

KS4 English Language Curriculum - Year A (2026-27)

AQA English Language | Tuesdays & Thursdays | 2-Year Rolling Programme

Year A approach: The programme develops GCSE English Language skills progressively across the year without attempting to teach every examination skill at once. Core reading and writing skills are revisited at increasing levels of independence and sophistication. Sessions remain interactive and discussion-led, with approximately 30 minutes of focused teaching and 15 minutes of shared reading, modelling or application. Extended independent writing is minimised during live lessons and can be completed as optional follow-up practice.

Autumn Term 2026

28 sessions | 8 September - 17 December | Half term: 26-30 October | Focus: Fiction, Language & Creative Writing

#	Date	Unit	30-min lesson	Progressive curriculum objective	15-min reading/application
1	Tue 8 Sept	Becoming a Stronger Reader	Reading Like a Detective	Distinguish explicit and implicit information. Retrieve relevant details efficiently and make logical inferences from textual clues.	Begin Short Story 1. Establish character, setting and situation; make initial predictions.
2	Thu 10 Sept	Becoming a Stronger Reader	What Can We Infer?	Develop inference beyond obvious conclusions. Use behaviour, dialogue and description to infer feelings, relationships and motives.	Character inference: what can we work out that the writer has not directly told us?
3	Tue 15 Sept	Becoming a Stronger Reader	Finding the Best Evidence	Select concise, relevant quotations rather than copying large sections. Match evidence accurately to an interpretation.	Choose the strongest evidence for different interpretations of the story.
4	Thu 17 Sept	Becoming a Stronger Reader	What Does This Word Suggest?	Explore vocabulary in context, connotations and shades of meaning. Understand how a single word contributes to an impression.	Select intriguing or unfamiliar vocabulary and infer meaning from context.
5	Tue 22 Sept	Becoming a Stronger Reader	From Evidence to Explanation	Move beyond 'this shows'. Explain how textual evidence supports an inference and develop increasingly detailed interpretations.	Pause at key moments and build interpretations together from evidence.
6	Thu 24 Sept	Becoming a Stronger Reader	The Unseen Fiction Challenge	Apply retrieval, inference, vocabulary and evidence-selection skills to an unfamiliar extract with reduced scaffolding.	Finish Story 1 and evaluate whether initial predictions and character judgements were accurate.
7	Tue 29 Sept	Writers' Language	Words Have Power	Explore connotation and semantic associations. Compare vocabulary choices and analyse how writers influence readers through precise language.	Begin Short Story 2. Identify striking vocabulary and initial impressions.
8	Thu 1 Oct	Writers' Language	Imagery: More Than Decoration	Analyse simile, metaphor and personification. Explain what an image suggests and how it contributes to meaning, character or atmosphere.	Identify imagery in context and discuss the impressions it creates.
9	Tue 6 Oct	Writers' Language	Zooming In on Language	Analyse individual words within quotations. Explore verbs, adjectives, nouns and adverbs without simply feature spotting.	Choose one powerful word and explore multiple possible interpretations.
10	Thu 8 Oct	Writers' Language	Patterns in Language	Identify semantic fields and recurring imagery. Move from isolated word analysis to recognising patterns across a passage.	Look for recurring words and images and consider why the writer repeats them.
11	Tue 13 Oct	Writers' Language	Tone & Atmosphere	Identify tone accurately and explain how vocabulary, imagery and sentence choices combine to create atmosphere.	Track changes in mood as Story 2 develops.
12	Thu 15 Oct	Writers' Language	Stop Feature Spotting!	Compare weak and strong analysis. Move beyond naming techniques to explaining effects, meanings and writer intentions.	Finish Story 2 and select the three most effective examples of the writer's language.
13	Tue 20 Oct	Suspense, Tension & Structure	How Writers Hook Us	Analyse effective openings. Explore how writers introduce questions, establish atmosphere and control information.	Begin Short Story 3. Identify questions deliberately created by the opening.
14	Thu 22 Oct	Suspense, Tension & Structure	Withholding Information	Explore how writers delay revelations and manipulate reader knowledge. Understand how mystery and uncertainty generate tension.	Identify what the writer is deliberately not telling us and make predictions.
15	Tue 3 Nov	Suspense, Tension & Structure	Controlling the Reader's Attention	Identify shifts in focus, perspective, time and setting. Explain why writers move attention at particular points.	Track where narrative focus shifts in Story 3.
16	Thu 5 Nov	Suspense, Tension & Structure	Pace & Tension	Analyse how sentence length, paragraphing, dialogue and detail can speed up or slow down a narrative.	Identify where the story accelerates or slows and discuss the effect.
17	Tue 10 Nov	Suspense, Tension & Structure	Foreshadowing & Clues	Recognise foreshadowing and understand how earlier details gain significance later. Distinguish meaningful clues from irrelevant details.	Revisit earlier passages: did the writer warn us about what was coming?
18	Thu 12 Nov	Suspense, Tension & Structure	Endings That Stay With Us	Explore resolved, surprising, circular and ambiguous endings. Evaluate how endings change interpretation of the whole text.	Finish Story 3 and evaluate its ending.
19	Tue 17 Nov	Creative Writing Craft	Show, Don't Tell	Communicate emotion and character through actions, dialogue, body language and precise details. Avoid over-explanation.	Begin Short Story 4. Find examples where the writer shows rather than tells.
20	Thu 19 Nov	Creative Writing Craft	Creating Powerful Settings	Use sensory description selectively. Develop atmosphere through precise nouns, verbs and imagery rather than excessive adjectives.	Explore how the setting influences the mood of Story 4.
21	Tue 24 Nov	Creative Writing Craft	Character in a Few Words	Establish convincing characters efficiently through selected details, actions and dialogue. Explore indirect characterisation.	Identify what small details reveal about the characters.
22	Thu 26 Nov	Creative Writing Craft	Sentence Control	Manipulate sentence lengths and structures deliberately for emphasis, pace and effect. Use	Examine sentence structures at a

				punctuation creatively and accurately.	dramatic point in Story 4.
23	Tue 1 Dec	Creative Writing Craft	Openings That Make You Read On	Compare approaches to narrative openings. Avoid clichés and unnecessary exposition. Establish intrigue, atmosphere or voice quickly.	Compare Story 4's opening with earlier stories studied this term.
24	Thu 3 Dec	Creative Writing Craft	Endings Without 'And Then I Woke Up'!	Construct purposeful endings. Explore circular structure, callbacks, ambiguity and final images. Understand how an ending can echo an opening.	Finish Story 4 and evaluate how effectively the ending completes the narrative.
25	Tue 8 Dec	Apply & Consolidate	The Unseen Fiction Challenge	Apply retrieval, inference, evidence selection and language analysis to unfamiliar fiction. Decide independently which details deserve analysis.	Begin a final short or seasonal story; read primarily for enjoyment and prediction.
26	Thu 10 Dec	Apply & Consolidate	Fix This Answer!	Diagnose common analytical weaknesses: oversized quotations, feature spotting, vague effects, repetition and unsupported interpretations. Improve responses collaboratively.	Select quotations from the story and decide which provide the richest opportunities for analysis.
27	Tue 15 Dec	Apply & Consolidate	The Creative Writing Challenge	Apply vocabulary, imagery, characterisation, sentence control and structural skills to short creative challenges using visual and written prompts.	Reach the climax of the final story and predict its ending.
28	Thu 17 Dec	Apply & Consolidate	The Great KS4 English Challenge	Consolidate Autumn learning through interactive vocabulary, inference, language, structure and creative-writing challenges. Identify strengths and Spring priorities.	Finish the final story and discuss the writer's most successful choices.