

English Department:

Preparing for A-level English Language:






What is A-level English Language?


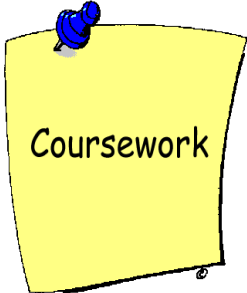
- English Language is the study and understanding of English. It allows you to look at how our use of language and the way we communicate differs depending of context e.g., the age or gender of who we are addressing.
- We will be looking at and analysing different types of data – including spoken transcripts and written non-fiction texts. From this analysis, we will make judgements about what we can infer from both the writer/speaker and the audience.
- You will also look at how English Language has changed – why is that we do not still speak the same way as Shakespeare or Chaucer and how the English Language has changed and adapted overtime?

What Will You Be Studying?



Exam Board: Edexcel

Module:	Percentage of Grade:	Summary:	
Individual Variation	17.5% of A-level	You will explore how language choices change based on a person's identity. You will analyse an individual's language, spoken or written, and work out how social and geographical factors such as age, gender or ethnicity have affected this person's use of language.	
Variation Over Time	17.5% of A-level	You will explore how the English language has changed from c1550 to the present day, considering what has altered and changed the way we use language throughout history. You will compare one modern text and one older text, looking at the influence of cultural, social, political and technological influences that have changed English over time.	
Child Language	20% of A-level	How do children learn how to speak? This is what we will be considering in this module. You will look at the way's speech develops as the child grows up and what factors help that child to continue to learn. You will be asked to analyse both written and spoken data, applying the theories of children's language development to improve understanding.	
Investigating Language	25% of A-level	Investigating Language will give you an opportunity to do your own individual research into an area of your choice. You can pick from several topics to research such as; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global English 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language and Journalism • Language and Power • Language and Gender Identity • Or, Regional Language Variation. <p>This module is a pre-release, meaning you will get a sub-topic to pick from four months before your exam.</p>	
Coursework : Crafting Language	20% of A-level	<p>For coursework, you will be asked to complete the two following assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment 1: two pieces of original writing from the same genre, differentiated by function and/or audience (1500-2000 words) • Assignment 2: one commentary, reflecting on the two pieces they have produced and making connections with their research (1000 words). 	

Key Terms You Should Learn:

Mode: What type of text is it?

Key word-Mode

E.g. Is it a spoken mode – just recorded speech? Or written?

Written modes can be subdivided further into categories such as newspapers, letters, magazines, autobiographies etc. Whereas the mode of spoken language can be subdivided into causal conversations, interviews, public speeches and so on.

For example:



The mode of this text would be a formal letter.

Field: What is the text about?

Key word: Field

The field of a text are the words used in a text relating to the subject matter (e.g. a medical journal would be in the field of medicine, an article about football would be in the field of sport).

For example:



ELIZABETH SMITH'S Beauty

ELIZABETH SMITH'S GUIDE TO

Beauty Treatments & Me Time

When you become pregnant you have no idea how much your life will change. All your friends tell you that you will never sleep again or have 2 minutes to yourself. I promise it's not that bad and the joys of children far outweigh the lack of sleep!

Although everything is about the babies I strongly believe you still need a little 'me time' and to feel good about yourself. It's all too easy for you to forget about yourself. After a while you come to accept that most of your tops end up with food or snot on them within 5 minutes of wearing them. My top tip is to wear your dressing gown over the top of your clothes up until leaving the house. At least once a month I advise you to have some time just for you to recharge the batteries and don't feel guilty about it! If you don't you will end up burning out and take longer to recover. At my beauty salon in Norwich I concentrate on doing low maintenance treatments, which save you time and last a good amount of time. The eye-lash extensions are a huge passion of mine and I am always studying on how to create the perfect look. The semi-permanent eye-lash extensions are individually bonded one by one to your natural lashes, so when you lose one natural lash it will only have one extension on it. These need infills every 3 weeks for the new natural lashes growing through. These are fab for busy Mums who have no idea how to apply make-up in the morning. You wake up looking like you have perfect mascara on without the stress of applying it in the car mirror! These really do make you feel like a million dollars I promise and you get to have a rest while I am applying them. I have mine quite short and full, so perfect for everyday without the drag queen look at the school gate.

www.elizabethsmithbeauty.co.uk
07834785821

28 | Bump, baby & Toddler | norfolk.bump.co.uk | Norfolk Edition

The field of this text would be the field of beauty – as the article is about beauty treatments.

Function: Why was the text produced?

Key word: Function

What is the intended purpose of the text? Language might have been used to persuade, inform, advise or entertain the reader/audience. The function of a text is vital to our understanding of the language used.

For example:



The poster is a vertical rectangular sheet with a black background. At the top left is the HM Government logo, and at the top right is the NHS logo. The main title 'Coronavirus' is in large green letters, followed by 'Isolate your household' and 'Stay at home' in white. Below this, a paragraph in white text states: 'If you or anyone in your household has a high temperature or a new and continuous cough – even if it's mild'. To the right of this text is a small, detailed illustration of a coronavirus particle. Below the paragraph is a list of instructions, each preceded by a green checkmark icon. The first instruction says 'Everyone in your household must stay at home for 14 days and keep away from others.' The second, preceded by a red 'X' icon, says 'DO NOT go to your GP or hospital.' The third says 'Go to NHS.UK to check your symptoms and follow the specialist medical advice. Only call NHS 111 if you can't get online or your symptoms worsen.' The fourth says 'Protect older people and those with existing health conditions by avoiding contact.' Below the list, it says 'Find out how to isolate your household at nhs.uk/coronavirus'. On the right side of the poster, there is a large, detailed illustration of a coronavirus particle. At the bottom left, there is a small green box with white text that reads 'CORONAVIRUS PROTECT YOURSELF OTHERS & THE NHS'.

HM Government

NHS

Coronavirus

Isolate your household

Stay at home

If you or anyone in your household has a high temperature or a new and continuous cough – even if it's mild

- ✓ Everyone in your household must **stay at home** for 14 days and keep away from others.
- ✗ **DO NOT** go to your GP or hospital.
- ✓ **Go to NHS.UK** to check your symptoms and follow the specialist medical advice. Only call NHS 111 if you can't get online or your symptoms worsen.
- ✓ **Protect** older people and those with existing health conditions by avoiding contact.

Find out how to isolate your household at nhs.uk/coronavirus

CORONAVIRUS
PROTECT YOURSELF OTHERS & THE NHS

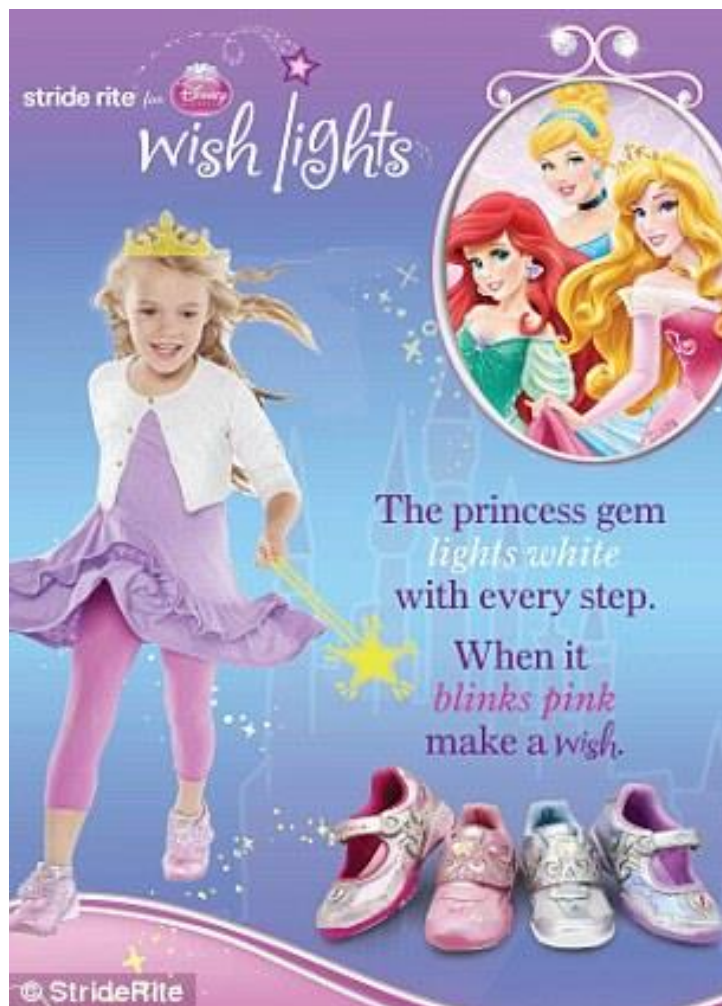
The function of this text is to inform the reader about how they can prevent the spread of Coronavirus and to persuade them to stay home.

Audience: Who produced it? For whom is it produced?

Key word: Audience

Think about who wrote the text and what is their relationship like between the intended audience. Who has this text been written for and how does this change our understanding?

For example:



The audience of this text is clearly female children.

Task One:

You have been given a range of non-fiction texts, your job is to read through them and apply some of the key terminology that you have just learnt.



You should:

1. Read through the following texts
2. Identify the Mode, Field, Function and Audience for each one.
3. Answer the questions provided.
4. After you have finished, think about the similarities and differences between the texts provided

Text 1: From Newsround online.

Prime Minister announces 2024 UK general election

23 May



On Wednesday, the prime minister announced the date of the next general election **Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has announced that the next UK general election will be held on 4 July.**

He made the announcement in a press conference outside 10 Downing Street on Wednesday afternoon.

Parliament will be dissolved on Thursday 30 May and the current Members of Parliament go back to being ordinary members of the public and many have to try to get elected again.

A general election is when adults vote for who they want to represent them in the UK parliament.

Read on to find out how general elections work in the United Kingdom.

What is a general election?

A general election is when voters decide who their members of parliament, known as MPs, will be.

Adults in the UK can vote for their local MP; someone they want to represent their local area in parliament.

When someone **stands for election** in a general election, it means they are putting themselves forward to be elected as an MP.

Most people who stand for election will choose to represent a **political party**. That's a group of people who all believe in a similar cause.

How is a general election called?



A general election must be called every five years
It is usually up to the prime minister to decide when a general election should be called.

Every five years, there has to be a general election.

Sometimes, the Prime Minister can also call an election earlier than that.

The Conservatives won the last election in December 2019, which means the next general election had to take place by January 2025.

What happens after a general election is called?



Mr Sunak has visited the King to ask if he can dissolve parliament
Parliament has to be ended - or dissolved - 25 working days before a general election takes place.

The current prime minister must go and visit the King to ask him to dissolve parliament. That usually starts the general election campaign.

Once this has happened, MPs are no longer MPs and all official parliamentary business stops.

But the current prime minister and their government ministers stay in their jobs until a new parliament is voted for.

Who can vote in a general election?



Adults can vote for who they want to represent them in parliament at polling stations
Only adults - people aged 18 and over - can vote in a general election.

You need to register to vote to be allowed to vote in a general election.

There are three ways an adult can vote - in person at a polling station, by post or by applying to have someone vote on your behalf which is called voting by proxy.

Adults also need to show a form of ID at polling stations to be allowed to vote.

How do you win a general election?



The UK is divided into 650 areas, called constituencies.

Each constituency gets their own MP, who represents their area in parliament.

The clearest way of winning an election is by getting something called a majority.

If a political party gets at least 326 MPs elected - more than half of all MPs in parliament - then they have a **majority** and can form a government.

Some political parties decide to join up with similar ones to get a majority together.
This is called a coalition.

If no one party gets a majority, then there's a **hung parliament**.

This means no official parliament has been announced yet, and politicians then go into talks, with the leading party usually trying to make agreements with other ones to form an alliance.

Mode- What type of text is this?

Field – What is the subject matter?

Function- Why has this been written?

Audience: Who is the intended audience?

Extension Questions:

- 1. Where can we see examples of the language being adapted to suit the audience?**
- 2. Do you think the language used is formal or informal? Where can you find evidence to back this up?**

Challenge: Rewrite a paragraph changing the audience an education adult. Think about how we would expect the language to change.

Text 2: Taken from online, feminist blog 'The F-word'

Not little at all

Sophie Perry 16 January 2020

Sophie Perry joins the standing ovation for Gerwig's new adaption of Little Women

Greta Gerwig's directorial solo *Lady Bird* saw her explore the complexities of mother-daughter relationships in all their messy, painful and loving glory. She returns with *Little Women*, a heartfelt, funny and moving film which again focuses on the importance of female-driven relationships. This time it is centered on the sisterhood between Louisa May Alcott's famous March sisters: Jo (Saoirse Ronan), Meg (Emma Watson), Amy (Florence Pugh) and Beth (Eliza Scanlen). Laura Dern and Meryl Streep also appear playing the supporting roles of Marmee and Aunt March, with actor-of-the-moment Timothée Chalamet portraying Theodore 'Laurie' Laurence.

Gerwig's vision plays with narrative, switching between the past and the present of the March family. For the audience this non-linear structure reminds us of the changes we all feel as we grow and develop from the children, we were to the adults we want to be

Set among the golden leaves and open, rolling fields of a just post-Civil War New England, Gerwig's *Little Women* is a modern take on the classic novel. In a similar way to Armando Iannucci's *The Personal History of David Copperfield* – whose colour-blind casting process even goes the extra mile – Gerwig's fresh angle on a classic tale speaks to audiences in new, exciting and relatable ways. Unlike other versions of *Little Women* (and there have been many) Gerwig's vision plays with narrative, switching between the past and the present of the March family. Here, Gerwig is able to highlight the changes that happen for the March sisters between childhood, adolescence and womanhood. For the audience this non-linear structure reminds us of the changes we all feel as we grow and develop from the children we were to the adults we want to be.

The choice particularly showcases Jo's development. From a hot-tempered girl with ink stains on her fingers who aspires to be a writer at the beginning of the film, she becomes a published author by the end. This evolution of achievement is put at the foreground of the story whereas Jo's arc of falling in love with Friedrich Bhaer (Louis Garrel) is only a side plot. This is purposeful and is true to the characters; a contemporary way of framing a classic story. The book may be feminist in many ways, but it was still written in a time when women were often confined to the domestic sphere.

In this way, the women of *Little Women* don't seem little nor unimportant at all. They are bold, caring, maternal, sensitive and utterly individual. Each character is given their own time to grow during the film, so much so that I still feel a jolt of sadness when Beth inevitably dies. A tragic moment that you might not necessarily expect in the narrative

juxtaposed as it is by such happiness – that is if you had completely avoided the novel, the other adaptations and the hilarious *Friends* episode where [Joey reads *Little Women*](#).

Gerwig's careful treatment of each March sister means that even the character of Meg, who is often written off for her vanity, supposedly lacking independence and conforming to the constricting feminine ideals of the time, is given room to grow and justify her choices. On the surface, Meg longs for luxury and wealth, unlike her sisters who strive to be famed writers and painters. But Meg's desire is actually for safety, a home, a husband and children – all of which she finds when she marries John Brooke (James Norton). Her choice to marry John is met with rebuke from Jo – a staunch opponent of marriage – who sees it as stealing Meg away from the family; a justified perspective given that marriage was traditionally an exchange of women as property, from the household of the father to the household of the husband.

But Gerwig frames Meg's marriage to John as something she wants as much as he does: a marriage of equals. "Just because my dreams are different to yours, does not mean they are any less important", Meg explains when Jo tries to persuade her from going through with the wedding and pursue an acting career. Though the film never implies as much, this still raises a question of whether the internalised misogyny of the time [played a hand in shaping Meg's life goals](#). It would have been an interesting nuance to explore, all the more so since there's no getting around the fact that Jo's arc remains the most central and revolutionary one.

I'm particularly impressed with Ronan as Jo and Chalamet as Laurie. Previously together in Gerwig's *Lady Bird* the two have a natural chemistry that bubbles on the screen. Hilarious, loving, longing: all of these complex emotions simmer in just a second of screen time. Their characters and relationship are detailed and offer lovely moments even in the background of scenes. Overall, *Little Women* is a stellar sophomore outing for Gerwig, solidifying her as a tour de force in the film industry. She is a voice who can tell original stories, as in *Lady Bird*, and retell classics, such as here in *Little Women*. Her take on Alcott's tale is as smart as it is sensitive; a contemporary story that women can watch with pride for both themselves and the women around them.

As Jo would put it, we are "sick of people saying love is all a woman is fit for".

Mode- What type of text is this?

Field – What is the subject matter?

Function- Why has this been written?

Audience: Who is the intended audience?

Text 3: Transcript of a speech by Michelle Obama:

My goodness! You guys are fired up!

So I'm going to get a little serious here, because I think we can all agree that this has been a rough week in an already rough election. This week has been particularly interesting for me personally because it has been a week of profound contrast.

See, on Tuesday, at the White House, we celebrated the International Day of the Girl and Let Girls Learn, and it was a wonderful celebration. It was the last event that I'm going to be doing as first lady for Let Girls Learn. And I had the pleasure of spending hours talking to some of the most amazing young women you will ever meet, young girls here in the US and all around the world. And we talked about their hopes and their dreams. We talked about their aspirations. See, because many of these girls have faced unthinkable obstacles just to attend school, jeopardizing their personal safety, their freedom, risking the rejection of their families and communities.

So I thought it would be important to remind these young women how valuable and precious they are. I wanted them to understand that the measure of any society is how it treats its women and girls. And I told them that they deserve to be treated with dignity and respect, and I told them that they should disregard anyone who demeans or devalues them, and that they should make their voices heard in the world. And I walked away feeling so inspired, just like I'm inspired by all the young people here – and I was so uplifted by these girls. That was Tuesday.

And now, here I am, out on the campaign trail in an election where we have consistently been hearing hurtful, hateful language about women – language that has been painful for so many of us, not just as women, but as parents trying to protect our children and raise them to be caring, respectful adults, and as citizens who think that our nation's leaders should meet basic standards of human decency.

The fact is that in this election, we have a candidate for president of the United States who, over the course of his lifetime and the course of this campaign, has said things about women that are so shocking, so demeaning that I simply will not repeat anything here today. And last week, we saw this candidate actually bragging about sexually assaulting women. And I can't believe that I'm saying that a candidate for president of the United States has bragged about sexually assaulting women.

And I have to tell you that I can't stop thinking about this. It has shaken me to my core in a way that I couldn't have predicted. So while I'd love nothing more than to pretend like this isn't happening, and to come out here and do my normal campaign speech, it would be dishonest and disingenuous of me to just move on to the next thing like this was all just a bad dream.

This is not something that we can ignore. It's not something we can just sweep under the rug as just another disturbing footnote in a sad election season. Because this was not just a "lewd conversation". This wasn't just locker-room banter. This was a powerful individual speaking freely and openly about sexually predatory behavior, and actually bragging about kissing and groping women, using language so obscene that many of us were worried about our children hearing it when we turn on the TV.

And to make matters worse, it now seems very clear that this isn't an isolated incident. It's one of countless examples of how he has treated women his whole life. And I have to tell you that I listen to all of this and I feel it so personally, and I'm sure that many of you do too, particularly the women. The shameful comments about our bodies. The disrespect of our ambitions and intellect. The belief that you can do anything you want to a woman.

It is cruel. It's frightening. And the truth is, it hurts. It hurts. It's like that sick, sinking feeling you get when you're walking down the street minding your own business and some guy yells out vulgar words about your body. Or when you see that guy at work that stands just a little too close, stares a little too long, and makes you feel uncomfortable in your own skin.

Mode- What type of text is this?

Field – What is the subject matter?

Function- Why has this been written?

Audience: Who is the intended audience?

Extension Questions:

- 1. How is the mode different to texts 1 and 2?**
- 2. Why do you think Michelle Obama keeps repeating 'you' in this text**

Task 2: Research and write a definition for the following terms. Bring this with you for your first lesson of 'English Language'

Step 1: Write a short definition for each of the following terms in the glossary below. You may need to research the meanings of some of these terms.

Term	Definition
Accent	
Dialect	
Phoneme	
Synonym	
Antonym	
Hypernym	
Register	
Semantic change	
Abstract noun	
Concrete noun	
Dynamic verb	
Stative verb	
Adjective	
Adverb	
Determiner	
Clause	
Passive voice	
Main clause	
Subordinate clause	
Deixis	
Discourse marker	
Orthography	

Recommended Summer Reading List:

Books Available on Amazon (optional):

- **Language and Power (Cambridge Topics in English Language)**- Gary Ives
- **Attitudes to Language (Cambridge Topics in English Language)** - Dan Clayton
- **The English Language: A Guided Tour of the Language**- David Crystal
- **The Stories of English Language** – David Crystal

Documentaries:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bazqmNsVgLY> -BBC History of the English Language
- Netflix documentary: Babies (episode 4 on speech is particularly relevant)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K1XQx9pGGd0>- The Adventure of English- Episode 1 Birth of a Language (BBC)

TED Talks:

- https://www.ted.com/talks/jamila_lyiscott_3_ways_to_speak_english?language=en - Jamila Lyiscott: 3 ways to Speak English
- https://www.ted.com/talks/david_peterson_why_language_is_humanity_s_greatest_invention - David Peterson: Why Language is Humanity's Greatest Invention
- https://www.ted.com/talks/lera_boroditsky_how_language_shapes_the_way_we_think - Lera Boroditsky: How Language Shapes The Way We Think

Websites:

- <http://www.universalteacher.org.uk/contents.htm#langa> - Universal Teacher – A-level English Language
- <https://aggslanguage.wordpress.com/> - I Love English Language