

Year 9 Curriculum Newsletter Autumn Term 1

English



What are we doing this half term?

GCSE Short Stories:

This half term, students will study a range of GCSE short stories, including *The Darkness Out There* by Penelope Lively and several classic short stories by Roald Dahl. Through these texts, students will explore how writers create engaging characters, settings and plots, while analysing themes such as appearance versus reality, morality, conflict and human nature. Students will develop their inference and analytical skills by examining language, structure and the writers' methods, preparing them for GCSE-style literary analysis.

Assessments: Students will complete three checkpoint assessments during the term: a reading skills check, a guided formative assessment with detailed feedback, and a final summative assessment.

Maths



What are we doing this half term? Students will be working on fractions, decimals and percentages, with a particular focus on percentage change. They will then move onto probability, followed standard form.

Assessments: Students will complete a triweekly unit assessment after each topic.

How can parents help? Ensure your child has the correct equipment such as a pencil, ruler and their own scientific calculator. Encourage your child to engage fully with SPARX (the Maths home learning platform) spending at least 50 minutes per week doing their home learning - they should be completing 100% of the tasks each week.

History



What are we doing this half term? Pack your work bag kids because we are heading to the factory! We will start by studying the various aspects of the Industrial Revolution. We'll be finding out what life was like for children in Victorian Britain and about the great and famous inventors of the time and the impact that they had on shaping the modern world. We will conclude with an investigation into Britain's most notorious murderer - Jack the Ripper - and finding out not only about him but also the victims and the nature of the police investigation.

Assessment - checkpoint knowledge and skills.

How can parents help? Books, documentaries, visits to London and other historical sites such as the Museum of London, Museum of London Docklands or Florence Nightingale Museum.

Computer Science



What are we doing this half term? Students will be building on the Python programming techniques that they have learnt about in year 8. They will continue to use their computational thinking skills to write, test, debug and run small programs. The students will be learning more advanced programming techniques such as functions and lists in Python.

Assessments: Students will be doing an assessment every three weeks as a check for understanding and mastery.

How can parents help? We ask parents to get their child to practice the programming techniques they have already learnt about. Students can use the CS Newbs website (<https://www.csnewbs.com/python>) to practice programming techniques. Parents can also help by making sure home learning is completed as this helps prepare them for each of the 4 assessments they will do this term.

Religion, Philosophy and Ethics (RPE)



What are we doing this half term? Year 9 students begin their GCSE Religious Studies journey by exploring some of the most significant beliefs in Christianity. We will tackle questions such as Who is God?, Why do Christians believe Jesus was more than an ordinary person? and What happens after death? Students will investigate key Christian teachings including creation, the Trinity, incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection and salvation, whilst considering how these beliefs influence the lives of Christians today. This unit introduces many of the core concepts needed for GCSE success and encourages students to think critically about religious claims and evidence. Students will need to learn specialist vocabulary carefully and come to lessons ready to analyse, evaluate and think deeply.

Geography



What are we doing this half term? Y9 students will study development across the globe. They will explore development indicators, the impact of fair trade and life in refugee camps. Throughout this topic students will develop their decision making and critical thinking skills.

Assessments: Check point assessments and 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 pens for annotating answers. Testing students on the information on their revision pages helps build their confidence. Make sure the literacy sheet is fully completed 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.

Science



What are we doing this half term? Cell Biology, Atomic structure and the Periodic Table.

Assessments: 3 assessments carried out in class over the half term.

How can parents help? Ensure your child has the correct equipment such as a pencil, ruler and their own scientific calculator. The BBC GCSE bitesize is a useful resource for homework tasks and revision - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zrkw2hv>

Drama



What are we doing this half term? Year 9 start the year exploring Shakespeare's Elizabethan Theatre. They will look into extracts from 'Twelfth Night', 'Macbeth' and 'A Midsummer Nights' Dream'. Students will learn about different types of stages in theatre and the Globe's unique stage. They will explore Shakespeare's theatrical convention of gender deception and develop their confidence to read and understand Shakespeare's texts. Students will be assessed on a performance from a scene studied in lessons and the new knowledge they have gained through lessons.

How can parents help? Please support your child to learn their lines for their assessed performance. If you are able, take your child to see a production at The Globe theatre in London.

Spanish



What are we doing this half term? We launch into the exciting world of Media, watching Spanish film trailers, choosing French TV programmes to watch and considering the benefits and dangers of social media. the emphasis is on expressing more advanced opinions and using more past tense.

Assessments: Students will be doing a vocabulary test every two weeks. The end of module assessment will be mid-October.

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 remind them we expect them to use class notes as reference and perhaps a few words from an online dictionary - www.wordreference.com. Testing your child on key vocabulary regularly will help them memorise key vocabulary and grammar ahead of assessments and build confidence. regularly will help them memorise key vocabulary and grammar ahead of assessments and build confidence.

French



What are we doing this half term? We launch into the exciting world of Media, watching French film trailers, choosing French TV programmes to watch and considering the benefits and dangers of social media. the emphasis is on expressing more advanced opinions and using more past tense.

Assessments: Students will be doing a vocabulary test every two weeks. The end of module assessment will be mid-Oct.

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 remind them we expect them to use class notes as reference and perhaps a few words from an online dictionary - www.wordreference.com. Testing your child on key vocabulary regularly will help them memorise key vocabulary and grammar ahead of assessments and build confidence. regularly will help them memorise key vocabulary and grammar ahead of assessments and build confidence.

PE



What are we doing this half term? Through a range of team and individual sports students improve and develop not just their athletic ability but also learn valuable skills to take away such as teamwork, communication, leadership and sportsmanship. With each sport they will develop more advanced skills, tactics and strategies.

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

How can parents help? Please ensure students are organised with their full kit on PE days.

Music



What are we doing this half term? The first project in year 9 will be about Jazz. Student's will start the year by revisiting the blues, before extending their understanding of chords, scale and improvisation.

Assessments: Jazz piece performed 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 Workshop (Rotation)



What are we doing this half term? Designing, Manufacturing and Evaluating a Desk Lamp (Wood, Polymers & Electronics). Students design, model, and manufacture a functional desk lamp, applying technical drawing, electronics, materials, and processes, and evaluate against a real-world brief.

Assessments: Checkpoint assessment: out of 10, Skills test – Technical Orthographic Drawing: out of 15, Checkpoint assessment: out of 10

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 metal materials and try and work out how they are made and constructed. Parents' could also discuss their Design taste in Interior design and focussing on Desk Lamps in particular. Complete home learning from www.stem.org Watch programs such as - How it's made and follow our stem learning program for challenges to complete at home.

DT Graphics (Rotation)



What are we doing this half term? Graphic Products: Branding, Visual Communication and Packaging Design. Includes: Film Poster (Design Challenge 1), DVD Packaging (Design Challenge 2) & Food Packaging (Design Challenge 3) Evaluation Assessment.

Assessments: Checkpoint assessment: out of 10, Skills test –Designing: out of 15, Checkpoint assessment: out of 10

How can parents help? Discuss the project, look at existing branding and why colours and themes are selected. Refer to film a posters and look at different food packaging which have different target markets. Take your child to the Design Museum or The Victoria & Albert Museum.

DT Product Design (Rotation)



What are we doing this half term? Students will be learning about how a GCSE project will be to study and this project is based on Inclusive Design focussing on both Physical and Mental disability. The project will cover the following areas: Inclusive Product Design: Designing, Developing, Prototyping and Evaluating Products for Users with Specific Needs.

Assessments: Checkpoint assessment: out of 10, Skills test – Investigation: out of 15, Checkpoint assessment: out of 10

How can parents help? Offering students feedback about the work that they are doing is always helpful as it enables students to reflect upon the effectiveness of their work. Discuss how inclusive design can be evident in the real world e.g pedestrian crossingsn public transport and public spaces such as libraries, hospitals etc. Enter design ventura, design competition. <https://ventura.designmuseum.org/>

Food and Nutrition



What are we doing this half term?

Year 9 focuses on mastery and preparation for GCSE Food Preparation & Nutrition. Students will develop advanced practical skills while studying nutrition, energy balance, food labelling, food safety, food poisoning prevention, food processing and functional properties of ingredients. They will become increasingly independent when planning, preparing and evaluating dishes. Practical dishes may include: Risotto, Turkey Burgers and Wedges, Empanadas, Fruity Crumble Bars, Homemade Pasta with Fresh Tomato Sauce, Cauliflower Mac and Cheese and Swiss Roll.

How will they be assessed?

Students will receive regular feedback during practical work and complete practical assessments, theory assessments and end-of-unit knowledge checks.

Home Learning

Students will evaluate practical outcomes, develop food preparation skills at home and be encouraged to cook independently, adapting recipes and making informed nutritional choices.

To be successful in this subject, students will need to enjoy:

Cooking independently

Applying food science and nutrition knowledge

Managing time effectively in practical lessons

Evaluating and improving recipes

Preparing for the transition to GCSE-level study

Art



What are we doing this half term? Students research the Mexican culture and the Day of the Dead festival as a starting point for their first project in Year 9. Students are inspired by a variety of traditional and current popular culture references alongside artists such as Frida Kahlo, Alfonso Castillo Orta and Jose Posada. Students refine their skills using a variety of painting and drawing techniques and processes to create their own Calavera celebrating the life of a loved one or someone they admire.

How can parents help? Please ensure that your child completes all their Art & Design homework activities for this project. High quality drawing and painting equipment will support students in completing their work in lesson and at home. Discussing popular culture and examples of art & design in our everyday lives encourages students to make connections and develops visual literacy to support creative thinking.