

YEAR 11: AUTUMN

Welcome to our Autumn term Curriculum Letter. There are plenty of extra-curricular activities for students to get involved in this half term and many departments will be running exciting activities.

More general information about the curriculum can be found here.

The departments that teach your child have contributed below to let you know what students will be studying this term.

ART

Year 11 are continuing their individual responses to the theme of 'Local Environment', as a natural follow-on from their project on the work of the St. Ives artists in Year 10. Pupils will continue to investigate this theme and produce a final piece in their Year 11 Mock Exam in early December. Pupils will then put the final touches to their entire coursework up to Christmas and will have completed this component, which accounts for 60% of the GCSE qualification by the start of the Spring Term in January.

BUSINESS STUDIES

Year 11 have completed Topic 2.1, Growing the Business, and Topic 2.2, Making Marketing Decisions. They have also just finished their mock exams, and we will now use the results to target revision ahead of the summer.

DRAMA

This term, Year 11 students will continue to develop their understanding of their GCSE set text, Things I Know to Be True, exploring its characters, relationships, themes and key moments in greater depth. Through practical exploration and discussion, students will consider how performance choices such as voice, movement, characterisation and staging can communicate meaning and bring the play to life. They will continue to develop the confidence and analytical skills needed to explain and justify their creative decisions.

Alongside their set text work, students will begin selecting and developing pieces for their examiner assessment. They will work collaboratively to explore different performance material, making thoughtful decisions about character, staging and performance style. Rehearsals will focus on refining performances, responding to feedback and developing the discipline, focus and independence required to present their strongest work for assessment.

Finally, Year 11 students will have the opportunity to visit the theatre to see a performance of A Christmas Carol. This live theatre experience will provide valuable inspiration and be a practical example to draw upon when preparing for the live theatre question in their GCSE Drama exam. In class, students will make detailed observations about performance and production choices and learn how to evaluate acting skills comprehensively.

ENGLISH

In Year 11, pupils begin by revisiting Language skills, developing their analysis and comparison of non-fiction texts.

Students will also study their Modern Times text for Literature: the play Leave Taking by Winsome Pinnock. The text explores themes such as race, gender, identity, belonging and families in modern Britain and will link to the identity themed poems from the Power and Conflict Poetry anthology.

In their Autumn mock series, students will sit a Language Paper 2 Exam.

GEOGRAPHY

Year 11 have been completing their UK Physical Systems topic, exploring Rivers and Coasts. A highlight has been our Dawlish Warren fieldwork where students completed their enquiry into the coastal management and evaluated the success of their results ready for paper 3. Students are moving on to the Changing Economic World topic where we will be exploring themes around global development, analysing data to explore trends and exploring the causes and solutions to the development gap. Students have also been hard at work preparing for their mock exams and we will be providing feedback and reflection on these to help students move forward.

HISTORY

During the second part of the Autumn term and into the new year , students will continue their study of Germany 1918-39, focusing on the rise and development of Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler.

We will begin by examining Hitler's rise to power to 1933 and how he consolidated his position as dictator between 1933 and 1934. Students will then explore what life was like in Nazi Germany, considering the experiences of different groups, including women, young people, minorities and, in particular, the Jewish community.

We will investigate how the Nazis maintained control through repression, including the role of the Gestapo, and the use of propaganda to influence public opinion. This will include a closer look at the 1936 Berlin Olympics and how they were used to promote Nazi Germany.

Students will also study the Nazi economy, changes in employment and how Germany was increasingly prepared for war. Finally, we will examine opposition to the Nazi regime, including resistance from the Church, young people and political groups.

Alongside developing their historical knowledge, students will continue to develop their source analysis skills, focusing on making inferences and evaluating the usefulness of historical sources. They will also explore why and how historical interpretations differ, developing their ability to analyse and explain the extent to which they agree with different interpretations through 16-mark extended writing questions.

MATHEMATICS

Students will develop advanced algebraic skills by working with formulae, algebraic fractions, surds, functions and proof. They will learn to rearrange increasingly complex formulae, manipulate and solve equations involving algebraic fractions, simplify expressions using factorisation, and work confidently with rational and irrational numbers. Students will also explore algebraic proof, using logical reasoning to demonstrate mathematical results. Building on their understanding of algebra, they will be introduced to function notation, including composite and inverse functions, and investigate how functions can be represented and transformed graphically. Through translating, reflecting and stretching graphs, students will deepen their understanding of the connections between algebraic expressions and graphical representations. Throughout this unit, students will strengthen their mathematical fluency, reasoning and problem-solving skills while preparing for more advanced study at GCSE and beyond.

MFL: FRENCH

This half term, Year 11 students will complete their mock GCSE exams and subsequently focus on reviewing and responding to their papers as they continue their preparation for their final GCSE exams. Pupils will receive detailed feedback on their papers and will have opportunities to reflect on their strengths and identify areas for improvement.

As part of this process, students will complete a full GCSE listening, reading and writing paper under examination conditions. This will help them develop confidence, improve examination technique and gain valuable experience of managing the demands of each paper.

Following the mock examination period, students will begin the GCSE topic of School, developing the language needed to discuss school life, subjects, teachers, rules and future educational plans.

Throughout the half term, students will continue to consolidate key GCSE vocabulary and grammar, with a focus on improving accuracy, fluency and communication skills across all four language skills.

MFL: SPANISH

This half term, Year 11 students will complete their mock GCSE exams and subsequently focus on reviewing and responding to their papers as they continue their preparation for their final GCSE exams. Pupils will receive detailed feedback on their papers and will have opportunities to reflect on their strengths and identify areas for improvement.

As part of this process, students will complete a full GCSE listening, reading and writing paper under examination conditions. This will help them develop confidence, improve examination technique and gain valuable experience of managing the demands of each paper.

Following the mock examination period, students will begin the GCSE topic of ‘my local area’, developing the language needed to discuss pros and cons of your local area and the environment.

Throughout the half term, students will continue to consolidate key GCSE vocabulary and grammar, with a focus on improving accuracy, fluency and communication skills across all four language skills.

MUSIC

Year 11s will be working towards their final performances, completing their Free composition, and continuing to develop their listening and appraising skills through listening tasks and analysis of their Beethoven set work.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Our Year 11 GCSE PE pupils have continued to build upon their knowledge and understanding as they progress through the final year of their examination course, with a particular focus on the psychological factors that influence sporting performance.

Throughout the Autumn Term, pupils have explored skill classification, goal setting, information processing, guidance and feedback, developing their understanding of how performers learn, develop and refine sporting skills. They have also investigated mental preparation for sport, considering how psychological strategies can help athletes manage anxiety, improve concentration and optimise performance in competitive situations.

Year 11 have begun working on their Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) written coursework, identifying areas for improvement and refining their analysis and evaluation of sporting performance.

As pupils approach their upcoming Year 11 mock examinations, there has also been an increased emphasis on revision, retrieval practice and exam technique.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Following their mock examinations, students will continue their study of Relationships and Families, exploring a range of religious and non-religious perspectives on topics such as marriage, family life, contraception, adultery and sex before marriage. Alongside consolidating their subject knowledge, they will refine their examination technique through regular practice of short-answer and extended evaluative questions in preparation for their GCSE examinations.

Year 12 Religious Studies Students are continuing their study of Buddhism, Philosophy of Religion and Ethics, developing the knowledge and evaluative skills required for A Level success. In Buddhism, they will recap key foundations of the course, including the historical Buddha, the Patimokkha and its role within the Theravada tradition, and the Four Parajikas, before moving on to the Three Lakshanas and the concepts of dependent origination (pratityasamutpada), karma and rebirth. In Philosophy of Religion, students will explore key arguments for the existence of God, including the cosmological and ontological arguments, while developing their skills in analysis and evaluation. In Ethics, students will study Utilitarianism and Situation Ethics, applying these theories to contemporary issues such as animal testing, nuclear deterrence and modern relationships. Through discussion, debate and essay writing, students will strengthen their ability to construct well-reasoned and critical arguments.

SCIENCE

Biology:

We started this half term with mock exams. After feedback, the students will carry on with their topic of homeostasis - how the body maintains a constant internal environment. This includes body temperature, blood glucose levels, water, salts and urea. Depending on time, we hope to start inheritance and will be initiating the unit with lessons on sexual and asexual reproduction.

Chemistry:

Combined - Students will be studying reversible reactions and how conditions of equilibrium can be reached. The factors that affect the position of equilibrium will be explored; an application of this topic important for operating conditions in industrial processes. Students will then move onto studying environmental chemistry, including, the evolution of the atmosphere and the impact of burning fossil fuels for the environment today and the future.

Triple - Students will be studying environmental chemistry, including, the evolution of the atmosphere and the impact of burning fossil fuels for the environment today and the future. There will be a focus on petrochemicals and refining. Students will then study other organic chemicals, including, carboxylic acids; polymers and biomolecules, for example, amino acids and DNA.

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Physics:

Combined - This term, Year 11 students will begin by studying Forces and Motion, focusing on Newton's laws of motion and completing the compulsory GCSE practical investigating Newton's Second Law. This will be followed by Waves, where students will explore wave properties and complete another compulsory GCSE practical to determine the speed of waves using a vibrating string and a ripple tank. Students will also sit a mock examination in November, providing an important opportunity to practise exam techniques, identify areas for improvement and prepare for their final GCSE Physics exams.

Triple - This term, Year 11 students will complete the units of Forces and Motion, Pressure in Fluids, and Moments before moving on to Waves and Electromagnetic Waves. They will complete the compulsory GCSE practical investigating Newton's Second Law and the practicals measuring wave speed using a vibrating string and a ripple tank. Students will also sit a mock examination in November to assess their progress and help them prepare for their final GCSE Physics exams. Some groups may also begin the Using Waves unit before Christmas.