

THE INDEPENDENT GRAMMAR SCHOOL: DURHAM

English Curriculum Overview - Middle School (Years 5-8)

Core Knowledge UK • National Curriculum progression

Middle School Curriculum Map

Year Group	Michaelmas 1	Michaelmas 2	Lent 1	Lent 2	Trinity 1	Trinity 2
Year 5	Non-chronological reports; impersonal writing	Research and retrieval; non-fiction discussion; formal writing	Persuasive words; figurative poetry; figurative techniques	Analysis; newspaper writing; past perfect tense; quotes and eye-witness accounts	Fantasy writing; setting description; character creation; narrative poetry	Performance; comparison
Year 6	Science-fiction writing; character analysis; inference skills	Persuasive writing; structure of work; planning and developing	Classic literature; performance; character analysis; writing diary entries	Emotive writing; vocabulary development; nonsense poetry	Analysis; rhythm and rhyme; autobiographies	Informal writing; editing work
Year 7	Literature: modern novels; Language: descriptive narrative	Literature: multi-genre texts; Language: persuasive writing	Literature: Poetry; Language: writing a narrative	Literature: Classic, short stories; Language: creating characters	Literature: Shakespeare; Language: Writing to inform and explain	Literature: Shakespeare; Language: Writing to inform and explain
Year 8	Literature: fiction (character & themes); Language: descriptive writing	Literature: non-fiction; Language: persuasive writing	Literature: Poetry (comparison); Language: analytical	Literature: Shakespeare; Language: creating characters	Literature: modern text; Language: narrative	Literature: Reading & writing consolidation; Language: Speaking & listening

Curriculum Intent

- Develop fluent, confident readers and writers
- Build a rich vocabulary and deep cultural knowledge
- Ensure pupils engage with high-quality literature and texts
- Follow a coherent, cumulative sequence of knowledge and skills in line with the National Curriculum and Core Knowledge UK

Implementation

- Teach English through high-quality, engaging lessons
- Read, write and discuss a wide range of texts and genres
- Explicitly teach grammar, vocabulary and text structures
- Provide regular opportunities for speaking, listening and performance
- Use high-quality Core Knowledge texts and literature
- Teach structured progression from phonics to fluency to comprehension and analysis
- Use regular assessment and feedback to support long-term retention

Impact

- Read fluently, with strong comprehension skills
- Write clearly, accurately and for a range of purposes
- Demonstrate a broad knowledge of literature and language
- Develop confidence in speaking, listening and performing
- Be well-prepared for secondary education and beyond

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