

## How Can I Support my Child in English? A Parents' Guide

### Why is English important?

- A good English GCSE is required for most level 3 courses
- Most universities and employers demand GCSE English, often at grade B (6) and above
- It is much easier to do now rather than later in life
- English teaches you vital life skills that give you confidence and an ability to communicate in a wide range of situations

### Getting the basics right

- ✓ Develop a regular routine for completing homework. Make sure there is a place free from distractions to work in, preferably with a desk/table to write on.
- ✓ Ensure your child is checking Show My Homework daily. In addition to homework, there is also a range of revision resources on SMH.
- ✓ Encourage them to attend support sessions (after school every Wednesday).
- ✓ If they have been absent for any reason, check that they have spoken to the teacher to find out what they missed and how to catch up.

### What skills are tested in the exams?

- Reading 20<sup>th</sup> century literary fiction
- Reading non-fiction from the 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century
- Analysing and comparing poetry (including unseen poems)
- Writing to describe/narrate
- Writing to argue/persuade/advise/explain
- Using quotes
- Analysing texts

### How to revise

Some people say “You can’t revise for English” but this is not true! Look on the next page for lots of revision ideas:

1. Re-read the texts! If you don't have a copy, most of these can be downloaded for free onto a tablet or smartphone using an app such as Amazon Kindle:
  - a. Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde
  - b. An Inspector Calls
  - c. Romeo and Juliet
  - d. The AQA Conflict poetry anthology
2. If you choose to buy your own copy of a book, encourage students to use highlighters or post-its to remember important sections/quotations.
3. Subscribe to English teachers' YouTube channels (e.g. Mr Bruff, Stacey Reay) and watch two videos each week.
4. Read around the topic, e.g. by finding articles about texts online, researching authors using Wikipedia, browsing YouTube.
5. Read for pleasure – choosing challenging texts from a range of genres.
6. Read a wide range of non-fiction, e.g. by downloading the Guardian or Huffington Post app.
7. Look at your child's exercise book, paying particular attention to targets set (EBIs) and ensure that they are following up on the teacher's feedback.
8. Be aware of your child's areas for development with SPaG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar). Test them on the spellings they keep getting wrong.
9. Encourage your child to redraft/rewrite work following the advice given by the teacher and hand it again for remarking.
- 10. Look at the English revision resources on the school website:**  
**<https://www.hdhs.org.uk/students/revision-support/>**
11. Use websites to explore key topics, e.g. BBC Bitesize and Schmoop
12. Learn quotations by putting posters/post-it notes up around the house.
13. Learn quotes from the quote key-ring- spend at least ten minutes a night learning quotes.

### Talking Together

- Get your child to tell you new words they have learned in English and explain what they mean. Students with a greater range of vocabulary will be the most successful in English exams.
- Get them to tell you what the book/play/poem is about and what they find interesting about it. Ask them questions about the plot, characters and themes.
- Talk about the meanings of unfamiliar words you come across in books, films and TV programmes.
- Read their creative writing pieces together and tell them what you like about them.