



Highsted Grammar School

The English curriculum

English at Highsted develops clear communication, deep reading and a maturity in literacy and personal expression. We seek to equip our students for a complicated and exciting world in which discernment and canniness in reading, and precision in writing have never been more important.

We strive to nurture curious, cultured and independent learners, by bringing the tradition of classic literature alive in the classroom, and examining the contexts in which it was produced and its relevance to our lives today.

Our aim is to make excellence in reading, writing and speaking clear to students as prime skills for life, as well as enriching their experience of the world with historic and contemporary culture in all its many forms.

Content

Years 7-9

Poetry – We study war poetry to examine the hardships of conflict and its impact on the human spirit.
Shakespeare – We introduce students to the Bard with scenes from Comedy and as well the full engagement in Tragedy in Romeo and Juliet with its themes of parenting and love.
Novel and plays – We challenge our students with powerful 20th century contextual narratives such as Animal Farm, Of Mice and Men and The Lord of the Flies, and the social and moral themes of The Importance of Being Earnest.
Creative and descriptive writing – Students learn to craft words to powerfully express themselves.

Years 10 & 11

All students study English Language and English Literature. Over the course of two years, students perfect their writing and analytical skills to prepare securely for terminal assessment.

We study: A Taste of Honey; Macbeth; A Christmas Carol; AQA Poetry Anthology (Love and relationships)

Sixth Form

In the sixth form, students are introduced to historically and culturally important texts, and undergraduate-style research and independence.

We study: Hamlet; Dracula; Beloved; A Streetcar Named Desire; The Picture of Dorian Gray; The Great Gatsby; Contemporary Poetry

Examples of cross-curricular links

With MFL, e.g. the teaching and learning of grammar to foster links and comparisons between languages.

With RE, e.g. belief systems and their links with literature from Greek Mythology to modern world religions.

With History, e.g. Animal Farm as a metaphor for the emerging Cold War in the 20th century.

Extra-curricular opportunities

Debating and public speaking, World Book Day competition, theatre trips and author visits