GCSE Writing

Winter 2023-2024

In our GCSE writing course we will be thinking about different types of GCSE writing to help the students craft their own responses to a mixture of creative and non-fiction writing prompts typical of a 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. The first **four weeks** will be **creative writing,** the second **four weeks** with be **non-fiction** and our final two lessons will feature a writing workshop and a mock exam. Each lesson will focus on one past paper- the students should not look at past papers before the lesson as we will be covering it together in class.

*Lesson 1-2:* **First Lines & Continuing an Extract**

Piecing together a story from a first line, taking inspiration from an author’s work, writing with other people’s characters- we will cover all of this in the first two weeks of our writing course, thinking about the importance of an opening in creative writing and discussing GCSE prompts on continuing extracts in our own unique voices.

*Lesson 3-4:* **Writing Stimuli & Inspiration**

In these lessons we will be working with a range of stimuli, from film to images to music, in order to expand the range of mediums the class are used to working with. We will look at how to extrapolate a story from a prompt and discuss interesting characterisation, looking at the different ways in which a story can be motivated.

*Lesson 5-6:* **Descriptive Essays**

In these lessons we will focus on descriptive essay writing, delving into the category of creative non-fiction which often features on GCSE exam papers. We will discuss how setting is utilised in these types of essays and look at the way figurative language helps to shape them, whilst also discussing the crossover between fiction and non-fiction.

*Lesson 7-8:* **Persuasive Essays**

These lessons will focus on persuasive essay writing, using New York Times resources to enable the students to think deeply about the way in which they write persuasion. We will look at GCSE prompts and debate key topics, whilst also thinking about how form, flair and style should be at the heart of their persuasive writing.

*Week 9:* **Writing Workshop**

In this lesson the students will have a workshopping and revision week, giving them the chance to work on any areas they feel they would benefit from focusing on and allowing them space to brainstorm pieces and responses together. The students will practice some writing exercises, thinking about how to incorporate these into their lives, and will have a chance to workshop and peer-evaluate their work.

*Week 10:* **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 over the past nine sessions. They will be asked to complete mock GCSE paper under timed conditions, answering both a creative and a non-fiction prompt. They 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.