

Year 12 English Language and Literature

Paper 1, Section A: Voices in 20th- and 21st-Century Texts (the Voices Anthology)

Learning Objectives

- Understand the concept of 'voice' and how writers and speakers shape and craft language to present themselves, others and events to different audiences for different purposes.
- Explore the range of non-literary and literary forms in the Anthology (e.g. interviews, speeches, broadcasts, podcasts, blogs, autobiography, travel writing, screenplays) and the conventions of spoken, written and multimodal modes.
- Learn and apply the language levels/frameworks - phonetics, phonology and prosodics; lexis and semantics; grammar and morphology; pragmatics; discourse - using accurate terminology (AO1).
- Analyse how meanings are shaped through choices of language, form and structure, including representations of speech, narrative voice and point of view (AO2).
- Consider how contexts of production and reception (audience, purpose, genre, mode, period, technology) influence meaning (AO3).
- Begin to make connections between Anthology texts and unseen 20th/21st-century extracts in preparation for comparative writing (AO4).
- Build secure knowledge of every Anthology text so that any one can be selected and compared under timed, open-book conditions.

What previous knowledge is required?

- GCSE English Language: analysing language and structure, comparing non-fiction texts, and identifying writers' viewpoints and perspectives.
- GCSE grammatical and literary terminology (word classes, sentence types, imagery, tone), which is extended into systematic linguistic frameworks.
- Awareness of genre, audience and purpose from GCSE non-fiction reading and writing.
- No prior study of spoken language or linguistics is assumed - key terms are taught from the start of the course.

How will this term's content help with future learning?

- Provides the linguistic frameworks and terminology used across every component of the A Level, including drama (Paper 1 Section B), prose and poetry (Paper 2) and the NEA commentary.
- Prepares directly for the Year 13 unit comparing Anthology texts with unseen extracts and for the Paper 1 Section A comparative essay.
- Develops the unseen-text analysis skills needed for Paper 2 Section A (unseen prose non-fiction extract).
- Anthology forms and 'voices' serve as style models and stimulus when students begin planning their own creative non-fiction for the NEA.
- Builds transferable skills in critical reading of media and spoken discourse, valuable for degree-level English, linguistics, journalism, law and media.

Common Misconceptions

- That 'voice' only means the literal speaking voice - rather than the crafted persona or identity constructed by a writer or speaker in any mode.
- Treating transcripts of spontaneous speech as if they were 'incorrect' writing; non-fluency features (fillers, overlaps, false starts) are normal and meaningful.
- Feature-spotting: identifying terminology without explaining the effect or linking it to context, purpose and audience.
- Working chronologically through a text instead of building an argument around the question focus.
- Assuming non-literary texts are 'unconstructed' and therefore less deliberately crafted than literary texts.

- Misusing frequently confused terms (e.g. 'reported speech', 'minor sentence', 'infer'), a common weakness noted in Pearson examiner reports.

National Curriculum / Specification

- **Pearson Edexcel A Level English Language and Literature (9EL0) - Component 1: Voices in Speech and Writing (Paper 1, 9EL0/01)** - 2 hr 30 min open-book examination, 40% of the qualification.
- **Section A: Voices in 20th- and 21st-Century Texts** - one comparative essay question on an unseen extract from 20th- or 21st-century sources and one text from the Voices in Speech and Writing: An Anthology (25 marks).
- Assessment Objectives: AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO4.
- Subject content: language levels (phonetics/phonology/prosodics, lexis and semantics, grammar and morphology, pragmatics, discourse); how speakers and writers create voice; contexts of production and reception.

Paper 1, Section B: Drama Texts - A Streetcar Named Desire (Tennessee Williams)

Learning Objectives

- Develop a secure knowledge of the plot, structure, characters and themes of A Streetcar Named Desire, including the eleven-scene episodic structure.
- Analyse how Williams creates distinctive voices for characters (e.g. Blanche's affected, poetic idiolect vs Stanley's direct, colloquial speech) using linguistic and literary frameworks (AO1, AO2).
- Explore dramatic methods: dialogue, turn-taking and conversational dominance, stage directions, plastic theatre, music, lighting and symbolism.
- Understand relevant contexts: the post-war American South, the decline of the Southern aristocracy, gender roles, class and immigration, mental health, and the play's original reception (AO3).
- Apply pragmatics and conversation analysis to power, politeness and conflict in key scenes.
- Write extract-based essays that move from the given extract to the wider play, using the clean text effectively in open-book conditions.

What previous knowledge is required?

- GCSE study of a modern or Shakespearean play: understanding of dramatic form, character, theme and stagecraft.
- Basic literary terminology (symbolism, motif, dramatic irony, tragedy).
- Concurrent learning from the Voices Anthology on spoken language features and the construction of voice, which is applied to scripted dialogue.

How will this term's content help with future learning?

- Directly assessed in Paper 1 Section B; the play is revisited for PPE revision in Year 13 (Term 2) and in final Paper 1 revision (Term 4).
- Comparing scripted speech with the real and represented speech in the Anthology strengthens AO4 skills for Section A.
- Contextual understanding of 1940s America supports study of 1920s America in The Great Gatsby (Paper 2).
- Analysis of how writers craft voice and dialogue informs students' own fiction writing for the NEA.

Common Misconceptions

- Reading the play as a simple story of 'good' Blanche vs 'bad' Stanley, rather than recognising Williams' ambiguity and shifting audience sympathy.
- Ignoring stage directions, or treating them as neutral description rather than a key part of Williams' crafted meaning.
- Discussing characters as real people rather than as dramatic constructs.
- Retelling the plot or writing about the whole play without anchoring the argument in the given extract.

- Bolting on context as historical information rather than integrating it into the analysis of language and meaning (AO3).
- Assuming open-book means little revision is needed - students still need secure knowledge and pre-selected references.

National Curriculum / Specification

- **Component 1: Voices in Speech and Writing (Paper 1, 9EL0/01), Section B: Drama Texts** - one essay question on the studied drama text, based on a given extract from the play (25 marks).
- Prescribed drama text: A Streetcar Named Desire, Tennessee Williams (one of the seven set drama texts).
- Assessment Objectives: AO1, AO2 and AO3.
- Open-book examination: a clean copy of the text is permitted.

Paper 2, Society and the Individual: The Great Gatsby (F. Scott Fitzgerald) - anchor text

Learning Objectives

- Understand the theme of 'Society and the Individual' and how writers present the relationship between individuals and the societies they live in.
- Develop detailed knowledge of the novel's plot, characters and structure, including Fitzgerald's use of Nick Carraway as a first-person, retrospective and unreliable narrator.
- Analyse narrative voice, point of view, symbolism, imagery, lexical and semantic fields, and the representation of speech and thought (AO1, AO2).
- Explore contexts: the Jazz Age, Prohibition, the American Dream, class and 'old' vs 'new' money, gender, race and the novel's reception then and now (AO3).
- Consider different readings and interpretations of the novel and how readers respond to its presentation of society.
- Begin to identify points of connection with the partner text (The Whitsun Weddings) for the comparative Section B essay (AO4).

What previous knowledge is required?

- Linguistic frameworks and analytical approaches established through the Voices Anthology (Terms 1-2).
- GCSE study of a 19th-century or modern novel: characterisation, narrative perspective and theme.
- Contextual knowledge of 20th-century America from studying A Streetcar Named Desire.

How will this term's content help with future learning?

- The anchor text for Paper 2 Section B; it is recapped in Year 13 Term 1, including key societal issues and links to post-war Britain, then compared with The Whitsun Weddings.
- Analysis of narrative voice and prose style prepares students for the unseen prose non-fiction extract in Paper 2 Section A.
- Provides a model of prose fiction craft (narrative voice, structure, symbolism) that students can draw on when drafting their NEA fiction piece.
- Builds the skills of sustained, integrated literary-linguistic essay writing needed across all examined components.

Common Misconceptions

- Accepting Nick's narration at face value rather than questioning his reliability and bias.
- Seeing Gatsby purely as a romantic hero, or reducing the novel to a simple love story.
- Spending too long explaining routine plot rather than analysing language and method (highlighted by Pearson examiner reports).
- Treating 'the American Dream' as a single fixed idea rather than something the novel questions and complicates.
- Neglecting the linguistic side of the course - analysing only literary features without using frameworks such as lexis, grammar and discourse.

National Curriculum / Specification

- **Component 2: Varieties in Language and Literature (Paper 2, 9EL0/02)** - 2 hr 30 min open-book examination, 40% of the qualification.
- Theme: **Society and the Individual**. Prescribed anchor prose fiction text: The Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald.
- **Section B** - one comparative essay on the anchor text and one other text from the chosen theme (30 marks). Assessment Objectives: AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO4.
- Open-book examination: clean copies of the prescribed texts are permitted.

Paper 2, Society and the Individual: The Whitsun Weddings (Philip Larkin) - poetry

Learning Objectives

- Read and analyse the poems in The Whitsun Weddings, exploring how Larkin presents individuals in relation to society, community, class, work, marriage, religion and change in post-war Britain.
- Analyse poetic voice and persona, including Larkin's shifts between colloquial and elevated registers, irony and detachment (AO1, AO2).
- Apply linguistic frameworks to poetry: phonology (sound patterning, rhyme, metre), lexis and semantics, grammar and syntax (e.g. enjambment, sentence length), pragmatics and discourse structure.
- Understand contexts: 1950s-early 1960s Britain, post-war social change, the Movement poets and the collection's reception (AO3).
- Develop comparisons with The Great Gatsby, considering similarities and differences in how the individual and society are presented across prose and poetry (AO4).

What previous knowledge is required?

- Knowledge of The Great Gatsby and the 'Society and the Individual' theme from Terms 3-5.
- GCSE poetry analysis skills (anthology and unseen poetry), including form, structure and imagery.
- Linguistic frameworks and terminology from the Voices Anthology.

How will this term's content help with future learning?

- Forms the second text for the Paper 2 Section B comparative essay; study continues in Year 13 (Terms 1-3) with a focus on comparison with Gatsby and links to post-war Britain.
- Close analysis of how the individual is presented in society supports Paper 2 Section A, where unseen non-fiction extracts are linked to the same theme.
- Develops the analytical precision and comparative writing needed for the NEA commentary.

Common Misconceptions

- Equating the speaker of every poem with Larkin himself.
- Reading Larkin as simply pessimistic or misanthropic, missing irony, ambivalence and moments of transcendence (e.g. in the closing lines of poems).
- Commenting on imagery and content while rarely analysing poetic form and structure in a meaningful way (a point made in examiner reports).
- Writing about the poetry and the novel separately rather than producing an integrated comparison.
- Thinking that linguistic frameworks do not apply to poetry.

National Curriculum / Specification

- **Component 2: Varieties in Language and Literature (Paper 2, 9EL0/02)**, theme: Society and the Individual.
- The Whitsun Weddings, Philip Larkin, is a prescribed poetry text for the Society and the Individual theme, studied alongside the anchor text The Great Gatsby.
- **Section B** - comparative essay on the anchor text and one other text (30 marks). Assessment Objectives: AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO4.

Component 3 (NEA): Investigating and Creating Texts - preparation and fiction drafting

Learning Objectives

- Understand the NEA requirements using the NEA booklet: two pieces of original writing (one fiction, one creative non-fiction) and one analytical commentary.
- Read and investigate two chosen texts (one fiction, one non-fiction) as stimulus or style models - these must be different from the texts studied for the examinations.
- Research forms, genres, audiences and purposes, and identify linguistic and literary features of the style models to adapt in their own writing.
- Plan and begin drafting the fiction piece, demonstrating expertise and creativity in the use of English (AO5).
- Keep a record of research, reading and drafting decisions to inform the later commentary.
- Understand authentication rules, independent working, referencing and the guidance on using AI tools.

What previous knowledge is required?

- GCSE creative and transactional writing skills.
- Knowledge of how voice is crafted from the Anthology, A Streetcar Named Desire and The Great Gatsby.
- Linguistic and literary terminology from Terms 1-4, which students need to discuss their own writing choices.

How will this term's content help with future learning?

- Leads directly into Year 13, where students complete and submit piece 1 (Term 1), piece 2 (Term 2) and the commentary (Term 3).
- Reflective analysis of their own drafting prepares students for the commentary (AO1-AO4) and strengthens their exam writing.
- Develops independent research and extended writing skills required for higher education.

Common Misconceptions

- That the NEA texts can be the same as the exam texts - they must be different.
- Copying or imitating a style model too closely rather than adapting its features creatively.
- Leaving research notes and drafting records until the commentary stage, making it hard to evaluate the influence of the style models.
- Treating the creative non-fiction piece as a standard persuasive essay rather than a crafted literary non-fiction text.
- Misunderstanding word limits: 1500-2000 words across both pieces combined, and 1000-1250 words for the commentary.

National Curriculum / Specification

- **Component 3: Investigating and Creating Texts (NEA, 9ELO/03)** - internally assessed and externally moderated; 20% of the qualification.
- Assignment 1: two pieces of original writing - one fiction and one creative non-fiction (1500-2000 words in total; 36 marks; AO5).
- Assignment 2: one analytical commentary reflecting on the studied texts and own writing (1000-1250 words; 24 marks; AO1, AO2, AO3, AO4).
- Two texts studied as stimulus/style models (one fiction, one non-fiction), which must be different from the examined texts.