

## Year 8 Curriculum Newsletter Autumn Term 1

### English



**Refugee Boy:** We will begin the year with a novel study, *Refugee Boy* by Benjamin Zephania. In this unit, students will explore the plight of refugees and social injustices as well as exploring the novel itself using a range of inference skills. This unit will also tie in with non-fiction, such as news and reporting of world issues and how this is used to shape our opinions.

**Assessments:** a mini assessment in week 2 or 3, where scaffolds are provided to help students through this, followed by a summative reading and writing assessment in week 5.

**How can parents help?** Please encourage your children to read (we always ask this, it really does develop their literacy skills), complete their home learning, and always sign their home learning reading log.

### Maths



**What are we doing this half term?** (1) Factors and powers including powers of 10; standard form; calculations and estimation. (2) Algebra such as simplifying expressions; expanding brackets; factorising; substitution and solving.

**Assessments:** There will be a unit assessment after topic 1 and 2 as described above.

**How can parents help?** Ensure your child has the correct equipment for every lesson such as a pencil, ruler and their own scientific calculator. Encourage your child to engage fully with SPARX (the maths homework platform) spending at least 40 minutes per week doing their home learning - they should be completing 100% of the tasks each week.

### History



Congratulations on surviving the War of the Roses and seeing in the new dynasty known as the Tudors. First we will investigate how Henry Tudor strengthens his grip on the English throne.

We will then meet the infamous Henry VIII and his various wives, establishment of the Church of England and analysing interpretations on whether he really was that terrible! We will then move on to his children and their influences on England: Edward VI and his changes to the church, Bloody Mary and her human barbeques. We will be visiting Hampton Court Palace in September to find out first hand about the Tudor Religious Rollercoaster.

**Assessment** - End of unit test. Interpretations of Henry VIII.

**How can parents help?** Books, documentaries (including *Horrible Histories!*), films and weekend trips to historical sites.

### Science



**What are we doing this half term?** (1) Digestion in Biology lessons, (2) Elements in Chemistry lessons (3) Work and Heating and cooling in Physics lessons. We are following the Oxford University Press (OUP) *Activate 2* textbook throughout year 8.

**Assessments:** Low stake quizzes at the end of each topic.

**How can parents help?** Ensure your child has the correct equipment such as a pencil, ruler and their own scientific calculator. The BBC KS3 bitesize is a useful resource - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zng4d2p>. It would be useful to have a KS3 Science revision guide for revision purposes. - <https://www.amazon.co.uk/KS3-SCIENCE-REVISION-LEVELS-GUIDES/dp/B008MWXGFO>

### Art



Year 8 students investigate a variety of 'Natural World' as a starting point for their first project this year. Artists such as Maggi Hambling, Georgia O'Keeffe and Yellena James inspire students to study, respond and analyse their artwork in written and visual forms. Students create their own triptych through experimenting with a variety of mixed media and painting techniques.

**How can parents help?** Please ensure that your child completes all their Art & Design homework activities for this project. Gathering natural forms such as shells and pine cones may inspire students and encourage them to notice seasonal changes in the natural world. Drawing equipment and good quality colouring pencils will support students in completing their work in lesson and at home.

### Computer Science



**What are we doing this half term?** In year 7 students were introduced to computational thinking and basic programming techniques. Students will be expanding on this and will be introduced to the Python programming language. They will learn how to write small programs and use the programming techniques they learnt about in year 7. They will re-visit computational thinking and apply this problem solving process to the programs they write in Python.

**Assessments:** Students will be asked questions every lesson on the programming knowledge they have acquired. They will do an end of unit assessment assessing their knowledge on problem solving and the Python programming language.

**How can parents help?** We ask parents to use online resources for learning Python. Parents can get their children to start looking through and using the CS Newbs website (<https://www.csnewbs.com/python>) to get a head start on the programming techniques taught in year 8.



## Religion, Philosophy and Ethics (RPE)

Year 8 students start the school year by delving into philosophy and asking the question 'How do we know anything for certain?' If you've seen the movie 'The Matrix' you will understand the philosophical enquiry we are dipping our toes into. We will look at the difference between fact, opinion and belief whilst exploring the concept of 'reality'.

Students will need to learn their key vocabulary carefully and will need to come to lessons ready to think deeply about the questions in class.

You can support your son/daughter by encouraging them to see two sides of the argument, ask them about their RPE lessons at school and for them to explain to you the philosophical enquiry that has taken place in class that day.

## PE



Building on skills, techniques and strategies learnt in year 7, students will develop their knowledge and understanding of various sports and physical activities. Students will continue to rotate through the curriculum on a half termly cycle, experiencing a variety of sports and activities including Rugby and Dance.

**Assessments:** Students will be assessed throughout each practical blocks of work.

**How can parents help?:** Please ensure students complete home learning tasks on time and that they are organised with their full kit on PE days.

## French



**What are we doing this half term?** In year 8 French, students start by building upon the topic of family which was previously encountered in Year 7. This time, the focus will be on the world of work and leisure time. Students will learn to talk about themselves and also other people, use opinions to explain why and use future and past tenses more confidently.

**Assessments:** Listening and reading assessments at half term.

**How can parents help?** Highlight the importance of language learning in our global world for encouraging tolerance of other cultures as well as giving them the edge in business. Do not allow your child to use online translators and instead, remind them we expect them to use language seen in class. Testing your child on key vocabulary and grammar ahead of assessments will help build confidence.

**What are we doing this half term?** In year 8 Spanish, students start by building upon the topic of family which was previously encountered in Year 7. This time, the focus will be on the world of work and leisure time. Students will learn to talk about themselves and also other people, use opinions to explain why and use future and past tenses more confidently.

**Assessments:** Listening and reading assessments at half term.

**How can parents help?** Highlight the importance of language learning in our global world for encouraging tolerance of other cultures as well as giving them the edge in business. Do not allow your child to use online translators and instead, remind them we expect them to use language seen in class. Testing your child on key vocabulary and grammar ahead of assessments will help build confidence.

## Geography

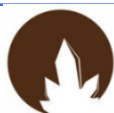


**What are we doing this half term?** Y8 students will delve into types of primary activities. Investigating farming, including how food miles and sustainable food production are important parts of the agricultural industry. This topic includes a fieldtrip to Bocketts Farm to ensure students will develop their enquiry, data collection and analysis skills.

**Assessments:** An end of topic written assessment, short and long answer questions.

**How can parents help?** Ensure your child has the correct equipment including, glue, scissors and a green pen for peer and self-assessment. Watch current TV programmes such as Countryfile or Our Yorkshire farm to see how relevant these industries are to our everyday lives. Make sure the literacy sheet is complete and test students to confirm that they know the keywords and definitions. Make sure the revision notes for the assessment follow the guidance on the revision help sheet, to include definitions, diagrams, explanations and colours to help in learning the information. Testing students on the information on their revision pages helps build their confidence, that they can recall relevant information.

## Drama



Building on skills and techniques learnt in Year 7, students will start year 8 with a unit about The Demon Barber of Fleet Street - Sweeney Todd. Using his story, students will create drama based on aspects of his life and apply new techniques alongside those students already know.

**Assessment:** Use of Angel/Devil technique and written evaluation.

**How can parents help?** Please support your child to research into the story of Sweeney Todd and ensure they complete homework on time. If you have the opportunity to see Live Theatre, this will always enhance your child's learning of the subject.

## Design Technology (Rotation)



**What are we doing this half term?** We will be looking into forces that act upon materials when we use the in products and polymer-based materials. We will manufacture a pen holder from acrylic and crate a small night light. We will be trained how to use the pillar drill, polishing machine, plastic heating equipment, the vacuum former and soldering irons. We will focus on finishing skills to create high quality products. We will also cover the concept of quality assurance, quality control and tolerance within manufacturing.

**Assessments:** Students will be assessed on the Acrylic pen stand practical work which they have the opportunity to focus on quality. Students will be assessed on their small night light, in which their soldering skills and ability to construct a vacuum formed case will be the focus.

**How can parents help?** Take an interest in the project work and skills they are learning and discuss them. Help them look at products made from polymer materials and try and work out how they are made and constructed.



## Music

**What are we doing this half term?** Year 8 musicians will be composing music for a scary story. Students will learn a range of techniques to create different moods in their music and develop their skills on the keyboard.

**Assessments:** Performance of a scary music composition in pairs.

**How can parents help?** Please ensure your child has a pen, a pencil and their Music book each lesson and provide help with learning the key musical words.

## DT Graphics (Rotation)

**What are we doing this half term?** Students will be using analysis, enterprise and teamwork skills in order to design and make a prototype of a flat-pack product. In completing the project, students will look at sustainability and material management, developing an awareness of intellectual property, and will look at how products are assembled. They will also look at the importance of prototyping within the design process. The project aims to develop students' awareness of designing for a target audience, managing materials, prototyping and working with others. In Graphics, Students' will be designing and constructing a robot character using paper engineering. The theme will be to related to environmental issues.

**Assessments:** Students will be assessed in the areas of Investigation (analysing flat-pack products and analysing their appropriateness for the fair), Designing (designing different products that could be sold) and Evaluating (evaluating the final product).

**How can parents help?** Students will be designing a product for a real world situation, so discussing what customers might want from the products they buy would be useful.

## DT Textiles –(Rotation)

**What are we doing this half term?** Students will use recycled fabrics or clothing to design a Block printing drawstring bag. Throughout the project, students will look at quality control, fabric construction, hand-sewing, machine stitching, embroidery, applique, seam allowance and templates. The drawstring bag project will allow students to develop independence whilst using the sewing machine, as they will have to ensure that they have sewn in the correct places to construct the product accurately. This particular Textiles project will challenge their problem-solving skills and ability to work to a high quality.

**Assessments:** Design sketches will be assessed as well as the practical outcome of the bag itself.

**How can parents help?** Discuss the project, look at existing drawstring bags for a variety of applications. Help them to experiment or practice sewing skills at home.

## Food and Nutrition



The focus this year is on developing and refining the basic skills taught in Year 7, developing accuracy and control across a range of equipment. More complex dishes featuring meat, chicken and alternative proteins are introduced this year. These intermediate skills build on the foundations of the basic skills learned in Year 7 and prepare students for Year 9.

Our students come from a variety of different cultures so a focus in Year 8 is International and British cuisines. This year also introduces the concept of different nutritional needs based on life stage, and food choice based on ethics. Students are exposed to a variety of food related messages from different sources so in Year 8 we focus on how different factors affect food choice such as religion, celebration, dietary needs, peer pressure and the media.

**Practical lessons include:** Burritos, Sausage Pasta Bake, Goujons, Margarita Pizzetta, Superveg Burger and Rainbow slaw, Irish Soda Bread

### **How will they be assessed?**

Students will be given regular verbal feedback within their practical lessons 'in the moment'. This allows students to act upon this feedback immediately for the maximum impact on progress. Students will be assessed via written and practical assessments.

### **Home Learning**

Students are set practical evaluations to reflect upon their practical outcome and own personal performance in practicals. In addition, where students provide ingredients for practicals they will continue to develop their weighing and measuring skills at home when preparing their ingredients for lessons.

Students are encouraged to practice their practical skills out of lessons by helping to prepare and cook meals at home.

**To be successful in this subject,** students will need to be good at and enjoy:

- ◆ Learning how to cook independently
- ◆ Developing organisational and time management skills
- ◆ Developing problem solving skills and the ability to overcome challenges
- ◆ Teamwork when carrying out practical investigations
- ◆ Learning through practical activities