



CHRIST'S COLLEGE

Emmanuel Schools Foundation

ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSE OVERVIEW

KEY STAGE 4 COURSE GUIDE

COURSE OVERVIEW

Course Summary

Course title:	GCSE English Language
Exam board:	AQA
Specification code:	8700

Course Overview

The course is comprised of two papers. These are presented below:

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

What's assessed

Section A: Reading

- one literature fiction text

Section B: Writing

- descriptive or narrative writing

Assessed

- written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 80 marks
- 50% of GCSE

Questions

Reading (40 marks) (25%) – one single text

- 1 short form question (1 x 4 marks)
- 2 longer form questions (2 x 8 marks)
- 1 extended question (1 x 20 marks)

Writing (40 marks) (25%)

- 1 extended writing question (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy)



COURSE OVERVIEW

Course Overview Continued...

Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

What's assessed

Section A: Reading

- one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text

Section B: Writing

- writing to present a viewpoint

Assessed

- written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 80 marks
- 50% of GCSE

Questions

Reading (40 marks) (25%) – two linked texts

- 1 short form question (1 x 4 marks)
- 2 longer form questions (1 x 8, 1 x 12 marks)
- 1 extended question (1 x 16 marks)

Writing (40 marks) (25%)

- 1 extended writing question (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy)

There is also an NEA spoken language component.

Non-examination Assessment: Spoken Language

What's assessed

(AO7-AO9)

- presenting
- responding to questions and feedback
- use of Standard English

Assessed

- teacher set throughout course
- marked by teacher
- separate endorsement (0% weighting of GCSE)



KNOWLEDGE CHECKLIST

The course has a number of Assessment Objectives. These provide the checklist for the course. Students will have opportunities in classroom work, mock examinations and homework to rehearse and refine these skills.

Where they are identified and specific work is set, the expectation is on the student to use online tools such as Century Tech to aim to close any learning gaps.

Assessment Objective	Descriptor	How students can practise this
AO1	- identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas - select and synthesise evidence from different texts	- Learn to identify key quotes any text read - Practise summarising what they read in their own words
AO2	Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their view	- Learn the list of key language and structure terms - Practise making specific comments on the effects of those words
AO3	Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts	- Practise identifying what a writer thinks, feels or believes - Learn perspective vocabulary
AO4	Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references	- Practise identifying writer's opinions - Practise justifying your own conclusions
AO5	- Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences. - Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts	- Learn the descriptive writing approach DZZSE - Practise writing for different purposes and audiences - Learn how to consciously craft paragraphs for effect - Learn how to craft imagery, metaphor and personification for effect
AO6	Candidates must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.	Learn vocabulary power words each term Use sentence structure for effect Use punctuation for effect Spell accurately by eliminating common errors



REVISION STRATEGIES

English Language revision can be broken into TWO threads.

We therefore suggest revision should involve both strategies over time.

1. CONTENT REVISION

This is about ensuring the key knowledge by the student can be recalled, quickly and without effort.

To aid this, we recommend a blend of strategies:

- Flash cards detailing key terms with definitions and examples.
- Mind maps which help articulate any links and allow students to rehearse the various approaches required for each question.
- Revisiting and creating posters of the key knowledge documents shared in class.
- Engaging with Century Tech in any of the gap identified areas and completing these quizzes until mastery of content is clear.
- Watching – and making notes – from trusted YouTube sites like Mr Bruff.

2. REHEARSAL REVISION

This is where students rehearse HOW to respond to exam questions by either: planning responses to real papers or responding under timed conditions.

Here the aim is to practice applying their knowledge, ensuring they are able to identify relevant quotations and then comment on these effectively.

Doing this students should:

- Visit revision sites and then respond to questions. They can then check these against the mark schemes. What did they correctly identify; what did they miss; what might their next steps be?
- Look at past papers which can be found on AQA's website. Practise responding to these in timed conditions.



LITERACY REQUIREMENTS

GCSE literacy skills are crucial for success across English in particular .

Developing strong reading comprehension, vocabulary and writing skills will help students to understand exam questions, analyse information and articulate their knowledge effectively. Daily reading, across a wide range of texts, will assist students to build these skills.

In Year 10, students are required to read Accelerated Reader books daily and pass quizzes (books can be borrowed from the College library). In Year 11, the reading focus is on revision material. Please see the next page for suggested reading material.

The following literacy requirements are specific to English

- Students should know the key vocabulary terms and their definitions.
- Students should know how to punctuate writing clearly and accurately to ensure they communicate precise meaning.
- The reading age required to fully comprehend all questions on GCSE papers is 15 years and 6 months.
- Students should be familiar with the meaning of tier two vocabulary as this is essential to understanding exam questions. See the list below:

ESSENTIAL VOCABULARY

Analyse: Examine something in detail (by breaking it down) to understand and explain it.

Assess: Evaluate or estimate the nature, ability, or quality of something.

Compare: Identify similarities and/or differences.

Consequence: A result or effect of an action or condition.

Context: The circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea, and in terms of which it can be fully understood.

Contrast: Identify differences.

Convey: Communicate or express an idea, feeling, or information clearly and effectively.

Deduce: To arrive at (a fact or a conclusion) by reasoning; draw as a logical conclusion.

Define: Explain the meaning or concept of something.

Describe: Provide a detailed explanation or account of something.

Emphasise: Give extra importance or prominence to something.

Evaluate: Make a judgement about the amount or value of something based on available evidence.

Evidence: Facts or information indicating whether a belief or proposition is true or valid.

Explain: Provide a clear and detailed account of why something happens, often including reasons and evidence.

Continues on next page...



LITERACY REQUIREMENTS

Tier 2 Vocabulary List continued...

Hypothesis: A proposed explanation based on limited evidence as a starting point for further investigation.

Identify: Point out something or establish something specific.

Illustrate: Explain or make something clear by using examples.

Implement: To put a plan or system into effect.

Infer: Work out what is being implied (suggested) using evidence and reasoning rather than from explicit statements.

Interpret: Explain the meaning of something.

Justify: Provide reasons and evidence to support a viewpoint or decision.

Perspective: A particular attitude or way of regarding something; a point of view.

Relevant: Closely connected or appropriate to the matter at hand.

Significant: Of importance.

Summarise: Give a brief statement of the main points.



READING LIST

Here's the best of the best in terms of websites you should be regularly visiting.

1. [GCSE English Language - AQA - BBC Bitesize](#)
2. [AQA English Revision - Lang Paper 1](#)
3. [AQA English Revision - Lang Paper 2](#)
4. [AQA English Language Paper 1 2026 Exams Onwards – YouTube](#)
5. [AQA English Language Paper 2 2026 Exams Onwards – YouTube](#)
6. [AQA | Resources | Past Papers & AQA Mark Schemes](#)
7. <https://app.century.tech/login/>



CAREER PATHWAY

Further Education Pathways

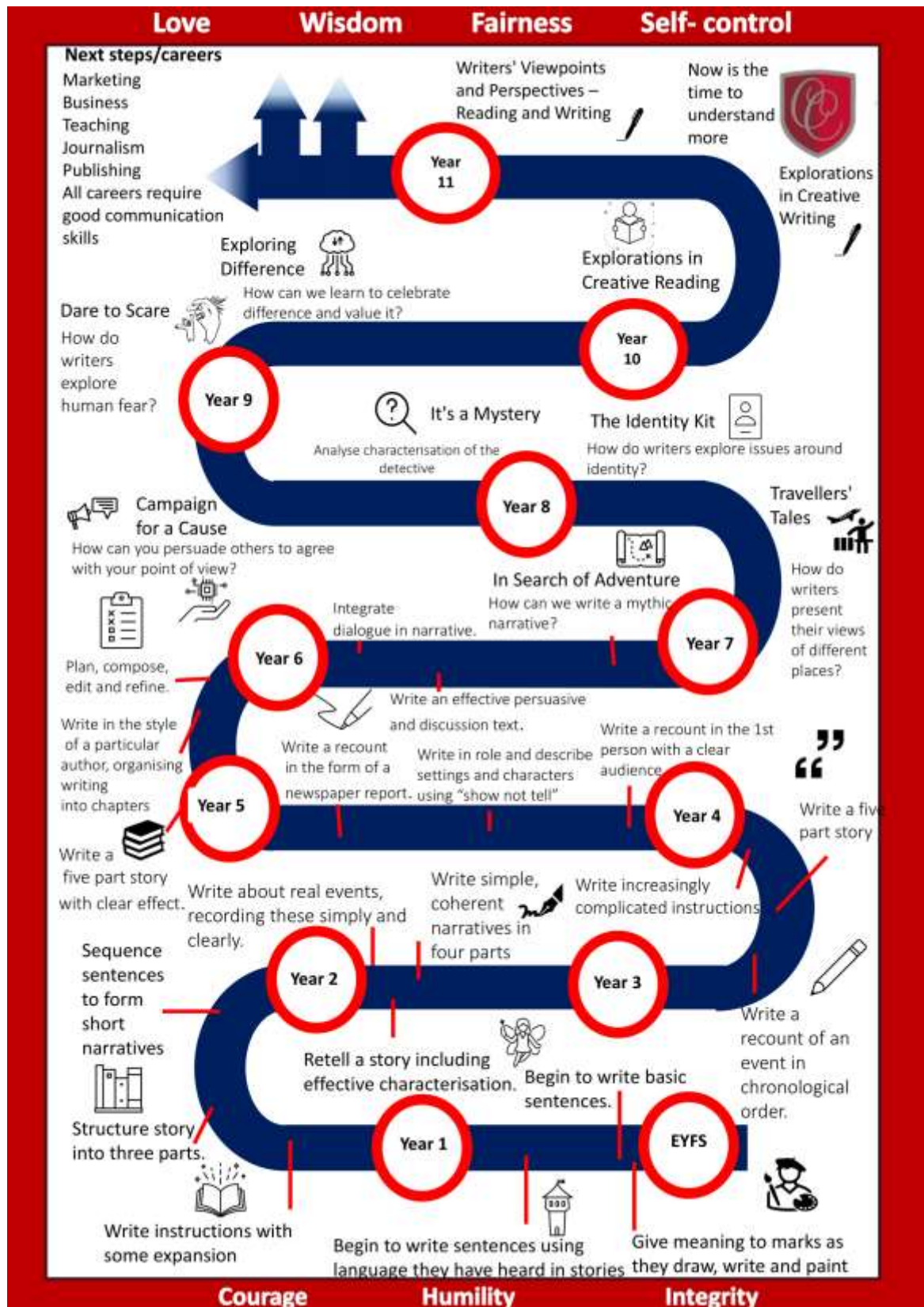
Students achieving a grade 4 or above may progress to A-Level English Language or English Literature. Other options include vocational courses in Media, Journalism, or Performing Arts.

Higher Education Pathways

- **English Language or Linguistics** (University of Leeds, Newcastle University)
- **Journalism** (University of Sheffield, City University London)
- **Law** (University of Durham, University of York)
- **Creative Writing** (University of East Anglia, Bath Spa University)
- **Teacher** (various universities)



KS4 CURRICULUM PLAN





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