

Subject: *A-Level English Language* | **Exam Board:** *AQA*



Welcome to A-level English Language. We are delighted that you are considering this A-level as an option in Year 12 and 13. To demonstrate your commitment to the course and to prepare you for September, you must complete the following tasks to the best of your ability. These tasks are compulsory and must be completed prior to your first English Language lesson in Year 12.

We expect you spend at least 3 hours completing the tasks outlined in this pack. The activities have been designed to help you begin to develop some of the key skills you will need for A-level English Language, which is very different from GCSE.

Learning Objectives:

- To develop your confidence and understanding of AO1 terminology – your new metalanguage.
- To understand your own use of language (idiolect).
- To develop analytical skills by conducting a piece of linguistic research into opinion pieces.
- To start to develop independent research and study skills by completing a mooc.
- To begin wider reading – this will be expected as part of your 6th form 7 study throughout all your subjects.

Contacts for Support:

-  Mrs Bell – Please email via Outlook, use chat on Teams or visit the 6th Form Office or room 14.
-  Mrs Hunt – Please email via Outlook, use chat on Teams or visit Room 21.

What is English Language?



Together we will study many things about the English language such as: grammar (What types of sentence are there? What is a subordinate clause? What types of noun are there?); meanings and representations (How do we create an identity through language? How do we represent ourselves or others?); occupational groups (How is language different at work?); language and power (How do we maintain a hierarchy through language?); language and gender (do men and women use language differently?); language and dialect (how and why does English change across the UK?); how children acquire language skills (is this ability always within us or are we influenced entirely by caregivers?); language change (where did our language begin and what changed it over the centuries?) and global English (how did English become used so widely and what are current attitudes towards this?).

As you can see there are many questions still left to answer which are what makes this course so varied, interesting but also challenging.

We will look at a myriad of theories and case studies across the whole history of the English language. You will also complete 2 pieces of coursework: original writing and a language investigation.

The following 5 bridging tasks will support you into making an easier transition into A Level study.



Task 1: Extend Your AO1 Terminology Knowledge

The best way to do this is by parsing (breaking down) plenty of sentences into their AO1 terms eg nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, conjunctions, articles, pronouns, proper nouns etc.

When you are watching TV, reading, on social media or anywhere there are words, see if you can label them with an AO1 term. Use Dictionary.com to help. You can extend this by looking at the etymology of words on www.etymonline.com.

Success criteria: a smooth start to Y12 and confidence in your linguistic abilities.

You choose the text but this is an example of how to annotate it:

Brahmadatta, king of Varanasi, took a journey through the length and breadth of his kingdom to see if his subjects were happy.

Brahmadatta : Proper noun, masculine gender

King : Common noun, masculine gender

Of : Preposition having Varanasi as its object

Varanasi : Proper noun

Took : Verb, past tense, active voice

A : Indefinite article

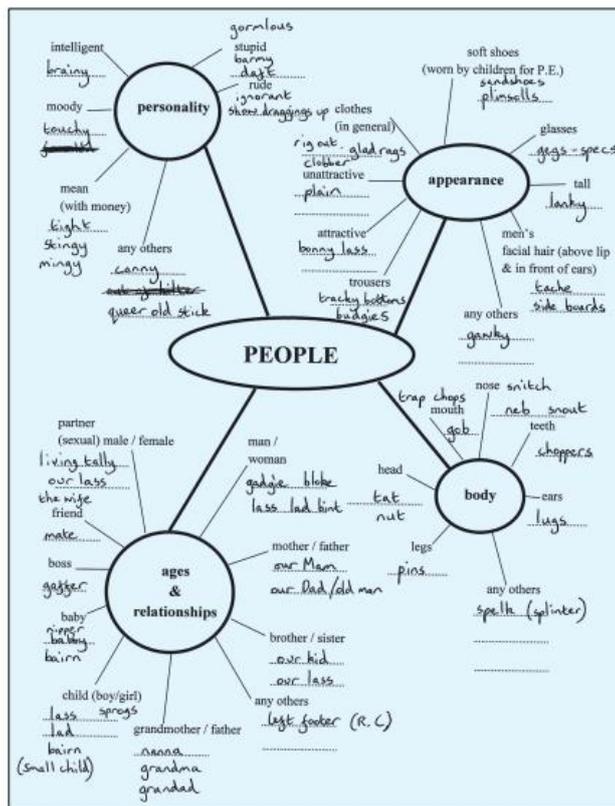
Journey : Common noun

Write your parsed sentence here:

Task 2: Your Idiolect

Mind map your idiolect. This is a map of the different ways you use language in formal and informal situations, at work, with family, with people of different ages and superiority etc. Why do you think your language changes in different contexts? This is one example of what you could include but everybody's will be different.

Success criteria: a well presented A4 or A3 mind map handed in on your first lesson.



Task 3: Take A MOOC



Independent research and study plays an important role in English Language and the Sixth Form as part of 6th form 7.

The more wider reading you can do, the better informed you will be.

On Future Learn or other providers' website, complete a language or linguistics based mooc eg gender, dialect, sociolinguistics, child language, history of English etc [these are all words you can put in the search bar]. You do not need to purchase anything. A screenshot of completion is all you need and this should be free.

Success criteria: a screen shot emailed to bell@tahs.net of the completed course and a bit of information about what you learned and what you enjoyed on the short course.

For example:

Online Courses / Language



An Introduction to Sociolinguistics: Accents, Attitudes and Identity

★★★★★ 4.7 (183 reviews)

Learn how sociolinguists explore the relationship between language and the expression of personal, social and cultural identity.

[Join course](#)

15,889 enrolled on this course



🕒 Duration
4 weeks

🕒 Weekly study
4 hours

🌐 100% online
[How it works](#)

🔄 Unlimited subscription
£19.99/month
[Learn more](#)

Task 4: Opinion Piece Review



One part of your examination asks you to write an opinion piece based on a theme. In order to do this successfully, you need to know exactly what an opinion piece is.

Choose an opinion piece (eg from The Guardian's Comment Is Free website).

You need to read and analyse an opinion piece and fill in the proforma at the end of this document.

Success criteria: completed proforma to be brought to the first lesson in September.

Task 5: Wider Reading

Complete this wider reading task by choosing at least one of the linguists below and reading one of their books, online papers or blogs, or listening to one of their podcasts. Make notes or mind maps of what you find as this can be used for revision later:

David Crystal eg [David Crystal – The Literacy Blog](#) or [David Crystal – Home](#)

Norman Fairclough eg [What are Norman Fairclough's ideas on language and power? | MyTutor](#)

Deborah Tannen eg [Gender and Discourse – Deborah Tannen](#)

Deborah Cameron eg [Deborah Cameron | University of Oxford Podcasts - Audio and Video Lectures](#)

Peter Trudgill eg [Peter Trudgill - Top podcast episodes \(listennotes.com\)](#)

Lev Vygotsky eg [Vygotsky: Life, Theories, and Influence of Lev Vygotsky \(verywellmind.com\)](#)

Noam Chomsky eg [chomsky.info : The Noam Chomsky Website](#)

Stephen Pinker eg [BBC Sounds - Think with Pinker - Available Episodes](#)

Jean Piaget eg [Jean Piaget's Theory on Child Language Development \(theclassroom.com\)](#)

Success criteria: At least one completed mind map showing confidence in AO2 concepts and issues when you start the course.

Opinion Piece Proforma

BACKGROUND READING FOR THE OPINION PIECE

Commented [A1]: Proforma useful as aid for preparation.

Aim: ensuring a range of different opinion pieces have been read, analysed and digested.

Title Of Opinion Piece Watched Or Read:.....

Theme:

Form eg TV, blog, tabloid, broadsheet etc.:.....

Linguistic Style:

Technique	Quotation	Notes
First, second or third person		
Purpose (eg persuade, advise, entertain, inform).		
Balance/ratio of opinion vs fact		
Sentence types		
Sentence structures		
Use of figurative language or a less florid style		

Opportunity Progress Individuality

Register (formal or informal, colloquial or standard English, any use of dialect etc.)		
Opinionated phrases eg 'This is why ...', 'I don't believe ...' or 'I had hoped ...'		
Tone eg witty, conversational, judgemental etc.		
Structure – how the text begins		
Structure – how a line of argument is maintained		
Structure – how the piece concludes		
How has a non-specialist audience been catered for?		