

## Year 8 Curriculum

Students in Year 8 can expect to have a **fortnightly library lesson** where they should be reading a book. Sometimes the book will be a class reader, sometimes they will be selecting a book from the list for the unit and sometimes they are making a free choice. Reading should be logged in their books. Their teacher will ask for book reviews and for presentations about what they are reading at different points.

The units the students study are as follows:

**War Novel Unit.** This is based around a novel – usually *Private Peaceful* or *The Machine Gunners*. They will study characters and themes. They will do research on the war that is the background to the novel and produce a presentation. The assessment is with a reading task – usually on character.

**Shakespeare – either *The Tempest* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.** The students get to get up and be dramatic in this unit! They will look at the whole play, and will get to perform scenes in front of the class. They are assessed by a reading task on two set scenes – this is good practice for the SATs.

**Media/Ballad.** This is really two short units rather than one. Students will study at least two ballad poems and be able to write about them for a reading assessment. They will also write and perform their own ballad. The media work ties in with our commitment to work with the BBC in their School Report. Students will consider what makes a news story and what the legalities are. In small groups, they will then gather news to report their own story to their class. The teacher will assess groups and put forward individuals to take part in News Day. We work with BBC personnel to create a filmed news programme on real news. Students taking part in this will be committed to attend a practice day and at least two afterschool news making training sessions.

The Year 8s will take part in an Enhancement Day, which is a cross curricular day off timetable. Specialists will be brought in as appropriate. This will culminate in a performance on the day.

**Chaucer.** We look at some of the stories told by the pilgrims in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tale*, and we also begin to unravel the Middle English in the 'Prologue to the *Canterbury Tale*'. Students will use drama and reading techniques to get inside the head of a pilgrim going to Canterbury. They will use this for their writing assessment based on a creative writing piece.

**Pre20th Century Novel.** Students will read the whole of a story written before 1900. This naturally leads to word studies and comparing modern writing with that of the Victorians. Currently, the novels available are *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *Kidnapped* and *A Christmas Carol*. The teacher will choose from the selection available. The teacher will also make a choice about whether to make writing or reading the priority in this unit.

**Language Unit.** Students finish the year with language work, based mainly on the writing triplets of the National Curriculum. A large variety of texts will be looked at as stimulus for writing. Students can also expect to complete projects where they have to research, make notes, summarise and explain clearly. During this final term, the students complete the QCA Reading and Writing papers.

Reading and spelling lists for each unit are on the website.