

You Choose

Year Eight English
Course Selection Booklet



The London Nautical School Department of English 2016-17

Dear students, families and interested parties,

Welcome to a new year of English at the London Nautical School. This year is one of fast development for us in the department with a number of new teachers and the introduction of some radical new approaches to the curriculum.

We have some very exciting plans, many of which involve you and about which we are very eager to receive your feedback.

This choices booklet is an introduction to a key aspect of our plan. Each teacher has devised a programme of learning for the year that combines the core learning described in the national curriculum with a “line of inquiry” which provides the year’s learning with a singular focus and a thread of coherence.

Each programme of learning can be evaluated according to three dimensions; the line of inquiry, the style of learning and the level of academic challenge.

Your part in this is to choose the programme you want to join for the year and, if you’re a student, to make a commitment to giving it your best.

Please take time to consider each of the programmes in this booklet, and also feel free to contact the teachers directly to have any of your questions answered (their email addresses are included in this booklet and every programme of learning has its own online centre linked from www.edutronic.net).

We look forward to a great year of learning and success.

Kind regards,

Christopher Waugh
Head of Department for English and Drama

How to Choose

Course selection in Year 8 can be broken down into 3 key factors

Curriculum Framework

Every Year 8 class follows the English department's **KS3 curriculum framework**, which has been devised in accordance with the English National Curriculum to build on the students' learning from Year 7 and to prepare them to make the next step into Year 9 with confidence. This framework is published online at the address:

› <http://edutronic.net/key-stage-three/framework/>

With confidence that **all** programmes embrace the requirements of English at Year 8, you are empowered to apply the following factors to your decision of "which class is right for me?"

1. Line of Inquiry

Each teacher has developed their programmes this year around a unifying idea. Each programme follows a **line of inquiry** that provides coherence to the year's learning - the students develop their skills as readers, writers, speakers, listeners and - most of all - thinkers to build their insight into the programme's unifying idea. Whether it's the **The Outsider; Wicked Women, Something Wicked This Way Comes; The Unknowable** or **Evolving Perspectives** - you should choose the programme that interests you most.

2. Style of Learning

The English Department prides itself in the diversity of its teachers. We all teach with passion and conviction, but each of us has a different style. This booklet contains an outline of the methods each teacher favours in their classroom

3. Level of Academic Challenge

Every class will challenge the students, each in different ways. While 'academic challenge' is not something that can be reduced to a simple statement, each programme allows for a different challenge which by selecting the course, you embrace for Year 8.

Option 1:

The Outsider

"I am solitary as grass.
What is it I miss?
Shall I ever find it,
whatever it is?"

— Sylvia Plath

Line of Inquiry

Fiction has always been a refuge for the lonely and downtrodden. In this option, however, we will explore the outsider as protagonist, not reader.

Beginning with words from **Sherman Alexie**, we will question what it is to be Native American in contemporary USA and the difficulties that arise from crossing communities in **The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian**.

Moving on, we will look at the play of **Macbeth** and how the main character, Macbeth, struggles with who he is in his world and why. There are also opportunities for creative writing, some of which will be stimulated by **Shaun Tan's The Arrival**.

On this note, perhaps you, too, have struggled to find voices similar to yours represented in the world around you. If so, you might find some answers here. Together, we will investigate **poets who have grappled with the same dilemma** and question whether this is also reflected in concepts such as representation in the **global media**.

Style of Learning

Mr O'Brien thinks **young people have a lot to say** and his classes reflect this. There will be plenty of room for you to **voice your opinion** in group discussion, debate and **class exploration of texts**. What you say is just as important as what you write, however, and you will be expected to do so often. We will spend time **reflecting on the choices you make** with words and how this can help us understand more about the subject of English.

DRAMA TEACHER: Mr Harris

Level of Academic Challenge

Pace of learning: **Moderate**

Complexity of Source Texts: **Advanced**

Expectation of independent work: **Supported**

Willingness to participate in class discussion: **Advanced**

Required prior knowledge: **Low**

Minimum entry level: **Open Entry**

Option 2:

Wicked Women

"I took a deep breath and listened to the old brag of my heart. I am, I am, I am."

— Sylvia Plath

Level of Academic Challenge

Pace of learning: **Moderate**
Complexity of Source Texts: **Moderate**
Expectation of independent work: **Advanced**
Willingness to participate in class discussion: **Moderate**
Required prior knowledge: **Low**
Minimum entry level: **Open Entry**

Line of Inquiry

This course will focus on the representation of **evil women in literature**, specifically how certain female characters may have been 'demonised' and what we think about this.

We will start by closely examining the character of **Lady Macbeth** and the consequences of her ambition, in our reading of **Shakespeare's Macbeth**, and later the vengeful spirit of **Jennet Humfrye in The Woman in Black by Susan Hill**. We will ask why the idea of an evil woman is so terrifying and fascinating in equal measure. We will explore both texts on paper and in various film interpretations, looking particularly at how different directors portray the leading female character.

We will also be examining modern '**witch hunts**' of high profile women such as **Princess Diana** and **Taylor Swift**, as conducted by the media. Why do ambitious or successful women in the public eye often seem to be vilified in the press? Are they 'fair game'? Do famous men receive the same treatment? We will debate the issues surrounding **gender representation in fiction and in the media**, building up to this year's inter-class debating competition.

As part of this course, we will explore the **ghost story** as a genre and you will create your own ghost story, inspired by the texts we have studied and your personal experiences. We will experiment with different creative mediums including music and film, experiencing how significant these can be in creating **atmosphere**.

Style of Learning

Ms Dearden places great emphasis on the value of students **expressing and developing their own opinions** in her English lessons and creating a space whereby everyone feels comfortable doing so. Her classes usually contain plenty of class discussions and **drama activities**, with reading at the heart of every lesson. You will be encouraged to **read aloud** as much as possible, and listen to how language sounds, in preparation for exploring your own individual **writing voice**.

DRAMA TEACHER: Mr Waugh

Option 3:

Evolving Perspectives

"Most misunderstandings in the world could be avoided if people would simply take the time to ask, "What else could this mean?"."

— Shannon L. Alder

Level of Academic Challenge

Pace of learning: **Moderate**
Complexity of Source Texts: **High**
Expectation of independent work: **Advanced**
Willingness to participate in class discussion: **Advanced**
Required prior knowledge: **Low**
Minimum entry level: **Open Entry**

DRAMA TEACHER: Mr Waugh

Line of Inquiry

If you enjoy looking at the world around you from an unfamiliar point of view then this is the programme for you.

During this course we will help students develop the thinking skills needed for success; not just in English, but across the school. You will systematically develop skills of **inference and analysis** while increasing your confidence, resilience and ability to express ideas.

Moreover, as part of the rich diversity of this course, it will be split between three teachers over the course of the year. Each one will bring their own unique style and perspective to the programme in order to stimulate your creativity and learning.

In order to build these skills, we will explore a variety of short fiction, non-fiction and audio visual texts. There will be a **broad range of subject matter** which does not attach itself to a single genre or time frame. In order to alter our perspectives we need to look beyond our comfort zone for inspiration. Texts studied will range from short stories by famed authors such as **Ernest Hemingway** and **Saki** to non-fiction articles discussing the **refugee crisis in Europe**.

Style of Learning

Mr Murray strongly believes that his teaching needs to prepare students with **real world skills** that will enrich and enable their lives both inside and outside of the classroom. Using this outlook as a foundation, he uses a **diverse and flexible** approach to learning in his classroom.

Mr Murray uses **choice based lesson activities** where students will have a range of options about how they wish to express their work. **Exploration, empathy and excellence** are the key beliefs of his classroom and approach to learning.

Mr Vinnicombe has always taught Drama and Media Studies alongside English and likes to bring **performance and interaction** into the classroom. What better way to truly understand a character or theme than to **explore it practically?** Then we can truly begin to feel what it is like to walk in someone else's shoes or see something from an altered perspective.

Each practical session will be followed up with a demonstration of your development by using **creative writing techniques** to explore why people make the decisions they do. Mr Vinnicombe takes an holistic approach honing in on **key analytical skills** to decipher the meaning behind a variety of texts, fables and short stories

Option 4:

Something Wicked This Way Comes

"Fiction is the truth inside
the lie."

— Stephen King

Level of Academic Challenge

Pace of learning: **Advanced**

Complexity of Source Texts: **High**

Expectation of independent work:
Moderate

Willingness to participate in class
discussion: **Moderate**

Required prior knowledge: **Moderate**

Minimum entry level: **Expected progress
or better**

Line of Inquiry

This programme is intended to explore how you would act when faced with **adversity and moral uncertainty**. We will begin with reading and performing **Macbeth**, where we will meet a protagonist who is so consumed with **desire and ambition** that he will slay all that stand in his way in a blood thirsty tragedy. More importantly, we will examine how ambition changes Macbeth from a respected soldier to **tyrannical murderer**.

We will then continue our exploration of supernatural and the unexplained through a collection of poetry ranging from **John Keats, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Lord Byron, Edgar Allen Poe and H P Lovecraft**. We will read and perform classic **gothic poems** intended to scare and enthrall. Our language exploration will look at the grammar and style of **gothic literature**, where we will then write our own tales.

Finally, we will end the year with Neil Gaiman's **The Graveyard Book**, a re-imagining of Kipling's **The Jungle Book** but set in a graveyard. We will explore the protagonist Bod's journey into adolescence, whilst also comparing parts of the text to Kipling's original text.

Style of Learning

The key thing about Mr North's lessons is **choice**. He will always provide a variety of tasks for you to do, but it is up to you to choose which tasks suit you and how they will help you progress on your own **personal learning journey**.

Mr North has a passion for **films and comics** and will try to include these in his lessons where he can to help start debates and inspire your own creative writing work.

Finally, Mr North **loves reading** and finding new words. He tries to include activities in lessons that will help you evaluate your own vocabulary choices and **develop your own voice**.

DRAMA TEACHER: Mr Waugh

Option 5:

The Unknowable

"It is better to fail aiming high than to succeed aiming low."

— Bill Nicholson

Line of Inquiry

If you enjoy reading, or feel that you would like to read more, then this is the class for you. Through reading we can explore places we have never visited and see the world through other people's eyes. We will have time for a lot of debate and discussion which will feed into writing in a range of different styles. With commitment and determination you will become a more advanced speaker, reader and writer over the next year.

Style of Learning

Mr Curran teaches with a genuine quiet passion, using traditional practices, where you can expect to engage in steady routines. In his classes the literature sets the tone and individual scholarship is highly valued. He sets high expectations of his students and demands a commitment to learning that extends beyond the classroom. The writing programmes will have a strong emphasis on developing in you a unique writer's 'voice'.

DRAMA TEACHER: Ms Gravenor

Level of Academic Challenge

Pace of learning: **Moderate**

Complexity of Source Texts: **Advanced**

Expectation of independent work: **Moderate**

Willingness to participate in class discussion: **Moderate**

Required prior knowledge: **Moderate**

Minimum entry level: **No minimum level**

Make your Choice:

The London Nautical
School Department of
English

Course Selection Process

Read more:

Many of your teachers have produced more detailed information about the courses they're offering this year. All of this information is available on The Edutronic:

<http://www.edutronic.net/>

You're encouraged to speak to your families and the teachers to find out more about the course options before you make your final selection.

Select your course

This is an online process; once you've decided what your preferences are for your English course for 2016-17 you must then go to Edutronic and complete the course selection form.

You will be asked to:

1. Rank your course preferences from 1-5
2. Explain why you believe you are a suitable choice for your first preference
3. (Optionally) enter your and your parents' contact information to be added to the English department mailing list
4. The deadline for completing this selection process is midday (12:00 pm) on Sunday 11 September

When will you know?

We will be making the course allocation on Sunday 11 September and you will start in your new classes on Monday 12 September.

Once this allocation is made, there will be no subsequent course alterations for the one year duration of the programme.