Autumn Term 2026

October 2026

Year 8 English

INTRODUCTION

Hello from all the staff in the English Department at St Mary's Catholic Academy. We really hope you had a lovely summer. We have enjoyed welcoming the children back to school getting the first half term up and running.

What's In This Half Term's Issue?

- Book recommendations
- Bedrock recap
- First module
- Literary house information
- What to expect for the upcoming year.

Book Recommendations

See your teacher for your literary house stickers in case you have forgotten which house you are in!

Module One

This half term we are studying Gothic literature. We will look closely at the conventions of Gothic literature, reading and annotating some extracts of Gothic novels such as *Frankenstein* and *Dracula*. We will also be designing and describing our own Gothic creatures and writing descriptively in the syle of Robert Louis Stevenson.

Grammar Focus

Sentence structures and subordinate clauses, antonyms and synonyms, ambitious adjectives, dashes, pronouns, colons and semi-colons

Revision for the upcoming formative assessment:

Revise literary techniques such as SOAP AIMS as well as stereotypical conventions of gothic literature such as pathetic fallacy and personification.

Revise ISPACED sentence openers, how to use colons semi-colons, brackets and dashes.

Home Learning

Please encourage your child to continue to do their Bedrock home learning twice a week. 3 or more missed home learnings will result in a after school detention with Miss Brady.

The Year Ahead

Take a look at the Year 8 Learning Journey to see what the year ahead holds!

Year 8 SMCA English Curriculum

Module 1: Gothic Literature

Reading

Read a range of Gothic texts including Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. Develop your ability to make **inferences and analyse how a writer uses literary devices** to achieve a desired **effect on the reader.** Begin to explore the writer's use of **structural devices.**

Writing

Creative Writing – focus on setting the scene in a narrative opening.

How will you be assessed?

Formative 1: Reading – Language Analysis
Formative 2: Writing – Description
Summative: Writing – Narrative Opening

Module 2: *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare

Reading

Enjoy reading, performing and studying Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Focus on how Shakespeare develops his **characters** and develop your **analysis of language.** Learn how the **context i**nfluenced how and why Shakespeare wrote the play.

Writing

Functional Writing: Persuasive Letters in the role of characters from the play.

How will you be assessed?

Formative 1: Reading – Retrieval, inference, analysis and context
Formative 2: Writing – Persuasive Letter
Summative: Reading – Retrieval, inference, analysis and context

Module 3: Powerful Voices

Reading

Enjoy exploring **poetry and speeches** and see how writers use their 'Powerful Voices' to convey important messages. Develop your ability to **analyse a writer's use of persuasive devices and poetic tools.**

Writing

Functional Writing – Speeches, debates & podcasts

How will you be assessed?

Formative 1: Reading – Retrieval, inference, analysis and context
Formative 2: Writing – Speech
Summative: Exam Week – Cumulative Reading & Writing – Speech

Module 4: Class Novel – *The Blue Book of Nebo*

Reading

Enjoy your class novel, a post-apocalyptic novel set after a nuclear disaster in rural Wales. Focus on **language analysis, structure analysis and characterisation.**

Writing

Description and narrative – focus on setting the scene.

How will you be assessed?

Formative 1: Reading – Language Analysis
Formative 2: Writing – either Description or Narrative
Summative: End of Year Assessment – Knowledge of Novel

Year 7 → INFERENCE → RETRIEVAL → LANGUAGE ANALYSIS → STRUCTURE ANALYSIS → Year 9

Welcome back to the St Mary's English Department!
This year, enjoy 4 new exciting modules which will build on the work you completed in Year 7!
Our theme this year is 'Outsiders'.

IDEAS & DEVICES · STRUCTURE & ORGANISATION · ACCURACY · VOICE & EFFECT · SENTENCE STRUCTURE · VOCABULARY