

English at Acle Academy

What do we study?

What you can expect?

How can you help your child to succeed?



The English GCSE(s)! Frequently Asked Questions...

- All students are entered for both *Language* and *Literature*
- Students will study the two courses concurrently
- Our exam board is AQA
- 100% exam (no coursework or controlled assessments)
- Students are awarded a number between 1 and 9.
- Spoken language is one individual presentation presented to the class and is recorded on the exam certificate as a fail, pass, merit or distinction. This doesn't go towards the GCSE grade.



We are part of...



English Language

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing (fiction)

- 1 hour and 45 minutes
- **Section A:** reading an extract and answering 4 questions on it
- **Section B:** writing a descriptive piece or story suggested by a picture or phrase.

Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives (non-fiction)

- 1 hour and 45 minutes
- **Section A:** reading two sources and answering 4 questions on them
- **Section B:** writing an article, letter, speech, leaflet or essay related to the theme of the sources.

- *The sources will be from the 19th, 20th or 21st century across the papers.*

This extract is from the opening of a novel by Daphne du Maurier. Although written in 1936 it is set in the past. In this section a coach and horses, with its passengers, is making its way through Cornwall to Jamaica Inn.

Jamaica Inn

5 It was a cold grey day in late November. The weather had changed overnight, when a backing wind brought a granite sky and a mizzling rain with it, and although it was now only a little after two o'clock in the afternoon the pallor of a winter evening seemed to have closed upon the hills, cloaking them in mist. It would be dark by four. The air was clammy cold, and for all the tightly closed windows it penetrated the interior of the coach. The leather seats felt damp to the hands, and there must have been a small crack in the roof, because now and again little drips of rain fell softly through, smudging the leather and leaving a dark-blue stain like a splodge of ink.

10 The wind came in gusts, at times shaking the coach as it travelled round the bend of the road, and in the exposed places on the high ground it blew with such force that the whole body of the coach trembled and swayed, rocking between the high wheels like a drunken man.

The driver, muffled in a greatcoat to his ears, bent almost double in his seat in a faint endeavour to gain shelter from his own shoulders, while the dispirited horses plodded sullenly to his command, too broken by the wind and the rain to feel the whip that now and again cracked above their heads, while it swung between the numb fingers of the driver.

15 The wheels of the coach creaked and groaned as they sank into the ruts on the road, and sometimes they flung up the soft spattered mud against the windows, where it mingled with the constant driving rain, and whatever view there might have been of the countryside was hopelessly obscured.

20 The few passengers huddled together for warmth, exclaiming in unison when the coach sank into a heavier rut than usual, and one old fellow, who had kept up a constant complaint ever since he had joined the coach at Truro, rose from his seat in a fury; and, fumbling with the window-sash, let the window down with a crash, bringing a shower of rain upon himself and his fellow-passengers. He thrust his head out and shouted up to the driver, cursing him in a high petulant voice for a rogue and a murderer; that they would all be dead before they reached Bodmin if he persisted in driving at breakneck speed; they had no breath left in their bodies as it was, and he for one would never travel by coach again.

25 Whether the driver heard him or not was uncertain: it seemed more likely that the stream of reproaches was carried away in the wind, for the old fellow, after waiting a moment, put up the window again, having thoroughly chilled the interior of the coach, and, settling himself once

we are part of...

Paper 1:

- High quality fiction – could be 20th/21st century or 19th century
- Well known authors
- Range of genres
- Challenging vocabulary
- Lots to analyse!

Source A – 21st Century non-fiction

Could you do your child's homework?

The Observer, Sunday 15 December 2013



Children appear increasingly weighed down by homework. But how tough can it be? Jay Rayner attempts his son Eddie's maths assignment.

A typical father son scenario

I am staring at a finely printed sheet of paper and trying not to let the bad feelings seep in. This sheet is all my childhood Sunday-night feelings of dread come at once. It is humiliation and "could do better" and "pay attention now".

5 I only have myself to blame. A few months ago over dinner Eddie announced that, in English, they were experimenting with food writing. "I have to come up with metaphors. Give me a metaphor about this pizza," he said. "I don't think I should do your homework for you," I said. He raised his eyebrows. "You can't think of one, can you?" This is what happens if you feed and educate your children. They grow up, become clever and remorselessly take the mickey out of you.

10 He was right. I didn't. On the spot I couldn't think of a single food metaphor worth dragging out and slapping on the table. And so the memories of homework came flooding back: of long nights of carefully planned idleness ruined by the imposition of essays and work sheets, of tasks flunked, of a chilly emptiness at the thought of the way my efforts would be received by teachers. The fact is that I was not especially academic. On the
15 results sheet, my grades lined up like a line of Pac-Men¹ doing a conga².

20 And so, having failed the English homework test, I decide to show a little solidarity. I will have a go at his maths homework just to get a sense of what it's like to be 14-year-old Eddie. Which is why I'm now staring at the sheet of paper. Ah yes, algebra, the merry dance of x and y. Simplify. Wrench things out of brackets. Calculate values. This, I used to be able to do. Or at least I think I used to be able to do this.

Paper 2 (two sources):

- High quality non-fiction
- Range of text types: broadsheets (The Times, The Telegraph, The Independent, The Observer), letters, journals, essays, articles.
- Range of topics
- Challenging vocabulary
- Lots to analyse!



English Language – Reading Sections (Section A)

- These papers will assess the pupil's ability to:
 - Read quickly and efficiently
 - Retrieve information from a source
 - Identify the key methods a writer uses
 - Analyse language and structure
 - Evaluate the way writers present characters
 - Identify and compare writers' opinions and how they are affected by the context in which they're writing
 - Summarise information
 - Infer meanings (read between the lines)

English Language – Writing Sections (Section B)

- These papers will assess the pupil's ability to:
- Use a wide and varied vocabulary effectively
- Spell accurately
- Organise and structure their writing to engage a reader
- Write in a way that is compelling and original
- Use a variety of different sentence structures for effect
- Be able to use a wide range of punctuation accurately
- Use a wide range of methods for effect
- Write in a way that's appropriate for the form, audience and purpose of the task

How can you develop your child's Cultural Capital?

- *Romeo and Juliet*
- *A Christmas Carol*
- *Jekyll and Hyde*
- What do you know about Shakespeare and his plays?
- How familiar are you with Victorian history?
- Do you know the origins of Christmas traditions?
- What do you know about Charles Darwin and what can you find out?



- *An Inspector Calls*
- *Poetry*

How much do you know about Edwardian society and socialism?



Do you (ever) read poetry?



What else you can do to support your child: TOP TIPS!



- Talk to your child about their English lessons
- Read the texts we are studying so you can discuss them over the dinner table
- Watch a film or play / listen to audio versions of the texts and explore the differences
- Watch films / TV and discuss why events occur in a particular order. What effect does it have on the viewer?
- If you are able to consider buying a copy of the tests for your child. We will provide these but with their own copy they can write in the text.

What else you can do to support your child: TOP TIPS!

- Read and discuss newspaper or magazine opinion articles and discuss them. Possible questions:
 - 1. What is the writer's opinion?
 - 2. What words / phrases interest you? Are there any you don't know?
 - 3. What does the writer do to keep you reading?
 - 4. Is there anything interesting about the order the writer has written in?



What else you can do to support your child: TOP TIPS!

- Discuss current affairs
- Visit the cinema, theatre and local library / bookshop
- Use the revision booklets / websites and test them on key words / terminology
- Help them with a revision timetable – and help them to stick to it!
- Help them to understand that watching YouTube videos isn't a replacement for creating revision notes / doing practise papers (from the AQA website)
- Help them to understand that the weekly homework set by the teacher isn't enough on its own, they also need to be completing independent revision.