

Dear parent/Carer,

Happy new year from the English department. We wanted to share with you, some changes happening within the English Department for 2024, as well as some exciting activities we have planned for our Key Stage 3 students.

### **Key Stage 3 Topics**

All of our Key Stage 3 students are studying Poetry this half term. Each year will cover a different topic and a range of literary heritage poetry, up to the modern day. Each week we will learn about the poets, analyse the poems and create some pieces of our own writing.

**Year 7** – Topic of Good and Evil. This will include poems such as Invictus by William Earnest Henley, Ulysses by Alfred Lord Tennyson and First they came By Martin Niemoller.

**Year 8** – Topic of Nature and the supernatural. This will include poems such as The Raven by Edgar Allen Poe and The Ghost by Charles Baudelaire.

**Year 9** – Topic of Power and Conflict. This will include poems such as Caged Bird by Maya Angelou and Rule Britannia by James Thomson.

### **Homework**

We are starting the new year with a fresh approach to homework.

Homework will be set every 2 weeks. This will be given in form of a menu. All students will be required to complete their “Starter” of learning a spelling list. There is an expectation that these will be practiced regularly over the 2 weeks. Classes will be given information regarding when their individual classes will have their test.

All students will have a choice of a “Main” homework task. For example, this may be an online task using SENECA, or a creative task based on their classwork. This will also be compulsory.

In addition to this, students may wish to complete a “Dessert” task for additional reward points. Our aim is to link this to students wider reading and reading for pleasure.

### **Beyond the Classroom**

We have a lot of exciting activities planned already for this term.

### **STM Poetry Competition**

As part of our Poetry Unit in English, we will also be holding a poetry competition. All students will be entered as part of their English lessons and there will be prizes for the winners and runners up in each year. We look forward to sharing some of our students’ creative work with you via our social media.

### **Holocaust Memorial Day**

On Friday 26<sup>th</sup> January, all of our year 7 students will take part in a Holocaust Memorial Day Workshop. This will include poetry, creative writing and the chance to enter a national competition.

We are very excited to bring this opportunity to our students to go beyond the English Classroom and explore the reality and emotion connected to the Power and Conflict poetry we have been studying.

For further information regarding this Holocaust Memorial Day trust website: [www.hmd.org.uk](http://www.hmd.org.uk)







**St. Thomas More**

CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

St. Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy, Palace Fields, Buxton, Derbyshire, SK17 6AF Headteacher: Mr D Redfern

**National Storytelling Week 2024**

In partnership with poet and author Steven Camden, and supported by REY Paper, we have created a storytelling project designed to inspire a love of story creation and storytelling.

The project will kickstart with a live interactive story building event with Steven Camden. Our follow-up classroom resource will support pupils to create their own story world inspired by Steven's own creative process.

We are very excited about English in 2024 at St Thomas More, and hope that you will join us in encouraging and celebrating our students' work and successes throughout the year.

Yours Faithfully

Mrs A. Shaw  
Head of English



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