

A Level English Language

Freya Howe (Alleyne's Alumni 2024,
University of Manchester)

"I really enjoyed studying English language A Level, and it was **surprising how much it differed to GCSE language**. I think my favourite aspect of study was **sociolinguistics and being able to look at how wider contextual factors such as power and gender** could influence language. **I loved the opportunity to conduct our own research** in the coursework as you are able to study whatever it is that interests you, and it is a **great insight into research for university assignments**."

Lang vs Lit

LITERATURE :

Study novels,
plays and
poems in detail

LANGUAGE :

Study the way in
which writers and
speakers use
language in texts
from the 'real world',
both WRITTEN and
SPOKEN



Forget GCSE English language

“After studying the A-level for two years and now doing my degree in the field, **my 'one thing to consider' is that A-level is NOTHING like GCSE.** The content is so much more engaging and whatever your interests, it's guaranteed you'll come across a topic you're fascinated with.”

Olivia Cash (Alleyne's Alumni 2024,
University of Edinburgh)



TRUE OR FALSE?

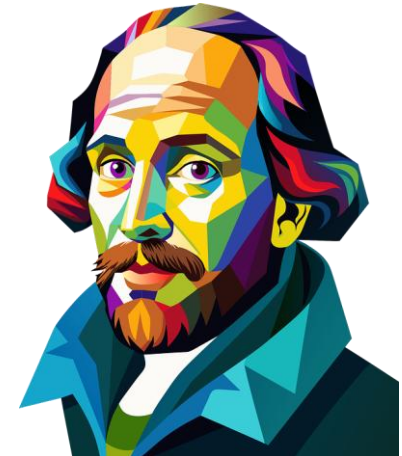
1. Shakespeare invented the idiom 'in stitches' (as in: *Her story had me 'in stitches.'*)
2. The Oxford English Dictionary enter approx. 1,000 new words every year!
3. An English speaking baby is likely to say the word 'dada' before 'mama'.



TRUE OR FALSE?

1. Shakespeare invented the idiom: 'in stitches'

TRUE! In-fact he invented 1,000s of words and phrases we still use today!



e.g. 'heart of gold'
'break the ice'
'the world's your oyster'



TRUE OR FALSE?

2. The Oxford English Dictionary enter approx. 1,000 new words every year!

TRUE! Their team of editors decide what to add.

The 'word of the year' for 2023 was **'rizz'**

The 'word of the year' for 2024 was **'brain rot'**



TRUE OR FALSE?

3. An English speaking baby is likely to say the word 'dada' before 'mama'.

TRUE! But only due to the easier phonemes (sounds) in the word 'dada' compared to 'mama'



Texts

Christmas day
25 of December 2007

... is christmas day what I
... is a rife ... with, ...
... ..
... ..
This is ...



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

I am writing to you to update you on the steps we are taking to combat coronavirus.

In just a few short weeks...

... this country has changed dramatically.
... virus not just on ourselves, but on our

 **KANYE WEST** ✓
@kanyewest

You don't have to agree with trump but the mob can't make me not love him. We are both dragon energy. He is my brother. I love everyone. I don't agree with everything anyone does. That's what makes us individuals. And we have the right to independent thought.

4:30 PM - Apr 25, 2018

♥ 219K 💬 78.2K people are talking about this

E: Oh honey tha
s:soo[:ner br
M: [:(f) Oh...]
E: It w's just deli:ghtfu[:l.]
M: [Well]=
M: I w's gla[d you] (came).]
E: ['nd yer f:] friends] 're so da:rlj:ng,=
M: =Oh:: [: it w'z]
E: [e-that P]a:t isn'she a do[: :ll?],
M: [iYe]h isn't she pretty,
(.)
E: Oh: she's a beautiful girl.=
M: =Yeh I think she's a pretty gir[l].=
E: [En' that Reinam'r
(.)
E: She SCA:RES me.



Dumbledore: I've found the perfect place to raise Harry until he's old enough for school.

McGonagall: With Remus and Sirius?

Dumbledore: Nope...

McGonagall: Hagrid's?

Dumbledore: Not exactly...

McGonagall: At Hogwarts with me?

Dumbledore: No...

McGonagall: I give up. Where?

Dumbledore: Well, now I'm not sure I want to tell you.



Bake Off: Creme de la Creme quiz

Could you cut it as a pastry pro? Join Tom Kerridge and test your knowledge. Patisserie made simple

Find the perfect recipe

Editor picks User recommended Special diets



Souvlakia
By Paul Hollywood
More kebab recipes

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Food issues

Veggie comfort food

10 yummy honey recipes

The easiest way to make bread

Quick recipe finder

Type ingredients, chef or programme

Quick & Easy Vegetarian

Recipes from programmes

A
CHARGE, &c.

GENTLEMEN,

YOU now appear as Candidates for the *first Honors* of this Institution. The *free* Spirit that it breathes permits us not to bind you to us by the ordinary Ties of Oaths and Promises. Instead thereof, we would rely on those Principles of *Virtue* and *Goodness* which we have endeavoured to cultivate. Suffer me, therefore, ere you go, to sum up all our former Labors for you, in this Place, by one last and *parting* CHARGE.

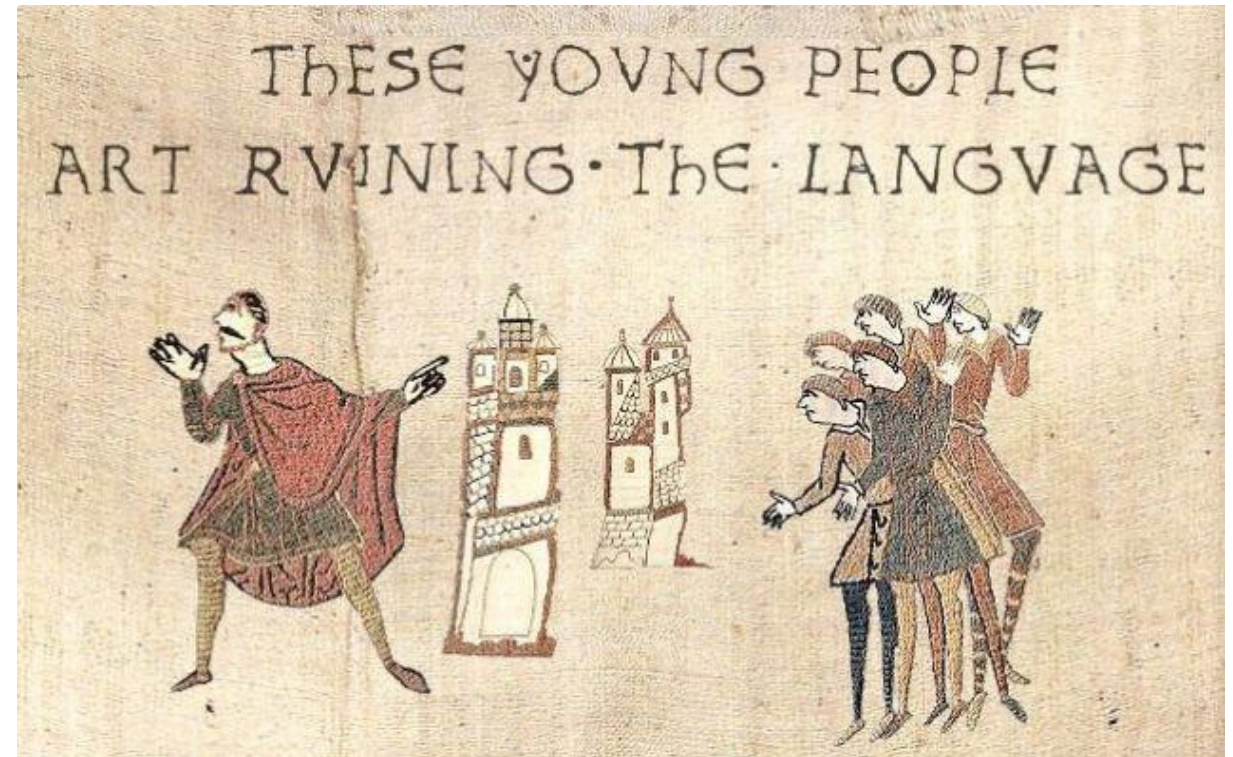
Surely---to LIVE is a serious Thing! And you are now about

Analysis



Theories and concepts

- ▶ Language and gender
 - ▶ Language and power
 - ▶ Language and technology
-
- ▶ Child language acquisition
 - ▶ Language in the media
 - ▶ Language change over time (1600s – today)



Theories and concepts – hot topics



- Women talk more than men



- Social media and instant messaging are ruining the English Language



- In the past people spoke 'better' English than we do today
- You shouldn't believe anything you read in the media!



2 exams – 80%

▶ Paper 1:

- ▶ Close linguistic analysis of an unseen text
- ▶ Write a blog, article, editorial or speech
- ▶ Compare the style of two unseen texts

▶ Paper 2:

- ▶ Examine child language acquisition
- ▶ Explore the concepts of gender, power and technology
- ▶ Explore language change over time



Language Investigation CWK – 20%

How do British Prime Ministers use language to maintain power during their resignation speeches?

How is language used by the fashion editors of GQ and Cosmopolitan magazine to represent gender?

How is Language used in the boardroom on the first episode of The Apprentice (Series 18) to exert power?

How do Sky Sports presenters use language to exert power and elicit information from F1 drivers in interviews on The F1 Show?

What do the sixth formers think?

► Why did you choose A Level English Language?

"I liked the sound of the **social aspects of the course: gender, power, etc.**"

"The subject content sounded **really interesting, and particularly the topic about language acquisition** appealed to me, as this is something I found relevant to my **plans for the future.**"

"All three of **my subjects interlink** in someway which is what makes lessons enjoyable as there is sometimes crossover."



What do the sixth formers think?

► What other subjects are you studying ?



What do the sixth formers think?

► What are lessons like? What have you enjoyed?

"The lessons are **fun, interesting, and engaging**. I've really enjoyed learning about power in language and how gender can affect it, as well as looking at, and understanding, different theorists' ideas. "

"Lessons in sixth form are **different to GCSE as the class sizes are a lot smaller**. For English I really like how **everyone in the class gets to speak, giving personal opinions and answering questions**. The lessons are really **interactive** so you **never feel stuck** on something even if its really difficult."

"I am currently enjoying **self directed learning** and the **mature atmosphere** in the classroom."

What do the sixth formers think?

► What advice would you give to anyone thinking of studying A Level English Language?

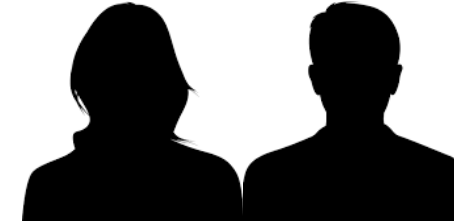
"I would advise anyone thinking of doing A Level English Language to **work hard at GCSE English**, though when coming to make a decision about taking this subject to **not judge it on your experience of English Language at GCSE** as it is so much different to what you've already done!"

"English Language is a good subject to take especially as it can be **interlinked with other subjects**. I would say **pick subjects which you enjoy and be open-minded.**"

"**Be open to discussion and be confident in your opinions** when discussing different issues and theories as it helps you to **become more level-headed and analytical** which helps with both sides of the course, and with other subjects that you may take. "



Are you an A Level English Language student?



- ▶ **Inquisitive**: you want to learn more about the way language works. How and why we use language the way we do, everyday.
- ▶ **Flexible**: you aren't daunted by the idea of analysing texts ranging from the script of The Simpsons, to a transcript of a House of Commons debate or a 2 year old's conversation.
- ▶ **Analytical**: you think critically about the way things work.
- ▶ **Diligent**: you are keen to investigate and work independently.
- ▶ **Open-minded**: you are ready to listen to opinions, research and theories and share your own.
- ▶ ***You want to succeed!***



Looking to the future

- University
- Higher level apprenticeships
- Employability

Selection of Alleyne's Alumni:

- University of Edinburgh (English Language and Linguistics)
- University of Manchester (Linguistics and Social Anthropology)
- Derby University (Sports Journalism)
- York ST John University (Journalism)
- Staffordshire University (Primary Education with PGCE)

"The teachers, and the department as a whole, are really helpful, supportive, and friendly. Because of the social issues that you learn about in the course, English would pair well with subjects like A Level Sociology--especially if you want a career in **Politics or Law**. You learn a lot about language in **advertising** so English would also pair really well with **Business**, if you want a career in **Marketing, Human Resources**, or anything similar."

Want to know more?

- Ask your English teacher!
- Email: r.rutter@alleynes.staffs.sch.uk
- n.harley@alleynes.staffs.sch.uk
- l.tovey@alleynes.staffs.sch.uk

