

Dear Parent/Carer,

As you will be aware, GCSE English Language and Literature courses changed recently and the current year 11 sat the papers for the qualifications for the first time this summer. Both exams are much more challenging than previously and there is no coursework or controlled assessment.

Reading and understanding nineteenth century fiction/non-fiction is a key element, study of which is already built into KS3. However, it is really important to encourage your son to read some classic fiction from that era if he is to fulfil his potential. The more familiar students are with the vocabulary and more complex syntax - typical of such writing - the less daunting the Language exam will be. This is especially important if your son is a reluctant reader.

Literature has reverted to being **closed book** (the students are not allowed to have the text in the exam). Students will have to quote from the texts (Shakespeare included) to support points and analyse the language in the quotations.

This means that reading and learning homework is of paramount importance and we would like to enlist your help in ensuring it is done carefully –making notes on plot/character in planning books and looking up unfamiliar words would be one way forward. Our experience is that boys often take short-cuts with reading homework if there is not to be a written test on it. **There is always English homework** even if no written work is set as it is impossible to learn quotations and consolidate textual knowledge a few weeks prior to the GCSE exams.

As there are no modules, organisation will be a key factor and we would request that your son buys a sturdy lever arch file and plastic wallets for the start of Year 10.

We will be studying *Macbeth*, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and the prescribed poetry in Year 10, moving on to *An Inspector Calls*.

We strongly recommend that *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* is read over the holidays and your son will be issued with the text before the end of term. It is also available to download from the GCSE Year 10 English Literature section of the FROG VLE.

We provide the texts for the nineteenth century novel and poetry but **it would help us immensely if you could purchase *Macbeth* and *An Inspector Calls* so that your son can annotate these thoroughly in class. He will need *Macbeth* in September.**

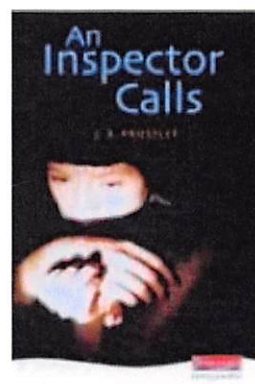
The editions we will be using are the Oxford Schools Shakespeare (2009) edited by Roma Hill and *An Inspector Calls* (Heinemann). There are many internet bookstores that offer these at bargain prices.

Should this arrangement cause any financial difficulty, we would be happy to give special consideration to individual cases in accordance with the school's charging policy.

Yours faithfully



Kathryn Daszkievicz
Subject Leader of English



Head Master: F. Hedley M.A.

Brook Street, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 6RP

Tel: (01476) 563180 Fax: (01476) 590953 Email: admin@kings.lincs.sch.uk / finance@kings.lincs.sch.uk

www.kings.lincs.sch.uk

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