



## Subject Philosophy

Our English curriculum at QE has three main aims:

**Empowerment:** We want to teach students the power of being confident but also critical readers. We also want them to become effective communicators in both written and verbal forms. In our classrooms, we intend to provide frequent oracy opportunities so students can discover, develop and use their voices.

**Creativity:** We want students to investigate and have fun with language in a variety of forms and inspire them to explore who they are in creative ways.

**Empathy:** Through the study of a range of novels, plays, poetry and literary non-fiction, we want students to better understand the world around them, past and present. In the words of the great Atticus Finch, "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view...until you climb in his skin and **walk** around in it." Through the text choices we provide students with, we hope that they understand that all great literature helps us to become more sensitive to the lives of others – a critical 21<sup>st</sup> century skill.

## Intent

In order to cultivate our main aims, we have selected a range of texts that all address the big questions of how human beings behave towards each other: how we do behave in reality, day to day and how we should behave towards each other to create a fairer, kinder world. In focusing on this key question that lies at the heart of any civilised society, we want to show our students that literature does not shy away from exploring the knotty problems of human existence. We want our students to learn that literature is a living breathing art form that cares and holds us to account if we would but listen to its messages and heed and enact its warnings in our own lives. At the same time as seeking for our students to become perceptive readers, we are passionate about our students becoming compelling writers. Through creative writing, be it descriptions of gothic castles or stories about time travel, our students are encouraged to develop their own distinctive voices.

## Design

Throughout their English learning journey, our students cover genres such as Shakespearean tragedies, comedies, the Gothic, Greek mythology and many others. Through the study of these diverse texts, whilst we explore the beauty, power and endless inventiveness of language and its ability to create worlds and characters beyond our everyday experience, we also challenge our students to allow them to reflect on their own life, and enact some of the messages they learn from great writers, past and present. In addition to fiction, we also look at how non-fiction writers tackle diverse topics, from sport and education to colonialism and environmental disaster, and how the way they write influences our point of view. Through this non-fiction writing, we teach our students how to organize their ideas clearly and express their options effectively when writing letters, articles and speeches, an unquestionably important life skill.

## Delivery

The delivery of our curriculum is reflective of our intent to encourage creative and confident English learners. We want our students to develop their skills, building on strong foundations in Year 7, which will allow them to flourish throughout their time at QE. All lessons include retrieval practice, explanations of skills and clarification of vocabulary, with numerous opportunities to apply their knowledge and complete extended written work. There is consistency built into the curriculum across the Key Stages to enable students to hone their English skills as they move through the years.