



HOW TO PREPARE FOR A LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE

In order to prepare for this A level course, it would be advisable to become familiar with a variety of non-fiction texts such as newspapers and magazines. You will also study areas such as language acquisition, language change, and language diversity.

1. Create a folder, collecting example articles from a variety of broadsheet newspapers (E.g. The Times, The Guardian, The Independent), and tabloid newspapers (The Sun, The Mail, The Star). Find articles that interest you; these will be very useful. Look closely at these articles and annotate (label) them, looking at how they meet their purpose.

2. Choose one of these newspapers and write an article of your own, attempting to match the style and techniques used in the example you have chosen. Try to make your piece have the same look and tone as the example, considering layout and design.

Note: This is a compulsory summer task! Please bring this to your first lesson.

3. Write a short story of around 1500 words. To think like a writer, sometimes it's helpful to be a writer! In order to do this, research how writers go about writing short stories. You Tube is rich with helpful videos on this subject. Podcasts made by The New Yorker are great sources of free excellent short stories.

4. Use You Tube to find videos on language change and language acquisition in children. A good place to start are TED talks. These are very insightful and will introduce you to important ideas and concepts.

5. Discover the words that have been added to the Oxford English Dictionary over the past **five** years. Create a mind map that explains how and why these words have come about and are being used.

6. Research the etymology of words: where they came from and why they're being used in our language. For example: vaccination, pyjamas, lager, journal, salary. Where does most of the U.K's legal language come from? Why?



7. Choose two dialects used in Britain (e.g. Geordie, Cockney, Black Country). Investigate how these dialects differ and how they have developed over time. Try to write an explanation of the differences between accent and dialect. Can you speak Standard English with an accent and dialect?

8. Think about how the use of technology has affected language: Why do you think some people still use 'text speak' when writing messages? Why do people use emojis so much nowadays? What do you think the impact of predictive text will have on grammar and spelling standards?

9. Surnames in the U.K are usually either **toponymic** (sometimes called topographic) such as 'Dale'; **related to family** such as Johnson (son of John); or **to do with one's trade or job** such as Fletcher. Make a list of common U.K surnames under these three headings and research where they're from. Go on the website Ancestry.com and research your own Surname – it's meaning and where it's from.

10. Research Lois Bloom (especially the Bloom and Lahey model) and her studies of children's language and Noam Chomsky: what was his theory about structures in the brain dedicated to language processing?

If you start to become aware of how language is used in different situations, it will help with your studies.