There are further reading recommendations in each section too and there are supporting videos for each section on the AHS English YouTube channel that you can watch to further your child's understanding of the themes and concepts in the booklet.

Will the content be assessed?

As the booklet is supplementary to our curriculum it does not require any additional assessment or testing; it will merely add to the possibilities that students have to express themselves fully in our scheduled class assessments. The final examination for year 7 and 8 (held in April) will make reference to some of the key vocabulary and ask students to define or use a particular word in a short answer about a book or character. The year 7 examination is focused primarily on Narnia and Boy Overboard. The year 8 examination is focused primarily on Of Mice and Men and persuasive writing. The year 9 examination will require students to write an essay on Macbeth which will provide an excellent opportunity to show off their new vocabulary in the context of the play. They may also wish to draw links with other texts we have studied in their essay; the booklet will help them to make these connections.

I hope this letter is useful and provides you with enough information to be confident that you and your child can use the booklet effectively, and, moreover, use it as a springboard to enjoy exploring new aspects of English.

Yours sincerely



Jo Bates
Second in English