**PREPARING FOR A LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

Welcome to English Language A Level. Studying English at A Level is an exciting and interesting subject: English is a global language and the language we use can both reflect and shape the society in which we live. You will study English in a way that is quite different to your GCSE studies, looking not only at the power of language in society and how language shapes identity, but the ways in which it is systematically divided into different levels or areas, such as phonology (sound & accent), lexis (vocabulary) & semantics (meaning), grammar and pragmatics (how language functions contextually). It is a rich and broad A level. To help you start to make the transition from GCSE to A Level there’s a range of relevant websites, podcasts, twitter feeds and traditional books recommended below. There’s also an accompanying PDF booklet called *Leaping into Language* from The English and Media Centre, which gives you a great range of activities and an excellent taste of studying Language at A level.

**Newspapers (print & online)**

Language is constantly being discussed online and in the press, with opinion pieces being produced all the time. Keep a look out for articles in the press & online, and keep a record of what you read (you can bookmark online sources.). Below are some examples of language in the news:

* <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/apr/27/muggers-and-invisible-enemies-how-boris-johnsons-metaphors-reveals-his-thinking>
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-45810709> - Should women be spelt womxn
* <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/jul/30/trump-langugae-rhetoric-hateful-infectious>

You can keep track of articles about language by following @EngLangBlog (<https://twitter.com/englangblog>) on Twitter.

**Recommended Books**

* *Words on the Move* – John McWhorter
* *The Life of Slang* – Julie Coleman
* *Because Internet* – Gretchen McCulloch
* *Don’t Believe a Word* – David Shariatmadari
* *The Language Wars* – Henry Hitchins
* *You Are What You Speak* – Robert Lane Greene
* *Talk On The Wild Side* – Robert Lane Greene
* *EMC Language Handbook* (2nd Edition) – Dan Clayton
* *The Myth of Mars and Venus* – Deborah Cameron
* *Women Talk More Than Men… and Other Myths About Language Explained* – Abby Caplan
* *The Prodigal Tongue* – Lynne Murphy
* *Your Voice Speaks Volumes* – Jane Setter
* *The Stories of English* – David Crystal
* *How English Works* – David Crystal

**Podcasts**

The BBC’s ***Word of Mouth*** programme presented by Michael Rosen can be found here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qtnz/episodes/player> and has a huge archive of previous programmes all available for download:

Some recent highlights have been selected for you here:

* A Debate About American English: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08g5533>
* Will Emoji Be the Future of English? <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08ffvp6>
* The Language of Lying: [www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000dfpy](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000dfpy)
* Romani Language: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m00050qw>
* Black British Identity and Black-related Words: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0004l93>
* Solving Crime with Language: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m00027n6>
* Language, Gender and Trans Identities: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b09r4k4l>

***Lexicon Valley*** presented by John McWhorter can be found here: <https://slate.com/podcasts/lexicon-valley> and a few particularly relevant ones have been highlighted below:

* Women’s Language: <https://slate.com/podcasts/lexicon-valley/2020/03/vocal-frywomen-language>
* Like, Sort Of…: <https://slate.com/podcasts/lexicon-valley/2019/11/politeness-in-the-english-language>
* Language on the Internet: <https://slate.com/human-interest/2019/07/john-mcwhorter-and-gretchen-mcculloch-on-because-internet.html>

**Video Clips**

[Six linguists introduce some key ideas about language study](https://www.englishandmedia.co.uk/video-clips/clip-listing/leaping-into-language-emagclips)

[Stephen Fry's view of Language](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J7E-aoXLZGY&list=PL6MOtTkX2Mt0y76pXU5jLFZVlheFJuFcw&index=12&t=0s)

**Relevant industry Pages to 'follow' for up to date news of their chosen field:**

* Linguistics Research Digest: <https://linguistics-research-digest.blogspot.com/>
* Accent Bias in Britain: <https://accentbiasbritain.org/>
* The Oxford English Dictionary: <https://www.oed.com/>
* The British Library: <https://www.bl.uk/>
* British Library – British Accents and Dialects: <https://www.bl.uk/british-accents-and-dialects>

**YouTube channels**

TED talks related to English Language: <https://www.ted.com/search?q=english+language>

Some good examples of TED talks:

* How Language Shapes the Way we Think: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RKK7wGAYP6k>
* Txting is Killing Language. JK!!!: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UmvOgW6iV2s>
* Accents: where and why: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uv6tBcJjfY0>

**University pages**

Many Universities offer courses in Linguistics and Language. A few are listed below. It’s often interesting to see what their current research projects are to get the most up to date information.

* Manchester Met: <https://www2.mmu.ac.uk/languages/research/linguistics/>
* Lancaster University: <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/linguistics/>
* Queen Mary University London: <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/sllf/linguistics/>
* York University: <https://www.york.ac.uk/language/>
* Manchester University: <https://www.alc.manchester.ac.uk/linguistics-and-english-language/>

**Twitter Accounts to follow – there are lots, here are 4 recommendations**





