



Thomas Mills
High School & Sixth Form

Thomas Mills High School & Sixth Form – English Language Curriculum (Year 9)

The Year 9 English curriculum at Thomas Mills High School prepares pupils for the demands of the AQA English Language and Literature GCSEs, while fostering a love of reading, writing and discussion. It is designed to give pupils a strong foundation in both the study of texts and the use of language, and to help them develop as thoughtful, independent communicators. The curriculum follows three key strands:

First, 'Substantive' Knowledge

- Substantive knowledge in English focuses on pupils' understanding of texts, genres, and the conventions of language. Across the year, pupils study:
AQA English Language Preparation (Ongoing):
 - Paper 1: Reading and analysing fictional texts; descriptive and narrative writing.
 - Paper 2: Analysing non-fiction texts; writing to argue, persuade and inform.
 - Reading for Pleasure (Weekly): Pupils engage with self-selected texts across a range of genres and authors to broaden their literary exposure and enjoyment.

Second, 'Ways of Knowing'

This strand focuses on how pupils learn to interpret and use English:

- Pupils are taught how to analyse texts by identifying language and structural features, evaluating their effects, and linking them to context and purpose.
- They practise comparing texts, both thematically and stylistically, especially in poetry and non-fiction.
- They learn how writers construct meaning and manipulate language to convey viewpoints, using this insight to craft their own writing.
- Through modelling, scaffolding and feedback, pupils refine their writing across a range of forms: descriptive, narrative, analytical and persuasive.
- Pupils develop skills of close reading, annotation, quotation selection, and evidence-based argument, preparing them for the structure and demands of GCSE assessments.

Third, 'Personal Knowledge'

English also encourages pupils to reflect on their own values, experiences, and identities in response to what they read and write:



- Pupils consider different perspectives and cultural experiences, particularly through poetry and texts that deal with conflict, heritage and identity.
- Speech writing and discussion tasks give pupils the opportunity to develop their own voice, express their views confidently and listen respectfully to others.
- Reading for pleasure sessions allow pupils to choose texts that reflect their interests, challenge their thinking, and build empathy and curiosity about the world.
- Throughout the year, students are encouraged to draw connections between literature and their own lives, deepening their emotional and intellectual engagement.

Year 9			
Term	Topic	Knowledge and Skills	Useful Links
1	English Language Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing	Knowledge: During this term pupils will be developing their experience, confidence and skills in English Language paper 1. They will work as a class exploring the reading section of the paper, ensuring pupils understand how to answer each question. There will be opportunities to complete answers in timed conditions and to build exam technique. Pupils will also work on the writing section, exploring what makes writing interesting and engaging and developing their own creative writing. Skills: • Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas, select and synthesise evidence	What you NEED for AQA Language Paper 1 Ft. @FirstRateTutors - YouTube Revise Paper 1 AQA Language Mr Salles - YouTube How to write descriptively - Nalo Hopkinson - YouTube How to Show, Not Tell: The Complete Writing Guide - YouTube



		Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure, analyse writers' ideas and perspectives and how these are conveyed, communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively	GCSE English Language - AQA - BBC Bitesize
Assessments		- Response to questions 2 and 3 from a Language Paper 1. The skills for these will be taught and embedded in class. Pupils will explore model answers and teacher/examiner feedback to prepare - Creative writing. Pupils will look at examples of successful writing and revisit the language features that make writing engaging. They will revisit and develop elements of structure and language to produce a response to section B of Language paper 1.	
2	English Language Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives	Knowledge: During this term pupils will be developing their experience, confidence and skills in English Language Paper 2. They will work as a class exploring the reading section of the paper, ensuring pupils understand how to answer each question. There will be opportunities to complete answers in timed conditions and to build exam technique. Pupils will also work on the writing section of the paper, learning about the different forms of transactional	How to Answer AQA's English Language Paper 2, Question 1 - YouTube Transactional Writing: Newspapers - YouTube



		writing (speeches, letter, article) and developing their own responses. Skills: • Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas, select and synthesise evidence • Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure, compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts, communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively	Transactional Writing: Formal Report Writing - YouTube English Language GCSE: Letter Writing Examples - YouTube
Assessments		• A written response to questions 1,2 and 3 of Language Paper 2. The skills for these will be taught and embedded in class. Pupils will explore model answers and teacher/examiner feedback to prepare • Transactional writing. Pupils will look at examples of successful writing and revisit the language features that characterise good transactional writing. They will revisit and develop elements of structure and language to produce a response to section B of Language Paper 2.	
3	Speech Writing and Presentation	Knowledge: During this term pupils will be exploring a variety of rhetorical devices and studying what makes a successful speech. They will watch and analyse a selection of speeches across a range of topics and	English Language GCSE: Speech Writing Examples - YouTube How to write a perfect speech BBC Ideas



		intention. They will plan and write their own speech which they will then present to the class. This is to prepare for the GCSE Spoken Language assessment the following year. Skills: • Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences • Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation, demonstrate presentation skills in a formal setting • Listen and respond appropriately to spoken language, including to questions and feedback on presentations. Use spoken Standard English effectively in speeches and presentations	<u>How to Start a Speech: The Best (and Worst) Speech Openers - YouTube</u>
Assessment		• Pupils will complete an analysis of a speech, exploring the art of rhetoric • Pupils will prepare a speech on a topic of their choosing, using the skills and techniques they have learnt • Pupils will present their speech to the class	