**William Ellis School  
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT**

Preparing for **GCSE** **English language paper 1 mock** (Communicating Information & Ideas/ J351/01)

Our recommendations for home study to prepare for the December mock 2019

Read through our guide to the OCR exams available on the school website under Year 11 (you have been given a printed copy too).

Consult the English language **Checklist** too (single page, available on website)

Write a blog entry aimed at a peer group audience about how to deal with stressed parents. Aim for a blend of sound advice and kindly humour.

Do non-fiction reading on the subject of automation (one piece by E.H. Gombrich, one by Chuka Umunna): ask your English teacher for the two texts and then research Thomas Carlyle, a 19th century essayist, on the same topic.

Write a letter to your English teacher explaining what you would like to do or achieve in the near future, beyond GCSEs, describing your situation now and suggesting what s/he can do to help and what your plans are to secure your own success. Additional writing focus: links between paragraphs

Find and read two news articles on the ‘Windrush Scandal’, as it has been reported by journalists in 2017-19 You might find Amelia Gentleman’s reports and interviews for the *Guardian* especially interesting.

Write a guest article for a news website in which you celebrate the life of one of your grandparents (or another relation/ancestor). This can be done in-role (as in it needs to sound real/true, but does not actually have to be so). Additional writing focus: paragraph openers (strong and varied).

Read this account of a TV series: <https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2018/oct/04/rich-house-poor-house-overly-reassuring-tale-haves-and-have-nots>

Look up and record the meanings of any unfamiliar words or terms in it. Write a proposal (in the form of a campaign pitch) for a TV programme or series that you think should be made to draw attention to an issue or circumstance in society. Aim for 5 paragraphs. Additional writing focus: check that every comma is correct and should not actually be replaced by a full stop, colon or semi-colon.

Ensure you are not a comma-splicer and prove it, at least in theory, by completing the exercises here: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/exercises/grammar/grammar_tutorial/page_47.htm>  
  
Memorize these questions to ask of unseen texts:

1. What is the tone?
2. What kind of language is used to create this tone?
3. How does the text open? (always move chronologically through the text)
4. What are the most striking sentences or phrases?
5. Does the language or tone change?
6. Are any ideas, words, devices repeated?
7. How does the text end? Has the writer’s viewpoint changed from the beginning?

We also advise timed rewriting of previous exam responses. Keep reading non-fiction and doing small pieces of practice writing with attention to accuracy and styling choices.

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**This replaces the advice issued for the October half-term 2019:**

**Because of progress made with the poetry unit, we have decided to ask students to sit Paper 2, rather than Paper 1. Any work done on Paper 1 between October half-term and November 18th is, of course, not wasted as those texts need to be kept alive too, but apologies to those who have already done a lot on *Great Expectations* and/or *An Inspector Calls* in readiness for December*.* Wehope no one feels disadvantaged for the December mock, and confirm that we will set a Paper 1 early in Spring 2020.**

Preparing for **GCSE English literature paper 2 mock** (Shakespeare and Poetry J352/02)

Our recommendations for home study to prepare for the December mock 2019

Make a plot pathway of *Romeo and Juliet*, using either an internet PDF as a plot reminder or your own copy (we recommend purchasing an inexpensive copy of this play for home use, e.g. Wordsworth £2 edition).

Listen to the RSC audio version of ‘Romeo and Juliet’ available on Youtube (it is very good, unabridged and all five acts are here):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kt8EzPxNeA>

Learn 5 new literature quotations a week: begin a wall chart and add to them every week.

Read the British Library articles on *Romeo & Juliet*. Start with this one perhaps: <https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/character-analysis-benvolio-mercutio-and-tybalt-in-romeo-and-juliet>

Then read:   
  
<https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/new-mutiny-the-violence-of-romeo-and-juliet>

**You are welcome to critique these writers’ interpretations of aspects of the play, it should be said.**

Choose three poems from the Love & Relationships poetry cluster to learn ‘off by heart’ or nearly so.

Do a timed rewriting of a minimum of one previous response on each text.

Take home a copy of any of the previous Paper 2 literature exams (June 2017, June 2018, June 2019) and find then make yourself do the relevant poetry and Shakespeare questions. You should then look at the examiner’s report online, e.g. 2018’s one <https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/538123-examiners-report-exploring-poetry-and-shakespeare-.pdf> or the 2017 one (where the discussion of paper 2 begins on page 18) here: https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/415557-examiners-report.pdf

You can also use this link (<https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/348009-the-little-book-of-spelling-punctuation-and-grammar-spag-.pdf>) to access OCR’s very useful ‘Little Book of Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar’, with online exercises. This guide is actually better read online (because of the colours used) but we will provide a paper version for any student or parent/carer who asks for one.