

Curriculum Intent: Disciplinary Literacy KS4 2025 - 2026

Disciplinary Literacy is fundamental to developing the strong literacy skills that are vital to success at school and beyond.
Disciplinary Literacy supports academic achievement across the whole curriculum and aims to equip our pupils with the literacy skills that are specific to each discipline, enabling them to access, interpret and produce subject-specific texts with increasing independence and sophistication.

Through carefully planned and sequenced teaching, pupils will develop:

Reading skills that enable them to navigate and interpret a range of complex texts, extracting meaning, evaluating evidence and understanding discipline-specific vocabulary and conventions.

Writing skills that reflect the demands of each subject, including extended writing, analytical responses and technical accuracy.

Oracy and listening skills to articulate understanding, justify opinions and engage in structured academic dialogue

Disciplinary thinking that encourages inquiry, evidence-based reasoning and subject-specific argumentation

Disciplinary literacy equips pupils with the tools they need to understand, question, and produce knowledge in each subject area.

By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils should have developed the Disciplinary Literacy skills—reading, vocabulary, and writing—required to access and succeed in subject-specific learning, functional qualifications and life beyond school, including further education or employment.

		Vocabulary		Reading		Writing	
		Key Stage 4 Skills Literacy	Key Stage 4 Knowledge	Key Stage 4 Skills	Key Stage 4 Knowledge	Key Stage 4 Skills	Key Stage 4 Knowledge
Half term 1	Descriptive Writing To be able to paint a picture with words of a person, place or item with a focus on the audience To include: Poetry Journal writing Diary Writing Description of nature, holidays, events Travel Guide Fictional plays and stories	Understanding and Applying Word Meanings in Context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be able to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words using: Context clues in the sentence or passage Morphology eg: understanding prefixes like <i>pre-</i>, <i>anti-</i>, <i>sub-</i>, and suffixes like <i>-tion</i>, <i>-ous</i>, <i>-able</i> Word families and roots eg. <i>photo</i> → <i>photograph</i>, <i>photosynthesis</i> 	Word Meaning and Usage Pupils should know: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meanings of words including words with multiple meanings How to use words accurately in context - spoken and written The difference between literal and figurative language eg: <i>stormed out</i> vs. <i>a storm is coming</i> How to identify and understand connotation and nuance eg: <i>slim</i> vs. <i>skinny</i> 	Comprehension and Interpretation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand explicit information Infer implicit meanings eg: read between the lines Identify and interpret themes, ideas, and perspectives Summarise information from one or more texts 	Literary Knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Genres and forms eg: novel, play, poem, short story, nonfiction Literary terminology – such as metaphor, simile, personification, irony, foreshadowing, motif, structure, narrative voice Text structure – how texts are organised eg: exposition, climax, resolution Character, setting, and plot – understanding how these are constructed and developed. Theme – understanding recurring ideas eg: power, identity, conflict, prejudice 	Writing for Audience and Purpose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapt tone, style, and register for different contexts eg: formal letter vs creative story Understand and use conventions of different text types eg: speeches, articles, reviews, letters, narratives Write with a clear purpose eg: to argue, persuade, inform, explain, describe, entertain 	Knowledge of Purpose, Audience, and Register <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding how to adapt tone, formality, and style depending on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose - to persuade, inform, argue, describe, explain, narrate, etc Audience eg: peers, teachers, the public Form eg: letter, article, speech, narrative, review
		Using Subject-Specific and Academic Vocabulary Accurately <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and use technical vocabulary relevant to each subject eg. <i>hypothesis</i> in science, <i>equilibrium</i> in economics Use Tier 2 academic vocabulary confidently in writing and speech (e.g. <i>evaluate</i>, <i>interpret</i>, <i>justify</i>, <i>infer</i>, <i>contrast</i>) 	Morphology and Word Formation Pupils should understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prefixes eg: <i>anti-</i>, <i>sub-</i>, <i>re-</i>, <i>dis-</i>) and how they change meaning. Suffixes eg: <i>-tion</i>, <i>-ive</i>, <i>-ous</i>, <i>-able</i>) and how they affect word class (noun, verb, adjective). Root words eg: <i>bio</i>, <i>graph</i>, <i>spect</i>) and how they help in decoding unfamiliar vocabulary. How compound and blended words are formed eg: <i>eyewitness</i>, <i>brunch</i> 	Critical Reading and Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse how writers use language, form, and structure to achieve effects. Evaluate the impact of these choices on the reader Compare texts critically, considering viewpoints and techniques Support views with textual evidence and close analysis 	Writer's Craft <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language choices – how writers use figurative language, tone, diction, and syntax for effect Structure and form – how the organisation of a text contributes to its meaning eg: use of stanzas, acts, chapters, narrative perspective Purpose and audience – recognising why a text was written and for whom 	Content and Organisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and structure writing logically to include strong openings, clear progression, effective conclusions Use paragraphs to develop and link ideas. Present a coherent line of thought or argument especially in discursive or persuasive writing Use cohesive devices eg: connectives, repetition for effect, reference chains, to link ideas and guide the reader 	Text Type and Genre Conventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of structural and language conventions for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persuasive writing eg: rhetorical questions, repetition, emotive language Narrative writing eg: plot structure, character development, setting Descriptive writing eg: sensory detail, figurative language) Informative/explanatory writing eg: clarity, logical order, headings Awareness of genre expectations eg: horror, dystopia, realism
	Selecting Vocabulary for Purpose, Audience, and Tone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose precise, formal, or technical language where appropriate. Adjust vocabulary for different writing tasks eg. persuasive writing vs 	Etymology and Word Origins	Understanding Authorial Intent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and evaluate writers' purposes, viewpoints, and attitudes. Recognise bias, tone, and narrative voice Reflect on the context of texts and how this shapes meaning 	Contextual Knowledge	Language Use and Craft <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a varied and ambitious vocabulary. Select and use figurative language where appropriate eg: metaphor, simile, 	Grammar and Syntax	

Half term 2	<p>Persuasive Writing To be able to convince the audience of a position or a belief, using opinions and biases, justifications and reasons</p> <p>To include: Cover letters Newspaper/Magazine Articles Letters of complaint Reviews Letters of Recommendation Advertisements</p>	<p>analytical essays vs creative writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid vague or informal language in academic writing <p>Confident Use of Vocabulary in Speaking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use appropriate vocabulary in spoken discussions, presentations, debates, or oral assessments Articulate thoughts clearly with the right vocabulary to back up arguments or points of view <p>Understanding Figurative and Nuanced Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise figurative language, idioms, and connotation Understand subtle distinctions between words eg: <i>argue</i> vs <i>suggest</i>, <i>forceful</i> vs <i>assertive</i> <p>Developing a Richer Vocabulary through Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be exposed to and engage with, challenging texts Use reading to absorb vocabulary patterns and internalise usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of Latin and Greek roots (e.g. <i>auto</i> = <i>self</i>, <i>tele</i> = <i>distance</i>, <i>chron</i> = <i>time</i>). Understanding how language has evolved, particularly in English Literature texts or historical documents <p>Tiered Vocabulary Pupils need to know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tier 2 words – High-utility academic vocabulary used across subjects eg: <i>evaluate</i>, <i>analyse</i>, <i>synthesize</i>, <i>contrast</i> Tier 3 words – Technical, subject-specific vocabulary eg: <i>mitosis</i>, <i>protagonist</i>, <i>inflation</i>, <i>theorem</i> When and how to use these types of vocabulary appropriately in different contexts <p>Grammatical Function of Words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How the same word can function as different word classes eg: <i>record</i> as a noun vs. <i>record</i> as a verb How to modify vocabulary for tense, number, and degree eg: <i>happy</i> → <i>happier</i> → <i>happiest</i> <p>Academic and Disciplinary Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and use key command words in exam questions eg: <i>compare</i>, <i>describe</i>, <i>explain</i>, <i>discuss</i>, <i>justify</i> Know how to interpret and produce vocabulary in extended responses, essays, reports, and presentations <p>Language and Register</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know how to choose vocabulary based on formality, audience, and purpose eg: <i>terminate employment</i> (formal) vs <i>got fired</i> (informal) Recognise and use tone-appropriate vocabulary in creative writing or persuasive argument 	<p>Use of Textual References</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed and explain relevant quotations fluently. Use subject-specific vocabulary eg: metaphor, juxtaposition, tone, irony) to discuss effect and meaning <p>Range of Texts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils should be comfortable reading and responding to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19th-century fiction eg: Dickens, Brontë Modern prose or drama Shakespearean texts Poetry (including comparison across poems) Non-fiction texts, including journalism, speeches, and autobiographies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historical, cultural, and social context eg: knowing about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victorian society for 19th-century texts World War I/II for certain poems or prose Gender roles in Shakespeare's time The 1930s Depression for <i>Of Mice and Men</i> Author background – understanding how an author's life or beliefs may influence their work <p>Comparative Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of how themes, characters, and ideas are presented differently across texts. Understanding conventions of time periods and genres eg: Gothic fiction, war poetry, dystopian literature <p>Non-fiction Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Familiarity with non-fiction forms – speeches, letters, articles, autobiographies. Knowledge of how rhetorical devices eg: repetition, rhetorical questions, emotive language) are used to persuade or inform <p>Vocabulary and Inference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong vocabulary base to support comprehension Knowledge of word roots, prefixes/suffixes, and language etymology to unlock meaning Ability to infer meaning from context using prior knowledge 	<p>personification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a range of sentence structures for clarity and effect. Create and control tone, mood, and voice (especially in narrative and descriptive writing). Show an awareness of the reader's response and shape language accordingly <p>Technical Accuracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write using accurate spelling, including of complex or irregular words Use correct punctuation, including full stops, commas, apostrophes, speech marks, colons, and semi-colons Apply accurate grammar, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject-verb agreement Tense consistency Correct use of pronouns Avoidance of sentence fragments or run-ons <p>Editing and Proofreading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-read work to check for clarity, sense, and errors Edit to improve structure, precision, vocabulary, and accuracy Proofread for spelling, punctuation, and grammar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parts of speech - nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc Sentence types and functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simple, compound, and complex sentences Use of fragments and varied sentence openers for effect Verb tenses - past, present, perfect, progressive etc and when to use them Subject-verb agreement, correct pronoun use, and grammatical consistency <p>Language and Literary Devices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to use and identify figurative language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simile, metaphor, personification, onomatopoeia Use of rhetorical devices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repetition, rule of three, emotive language, hyperbole, statistics, direct address Awareness of tone and voice and how these affect the reader <p>Spelling, Punctuation and Capitalisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of spelling rules and patterns, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common homophones and commonly confused words Prefixes and suffixes eg: un-, dis-, -tion, -able Correct use of punctuation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full stops, commas, apostrophes, colons, semi-colons, question and exclamation marks Capital letters used appropriately for names, places, titles, and sentence openings <p>Writing Process Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding of the importance of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Planning: generating ideas and structuring writing ❖ Drafting: getting ideas down and improving clarity ❖ Editing: refining vocabulary, sentence structure, and overall flow ❖ Proofreading: checking grammar, punctuation, and spelling <p>Vocabulary Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of Tier 2 vocabulary - precise, academic, and
Half term 3	<p>Narrative Writing To be able to construct and communicate a story, complete with characters, conflict and settings</p> <p>To include: Novels/novellas Poetry/poems Short stories Anecdotes</p>						

Half term 4

Expository Writing

To be able to explain a concept, imparting information to a wider audience, focussing on the facts of the topic including statistics and evidence

To include:

- Textbooks
- How to articles
- Step by step guides
- Recipes

Half term 5

Descriptive Writing

To be able to paint a picture with words of a person, place or item with a focus on the audience

To include:

- Poetry
- Journal writing
- Diary Writing
- Description of nature, holidays, events
- Travel Guide
- Fictional plays and stories

transferable words

- Understanding of connotation and nuance in word choice
- Awareness of formal vs informal vocabulary and when to use each

Persuasive Writing

To be able to convince the audience of a position or a belief, using opinions and biases, justifications and reasons

To include:

- Cover letters
- Newspaper/Magazine Articles
- Letters of complaint
- Reviews
- Letters of Recommendation
- Advertisements