GCSE English

Winter 2023-2024

Literary Analysis

In each lesson we will study a particular skill set for the GCSE English exam, using examples from two mock exam questions per week to help us think about the format and structure of these questions. For each different type of analysis, we will dig into different ways of interpreting and analysing language, thinking about evaluating another writer’s craft in a creative and innovative way. By the end of these five weeks, they will have studied how to answer a GCSE analysis question, focusing on different skills needed for the GCSE, and will have also taken a mock exam.

**Lesson 1: Prose**

In our first lesson we will focus on prose in the GCSE exam and the kinds of questions students are likely to be asked about a passage. We will learn about:

* Creation of suspense and tension
* Character development
* Atmosphere
* Language devices

**Lesson 2: Techniques & Structure**

In this lesson we will look more closely at specific techniques and structural features that the class should be aware of for GCSE analysis. We will learn:

* How to interpret the impact of techniques
* How to think creatively about structure
* New and unusual techniques such as metonymy
* Literary references and allusions

**Lesson 3: Genre**

In this lesson we will look at how to use genre in literary analysis, discussing the genres typical of the GCSE exam and looking at examples from past papers. We will learn about:

* Conventions
* Victorian literature
* Tackling unseen prose
* Using context in analysis

**Lesson 4: Theme**

In this lesson we will tackle some of the common themes that arise on the GCSE analysis papers, thinking about how to discuss large and philosophical topics with reference to a text. We will learn:

* The type of themes that are commonly used in GCSE exam papers
* How to infer deeper meaning from a text
* Philosophical approaches to literature
* How to write a theme-based essay

**Lesson 5: Mock Exam**

In the first part of this class the students will complete a mock analysis paper which we will then feedback on as a class and discuss the different ideas, themes and techniques the students were able to comment on in the writing. I will then mark these and the students will have a sense of their progress over the duration of the course.

GCSE Writing

In our GCSE writing course we will be using the AQA GCSE syllabus to help the students craft their own responses to non-fiction writing prompts typical of a GCSE exam, thinking about argumentative and persuasive writing in the format they are found in the GCSE exam. We will look at different writing techniques that should be employed and discuss the ways in which students can make their writing stand out to examiners, keeping their writing fluent and original throughout. Each lesson will focus on one past paper.

*Week 1:* **Audience, Purpose & Tone**

This lesson will mark the first of our non-fiction writing lessons, beginning with an overview of the non-fiction section of the exam and considering the importance of deeply understanding audience, purpose and tone. We will use past papers to illustrate the different ways in which they are expected to navigate these elements and discuss how important structure is in this section of their GCSE.

*Week 2:* **Article Writing**

In this lesson we will work on article writing, considering the different types of articles the GCSE papers ask students to write and looking at various styles that these articles can cover- from persuasive to informative. We will look at the difference between different audiences and purposes specified by the exam and work on identifying appropriate structures in order to fulfil the GCSE briefs.

*Week 3:* **Essay Writing**

In this lesson we will be working on essay writing, looking at examples from the AQA past papers and thinking about the kinds of topics they cover and what they require of the students. We will look at structure and form, linking back to our work on purpose and tone, and consider different styles of writing, from argumentative to persuasive.

*Week 4:* **Speech Writing**

In this lesson we will consider speech writing, one of the types of writing they may be asked to do in the GCSE exam- we will think about how this differs from the style and voice of creative writing. We will look at famous speeches to help us understand the kind of language necessary and practice this using past papers to guide us.

*Week 5:* **Mock Exam**

This lesson will be a mock exam to help test the students’ skills, enabling them to showcase all they have learnt about GCSE writing. They will be asked to complete mock GCSE paper under timed conditions & will have their exam graded and returned to them after the lesson and can use these mocks to track their progress and work out their strengths and areas of improvement in writing. They should aim to use as many different advanced writing techniques, high-level vocab examples and interesting structural devices as possible- all of which we will have covered in the preceding weeks.