



## St Joseph's College English Department

### Preparation work for AQA A Level English Language and Literature

Choose one or more tasks from the list below.

*These tasks are designed to get you thinking broadly about language and how it is used.*

1) Dystopia

- Read *The Handmaid's Tale* (this is one of your set texts) over the summer. Be prepared to discuss the novel and present ideas. Annotate with information regarding key characters and themes.
- Prepare notes to discuss the question: Are the male characters victims in this society? Notes must include key references from the entire novel. Research critical readings / interpretations of the novel. Choose one that you find interesting and you can either support or refute.
- Read *1984* by George Orwell. In conjunction with this, research dystopian fiction and feminist literature. Make notes on the key elements of these genres. How far does either novel fit these models?

2) Representation

Representation is the study of how different people are presented through a conscious selection of words (lexis) and images (graphology). Consider how you have chosen to represent yourself on social media – why have you chosen to present yourself with specific images and language choices? Is there anything you would not share on social media? Why / why not? Write up an analysis of your self-representation.

3) Gender

Identify some advertising aimed at men, and some aimed at women. Are there any differences in the way each advert uses language? What does this suggest about how gender is being represented in the text? Are there any differences if you repeat the exercise for adverts aimed at different age groups, for example teens or someone who is retired?

4) Spoken language

- Research non-fluency features of speech
- Research prosody and paralinguistics – how do non-verbal elements of speech such as pitch, volume and intonation contribute towards shaping meanings?

5) History of language

Research the history and development of the English language, and produce a mini guide for an A level student. The resources on the British library website are a good place to start: [www.bl.uk](http://www.bl.uk)

6) Dialect, Idiolect, Sociolect and Accent

- Create a list of words which are specific to the geographical area you come from.
- Make a list of words which are specific to a social group you identify with (this could be based on age, interests, hobbies etc).
- Accent (this is not the words we use, but the way in which we pronounce them). People can have strong reactions to accents. List as many different types of accent you can think of, and any stereotypes that might be associated with these.

### **Texts to purchase**

*ISBN numbers given are for editions of texts which will be used in examinations. We recommend purchasing the same edition for your own study for ease of navigating texts in the exam.*

#### **Examined set texts:**

*Othello* by William Shakespeare, ISBN 9 781107 615595

*The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood, ISBN 9780099 740919

*The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, ISBN 9 78014 182636

AQA 'Remembered Places' (Paris) and 'Poetic Voices' (Seamus Heaney) anthologies will be provided by the exam board.

#### **Also required:**

*English Language and Literature A/AS Level for AQA Student Book* by Marco Giovanelli, Andrea Macrae and Felicity Titjen, ISBN 1107465664

#### **Study guides:**

York Notes – available for *Othello*, *The Great Gatsby* and *The Handmaid's Tale*

*A Critical Study Guide for the AQA AS and A Level English Language and Literature Paris Anthology* by M Parks, ISBN 978-1978039100