

HELSEBY

Sixth Form



Year 11 Sixth Form Transition Material

Subject

English Language

Congratulations on choosing to study English Language at A Level

The information and tasks contained in this booklet will help you to research and prepare for your course when you start at Sixth Form Helsby in September. They will provide you with an overview of what to expect from your A Level studies and help you to develop a greater understanding of the subject.

This is by no means an exhaustive list but it will help you to start thinking about the subject and extra-curricular study and research.

Audio/visual links:

George Lakoff - The Neuroscience of Language and Thought,
<https://youtu.be/JJP-rkilz40>

Robin Lakoff/gender theory and language: <https://youtu.be/GEGXEplzo1Q>

Word of mouth. BBC <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qtnz/episodes/player>

You should also check out this playlist on Ted Talks:
https://www.ted.com/playlists/228/how_language_changes_over_time

Language acquisition: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Cgpfw4z8cw>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theory_of_language

Reading:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/English%20Language/2015/teaching-and-learning-materials/A-level-English-Language-theory-guide.pdf>

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/English%20Language/2015/Specification%20and%20sample%20assessment/a-level-english-language-specification.pdf>

There are a lot of books written about English Language. Some of the most accessible include:

David Crystal: *The Story of English in 100 Words; How Language Works; The English Language: A Guided Tour of the Language* (in fact, most books by this author are accessible and interesting. Have a look in your local library for them.)

Bill Bryson: *Mother Tongue*

There are also some really useful blogs to have a look at:

<https://blog.oxforddictionaries.com/> - gives some interesting insights into new words and the changing uses of existing words.

<http://flashfictiononline.com/main/> - useful website for looking at short pieces of creative writing. This will prove useful as you start preparing for coursework.

<https://www.theguardian.com/media/mind-your-language> - interesting blog that looks at attitudes towards the ways in which language is used.

UCAS

<https://www.ucas.com/explore/subjects/english-language>

Other Resources/ideas/investigations/exploration:

Language Scrapbook

The joy about studying English Language is that it is everywhere.

As part of your summer work, start a 'scrapbook' where you collect different examples of language. Annotate the examples looking at how they use language to meet the demands of the different audiences, forms and functions of the text.

For example:

Jargon – language unique to this type of text. Demonstrates the cost of the ticket and implies that it is cheaper than other types.

Abbreviations due to limited size of

Colours are typical of this text type and are the same regardless of the train company.

Implied legal language showing the authority of the ticket. Hints at the power behind the people who issue and check tickets.

Off-Peak Single

Valid for one journey from
Watford Junction
To
Coventry

From
05-Jnr-15
Until
05-Jnr-15

Not valid for travel via London Terminals

This Off-Peak ticket can only be used at certain times, for details ask staff or go to nationalrail.co.uk/8

Under-16-year-old Standard Class

Refundable and exchangeable for a fee

£22.55

1234-1234-1234-01-00
1234 56789A

<p>Txtng is killing language. JK!!!</p>	<p>What are your views on the way that texting (and social media in general) has influenced language?</p> <p>What are the key differences between the way we use language in speech and the way we use it in language?</p> <p>Look at the way the speaker discusses the use of the phrase 'LOL.' How far do you agree with his assertion that the role of 'LOL' has changed?</p> <p>Do you still use this technique?</p> <p>Investigation: What are the key features of the way you use language in text messages and social media? What affects the way you use language in these situations?</p>
<p>Go ahead, make up new words!</p>	<p>How far do you agree with the idea that we are pre-programmed to apply certain grammatical rules such as plurals?</p> <p>According to the talk, what are the different ways of creating new words?</p> <p>Look at the new words that have been added to the <i>Oxford English Dictionary</i> (google 'new words list' and they will appear). What methods have been used?</p> <p>Investigation: Try to create a new word and see if you can track its usage. Think about the gap you are trying to fill and how you will get the word to spread around different speakers.</p>
<p>How language transformed humanity.</p>	<p>How essential is language to social learning?</p> <p>Page1 presents an argument for a global language. What are your thoughts about creating a single global language? What are the potential benefits of such a situation? What are the potential downsides to this situation?</p> <p>Investigation: Page1 discusses the idea that language is subversive and that there are certain words you cannot say. Discuss the words that are considered 'dangerous' or 'taboo' in modern society. How has this changed over time? Are there words that could be used 50 years ago that are considered inappropriate now? Why has this changed?</p>

<p>What our language habits reveal.</p>	<p>What are the different types of verb that Pinker discusses?</p> <p>Why might speakers choose to use euphemistic or metaphorical phrases for certain events or ideas?</p> <p>Pinker discusses the use of language to create implicature (implying meaning but not saying it directly). In what ways have you used or heard implicature in different settings or situations?</p> <p>Investigation: Look at different political speeches and identify how language has been used to convey or reinforce certain ideologies or values. How do politicians use implicature to affect the audience's response? What values do they assume their audiences hold?</p>
<p>Don't kill your language!</p>	<p>This talk is in a different language with subtitles. What were your initial responses to this? Did this make you less likely to want to engage with the talk? What do you think that reveals about the way we respond to different languages?</p> <p>To what extent do you feel that language is an important part of culture?</p> <p>What might make someone give up their native tongue in favour of a different language?</p> <p>Investigation: Research a country that has English as a primary language alongside other national languages – e.g. South Africa, Jamaica or Singapore. How does this country use English? How did English arrive in the country? What effects has English had on the native languages?</p>
<p>What makes a word real?</p>	<p>In your opinion, when should a word be added to the standard dictionary? What criteria do you think it should fulfil before it is added?</p> <p>Do you think any words should be banished? What criteria would a word have to fulfil in order for it to be threatened with 'banishment'?</p> <p>Can you write a definition of what makes a word real?</p> <p>Investigation: Select three new slang words that you think your English teacher <i>needs</i> to know in order to be able to communicate effectively with your age group. Prepare the dictionary definitions for your words along with examples of them in use.</p> <p>Justify why you have selected these words over any others.</p>

Finally:

Take the time to read. Using the summer to think about reading the language around you is extremely important. This can include literature texts (novels, plays and poetry) even if you are not planning to study English Literature. When thinking about English Language, we need to think about how language and humans understanding of it creates the world around us.