Winter Writing 2025

Years 567

For our classes together over the winter term, we will be focusing every two weeks on a different style of writing, looking at famous works written in that style/ form/ genre and learning how to both analyse and emulate the conventions of each style. The two-week structure enables students to study each genre in greater depth, helping them to explore nuances within the genres themselves and giving them a greater opportunity to experiment with form and style. Within each lesson we will consider literary techniques, structure, writer’s voice and other key elements of writing, whilst also thinking about advanced vocabulary to encourage the class to expand their lexical range. There will also be a writing workshop and a final mock exam where the students will have a chance to practice and receive feedback on different ways of writing creatively, experimenting with new ideas and advanced writing styles.

***Lessons 1 & 2: Narrative Writing***

* Analyse adventure stories like *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson or *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien.
* Brainstorm and outline an adventure story idea with a unique setting.
* Emphasise pace and plotting in adventure stories, whilst using cliffhangers, escalating tension, and resolving conflicts
* Co-creating adventure stories, thinking about ‘choose your own’ styles

***Lessons 3 & 4: Developing Characters and Dialogue***

* Read excerpts with dynamic characters and practice writing short conversations between two characters.
* Build strong, relatable characters and use dialogue effectively.
* Develop static and dynamic characters and realistic interactions
* Learn techniques for creating interesting dialogue and using it to further the plot

***Lessons 5 & 6: Persuasive and Argumentative Writing***

* Practice writing a persuasive piece, using an example to highlight the importance of supporting evidence.
* Debate a topic as a class, highlighting counterarguments and ways to respond to them effectively.
* Learn how to combine the persuasive and the descriptive, thinking about the importance of writing originally and with flair in non-fiction
* Write a short story or personal anecdote that subtly incorporates a persuasive theme (e.g., the importance of teamwork).

***Lessons 7 & 8: Descriptive Writing***

* Identify examples of personification and symbolism in texts (e.g., describing nature or objects).
* Compare descriptions of the same scene written with different tones (e.g., eerie vs. cheerful) and practice writing a scene (e.g., a forest at night) with a focus on evoking a specific mood.
* Learning how to layer meaning into a story
* Debating the role of description in a story; what does setting achieve?

***Lesson 9: Writing Workshop***

This lesson takes all of what the students have learnt over the past few weeks and aims to teach them how to self-evaluate by workshopping a piece of writing of their own and sharing with one another. They will also get to spend time re-formulating their work to make them the best they can possibly be, using the feedback from their classmates and their own self-evaluation to inspire a new approach to their work- which is particularly good practice in terms of learning the importance of re-drafting. Finally, we will also focus on planning processes, considering what to include in a plan and how to get the most out of the time in an exam, in preparation for the mock exam in lesson 10. The students will have the opportunity to ask any questions they like about writing and will be encouraged to work around the genres they feel least comfortable with in order to help push their work into an even higher bracket.

***Lesson 10: Mock Exam***

This lesson will contain a mock exam to help test the students’ skills, enabling them to showcase all they have learnt about writing over the past nine sessions. They will be asked to complete an exam under timed conditions, which we will then go through step by step as a class. 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. This lesson is designed to consolidate their knowledge and to help them get used to the format of writing in exams. 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.