



Wath Sixth Form Subject Preparation Pack

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

World-class learning

World-class learning every lesson, every day

The highest expectations

Everyone can be successful; always set and expects the highest standards

No excuses

Create solutions not excuses; make positive thinking a habit

Growth mindset

Believe you can improve; work hard and value feedback

Never give up

Resilience is essential; be relentless in the pursuit of excellence

Everyone is valued

Diversity is celebrated; see the best in everyone

A Level English Language Transition Pack

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What is English Language?

Choosing to study English Language at A-Level is to embark on a journey of witnessing language in action. Here, you will delve into an exciting array of spoken and written texts, analysing the language to find the hidden depths of meaning within them. Through this analysis, you will develop and refine your understanding of the ways linguistic techniques function in different contexts, seeing the rich and diverse uses of language, in both past and present times. You will even be able to study how children begin to acquire spoken language: a phenomenon that is universal to us all. English Language is a subject that opens the classroom to analytical and evaluative discussion of the topics we discuss, which will challenge you to voice your own interpretations of texts, as well as theories of other published linguists in their fields. You will also have the opportunity to write a piece of original writing, as well as investigating into an area of Language that you feel most passionate about. The possibilities are endless when studying A-Level English Language.

Why should I study English Language?

English Language is an academic A-Level that is highly regarded by Universities. As a student of English Language, you can go on to study Linguistics, Journalism and Media, Education, Communication, Foreign Languages, Forensic Science, Law as well as a wealth of Language-based degrees. The precision in identifying and evaluating language functions, understanding and critiquing theories as well as writing creatively and academically, really make you as a student develop fully, as well as making English Language complement other English, Drama or Science subjects.

What careers can English Language lead to?

English Language is a subject that truly offers a plethora of skills to future employers. As a student of Language, employers will recognise that you are able to read and interpret a wide range of texts, as well as having a keen eye for detail through your precision of identifying and understanding the functions of the language and its syntax. Additionally, it will be recognised that you will be able to write in different contexts, communicating both creatively and academically, with accuracy and flair. As a result of these skills, English Language graduates find opportunities in many different sectors. Public and private sector organisations such as in Business, educational institutions, local and national government, forensics, financial and legal firms as well as the National Health Service (NHS) are just a few of the areas English Language skills are required:

- administration
- arts management
- events management
- finance
- general management
- teaching
- research

Other employers/ job titles may include:

- advertising marketing and public relations agencies
- media organisations
- publishing companies
- Journalism / media and creative outlets
- Speech and Language therapist
- Translator
- Forensic Scientist
- Lexicographer

The retail, leisure and tourism sectors also typically recruit English graduates.

What will I study?

At Wath Academy, we cover the **AQA English Language** syllabus which develops a breadth of knowledge split across **2 papers and 2 pieces of Non-Exam Assessment** (coursework).

Paper 1

Language, the individual and Society

This will introduce you to language study, exploring a variety of texts and children's language development.

Section A: Analysing and comparing two texts (one old and one modern) for how language creates meanings and representations within them.

Section B: Child Language Acquisition

Paper 2

Language Diversity and change

You will explore a wide range of Diversity topics such as Language and Gender, Region and Occupation to name a few, as well as studying how language has changed over time.

Section A: This focuses on evaluating a statement from a topic studied in Language and Diversity or Change.

Section B: Comparing how writers have used language to convey their attitudes to a language issue. Writing an entertaining article on the issues raised in the articles on a diversity topic.

NEA

Language in action

Original Writing: 1500 words

You will be able to write more creatively, choosing a format to write in about a topic of choice. This could include (and certainly not restricted to) : an article, travel journalism, a monologue, a script or even a short story. You will also provide a commentary on the choices you made in constructing your work.

The Investigation: 2000 words

You will carry out a full investigation, setting out hypotheses, methodology, analysis and conclusion into a topic area of your choice about Language. This could be something that has piqued your interest in one of the topics or related to Language.

How will I be assessed?

You will be formally assessed at the end of Y13, where you will sit two exams: Paper 1 and Paper 2. Paper 1, *Language, the individual and society*, will last for 2 hours 30 minutes and consist of 2 sections, totalling 40% of your grade. Paper 2, *Language diversity and change*, lasts for 2 hours 30 minutes and again, will total 40% of your final grade. Finally, you will complete the two pieces of NEA outlined above, which will be marked internally, before being sent off to be moderated by the examination board. This will total 20% of your final grade, completing the course.

As a department, we will conduct ongoing assessment throughout the two years that will test your development of skills and question styles assessed by the exam board.

Meet the A-Level English Language staff

Miss Hardy

Teaching A-Level English Language is such an exciting experience for me. I truly love that we can get stuck in to the complexities of language and really explore why a word, device or particular sentence structure might have been used in a wealth of different genres and texts. It never gets boring for me and that is because of the students that I teach and the modern, interesting content we analyse! Each year, there will be something new that is discussed and explored by the class, which is fascinating, as the study of the English Language is kept alive. Not only do I get to listen to your new and interesting ideas about language, but I also have the pleasure of reading your creative writing, as well as marvelling at the outcomes of your Language Investigation.

I am really looking forward to starting the new year, with a new class that will be just as passionate as I am about how language works!

Miss Perry

I have been teaching English Language at A Level for the past 13 years and look forward to every new class I teach. The subject's blend of creative writing coursework, independent language investigation and debate about language use in today's world really means that no lesson, or year, is ever the same. Which words do you find sexist? How do politicians use language to persuade voters? How do children learn to talk? All these questions are explored in our lessons and the challenge of an entirely new way of looking at the English language is the reason I keep requesting to teach it!

Come prepared to justify your opinions, to have others challenge your thoughts and to not be able to stop analysing everything from your bus ticket to your server's questions about your coffee order!

Mr Bishop

I have always believed that language is very powerful - it's the building block of all human society. One of the best aspects of A Level English Language is that it isn't just like the GCSE: it includes study of new aspects of language, such as how men and women speak differently, attitudes towards the different ways people speak and how language has been changed by the likes of technology over time – all of which are fascinating. My favourite part of the course to teach is the writing. I've had some articles published myself, so really enjoy considering how to craft a piece of writing to get across a message and adapt it to an audience. The non-exam assessment, which includes original writing, is particularly satisfying, as I enjoy working with students over a longer period to help them refine their work and help unlock the potential within them.

Miss Majer

I studied English Language and Linguistics at the University of Sheffield, having enjoyed studying aspects at A level such as how children learn language, how does the way I speak shape my identity and how language has changed. Ultimately, my love for English as a subject started in my secondary school experience. My teacher taught the subject with such enthusiasm and passion- and this is what I want to achieve and instil in my students.

Why English Language? English is woven into every aspect of our lives; it is a global language spoken by billions of people. The study of English Language is everchanging. I enjoy the dynamic nature of the subject: investigating how people perceive accent and dialects, recognising how much language has changed because of social media and exploring the power of language worldwide- whether that be an advert on the back of a magazine, or a speech that changes the world.

English Language allows creativity, curiosity, in-depth analysis and fuelled discussions. I enjoy teaching topics that are increasingly relevant to every aspects of our day-to-day lives.

Language is at the heart of everything we do.

Miss Herdman

As an English teacher, I love the variety of ideas that we can engage with in a text and in the discussions that subsequently follow. More importantly, I love to see students' depth of knowledge and ideas develop over time, as we learn new subject terminology and comment on the findings of other linguists. As I have a degree that specialises in Linguistics, I find exploring 'how children acquire language' truly fascinating! Likewise, annotating a text and focusing on how a single word can create a whole new representation of something is intriguing, and allows us to really consider the writer's intentions. Helping my students develop their analytical skills, creativity, and general confidence is always an honour. Hopefully, my own enthusiasm will be reflected in my students and strengthen their love for English!

Mrs Doughty

The English Language is interlaced throughout every aspect of our lives, which is the main reason I love teaching the subject at A-Level; exploring the intricacies of our diverse and complex language is always fascinating and seeing students explore the excellence of English each year is undoubtedly exciting.

This course develops a range of invaluable skills for life. From understanding how and why humans learn to communicate and assign meaning to words (semantics), to exploring different interpretations of representations of different writers in different texts and contexts (pragmatics), the A-Level English Language course is continually stimulating and ever-evolving, as our language is. When studying English Language, you will understand how to communicate effectively, critically assess information and challenge assumptions whilst becoming aware of the wider context of language and the written form.

I cannot wait to start the new year with a new A-level class, embarking on their journey of discovery of our very own language!

Miss Sprack

To me, one of the most exciting elements of teaching A Level English Language is how it is a completely different range of skills and topics from GCSE. It helps students to develop from learners to linguists.

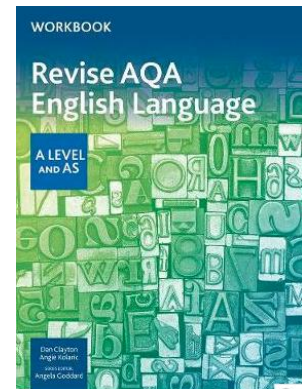
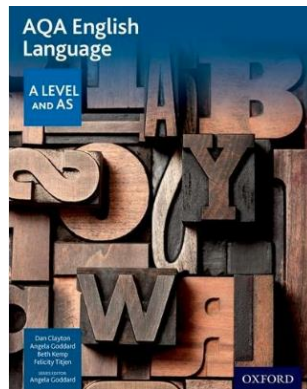
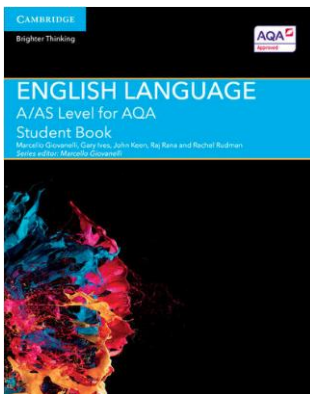
We investigate how people use and develop language in a range of different ways: from childhood and how we acquire language to how this plays an important role in our social interactions and shaping identity. Whether you say 'bread cake', 'barm cake' or 'roll' or have strong feelings about the pronunciation of 'scone', your attitudes towards language use will be debated and explored whilst studying and applying prominent linguists' viewpoints. There will be the opportunity for you to be creative and write in a range of genres including opinion articles, original storytelling, and modes of rhetoric -the choice is yours!

As well as this, you will investigate your own chosen field of language use, which will give you the choice to explore an area of Language that interests you and potentially unlock some fresh perspective in this area of study!

I'm excited to welcome you as linguists so that we can unravel the intricacies and complexity of the English language together

Recommended resources

The following 2 key text books in English Language will be supplied for you by Wath Academy:



The Cambridge, AQA approved, English Language student book by Marcello Giovanelli. The Oxford AQA English Language book by Dan Clayton.

This workbook is a great revision tool, as it accompanies the Oxford revision guide.

Additional resources

Some additional websites to consolidate and extend learning:

- This blog has been written by Dan Clayton (who you can see has also produced the text books above) <https://englishlangsfx.blogspot.com/>
- **The emagazine** which contains past articles on uses of language. There will be a password for this that you can access from your teachers. <http://englishandmedia.co.uk/emag>
- **The Guardian online newspaper** which has many articles on language uses and will prove very useful to read so you can get a feel for how to write an article of your own for paper 2.
- A good website to consolidate learning and to perhaps add some more ideas to your notes: <http://theuniversalteacher.org.uk>

Additional books:

- R L Trask, *Language: The Basics*
- Crystal, *A Little Book of Language*
- Ursula Clark, *An Introduction to Stylistics*
- Carter, R and Goddard, A. (2015) *How to Analyse Texts: a Toolkit for Students of English*

Aim: The aim of these tasks is to develop your understanding of key content and key terms to ease the transition into the study of a new subject at A Level standard. Whilst you will have already been exposed to many English skills and linguistic terms at GCSE, more detailed terms will have to be learnt so we can explore the language in use. Look at the table of the terminology below (this is not a complete list) and see if you can either consolidate the terms you have heard before or research new terms you haven't learnt yet.

Task 1:

Word Classes in detail:

Key Term	Definition
Comparative adjective	
Superlative adjective	
Intensifier	
Exclusive adverb	
Subordinating conjunction	
Co-ordinating conjunction	
A determiner	
A definite article	
An indefinite article	
Abstract noun	
Proper noun	
Preposition	
Possessive pronoun	
Demonstrative pronoun	
Progressive/continuous verb	
Modal verb	
A conditional	

Phrases in detail

Key term	Definition
Noun phrase	
Adverbial phrase	
Verb phrase	
Adjectival phrase	

Sentence types

Key term	Definition
A simple sentence	
A compound sentence	
A complex sentence	
A minor sentence	
Declarative sentence	
Interrogative sentence	

Additional techniques:

Key term	Definition
Euphemism	
Dysphemism	
Hyperbole	
Repetition	
Syntactic parallelism	
Triad	

Terms for identifying the context of a text

Key term	Definition
Purpose	
Audience	
Format	
Mode	
Register	
Genre	

Task 2) Becoming a student of Language

What does an A Level in English Language involve and what does it mean to be a great student of English Language? This activity will help you find out what's involved in the A Level and beyond and the ways of learning that will help you succeed in your exams and non-exam work, but more importantly than all that: how to enjoy and get the most out of the course. You might be in for a surprise or two along the way...

- Use the table below to get a sense of what might be involved in the A Level English Language course. Tick the things that sound like you might find them interesting and then tick any that you have already studied or learned about at some point in your education (whether at Primary, Secondary or just out of your own interest).
- Select three of these areas for language study that you most want to study in greater depth. Do a set of bullet points on what you already know about these areas (either through study or general knowledge), and another set of bullet points outlining what you would like to know more about and why.

What you might study	I know a bit about this but have never studied it	I've studied this	Would like to learn more about it
How children start to say their first words			
The ways in which women and men use language in similar and different ways			
Why everyone has an accent but why some accents are liked more than others			
How social media language has developed rapidly in the last couple of decades			
Where new words come from and why			
Why people in India, Nigeria, USA and New Zealand all have their own ways of speaking English			
How people in conversation interrupt and overlap with each other and how that works			
How slang develops and how it's been around for hundreds of years			
Why some words in the language are particularly offensive and make others feel angry or upset			
How writers use language to persuade and influence their readers			
Why some jobs and occupations develop their own specialist vocabulary and expressions			
How people switch and shift the ways they use language in different situations and with different people			
How English has changed from something that only the common people spoke to being the language of all parts of society			

Task 3: Do We Need New Words?

The English language is always generating new words. New words can be created out of nothing (**neologisms**) or be formed by using other words – or parts of words – together in new combinations (**what are called compounds and blends**). Sometimes initials of words in a phrase might be used (**acronyms and initialisms**) and you might also see parts of words being added to the front or end of another word to give it a new form (**prefixes and suffixes**). Most A Level English Language courses look at how and why new words are formed, but there is also debate about whether we need new words and when (or whether) they should appear in dictionaries.

Look at the list of some of the new words that have appeared (or suddenly become much more popular) in English over the last few years (see the next page):

- Have you heard of these words before? Have you used any of them? Tick the relevant columns for each word.
- Choose two words from the list that you think are an important addition to the language. Try to come up with a sentence or two explaining why they are so important.
- Then choose two words from the list that you think are pointless and insignificant. What's the problem with these words and why do you think they shouldn't be included? Again, write a sentence or two explaining your thinking.
- Are there any other new words – or new meanings for older words – that you have heard about? Perhaps you could make a note of new and interesting uses of words over the next few months.
- What are your predictions for the most popular and widely-used words for the next 12 months?
- If you are interested in looking at the history of new words and slang terms that have appeared in the language, read this article by one of the world's most respected slang lexicographers (i.e. people who compile dictionaries of slang), Jonathon Green, is a very good read:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-27405988>

Word	Definition	Have heard/seen this word being used	Have used this word myself
Floss	A dance in which people twist their hips in one direction while swinging their arms in the opposite direction with the fists closed. Popularised by the game <i>Fortnite</i> .		
VAR	Video Assistant Referee. A system used in football to assist refereeing decisions.		
Gaslight	To manipulate or trick someone by pretending that they cannot trust what they see or hear until they doubt their own sanity.		
Twerking	A way of dancing that involves bending forward and shaking or thrusting your buttocks in a rhythmic motion.		
Dadbod	A term used to describe the typically flabby and unsculpted male physique that most dads have.		
Cancel culture	A way of describing the movement to 'cancel' - to publicly disapprove of and then attempt to ignore - celebrities or organisations because of their perceived immoral or unpopular actions.		
Climate strike	A protest in which people leave work, school or college when they should be attending to take part in a protest about climate change.		
Influencer	A person who uses social media to promote a particular way of life or commercial products to their online followers.		

Task 4: Textercise

On an A Level English Language course, you will analyse all sorts of language. This activity gives you a taste of that and asks you to think a bit more about the language around you all the time.

Below are five texts. These may not be the types of texts you have analysed before but these are worth analysing because they are communicating in some way!

Have a quick look at each text and think about the following:

- What they are about
- What they might mean – the ideas, messages, opinions, personalities being expressed
- How they use different methods of communication: design, colour, vocabulary choices, structure, style, interaction.

Then just focus on 3 of them and consider the following questions:

- What is the language in each text designed to achieve? Do you notice any differences between the three you have chosen?
- How have visual elements been used in the texts? Any differences?
- If any of the three were originally spoken, do you notice anything distinctive about them?

Text 1:

On tonight's show, we've got Fontaines DC live in the studio, old session tracks from The Chameleons, Ruthless Rap Assassins and Half Lazy plus all the usual mixture of weird, wonderful and just a bit wonky music from all around the world. Join me after nine tonight for the last of this week's Evening Shows.	A radio DJ presenting a trailer for a show.
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Text 2:




6. Serve

Serve the **spiced Moroccan soup** in bowls with the remaining **coriander** sprinkled over. Dollop on some **Greek yoghurt** and finish with a sprinkling of **dukkah**. Add a sprinkle of the remaining **chilli**, if you want an extra kick.

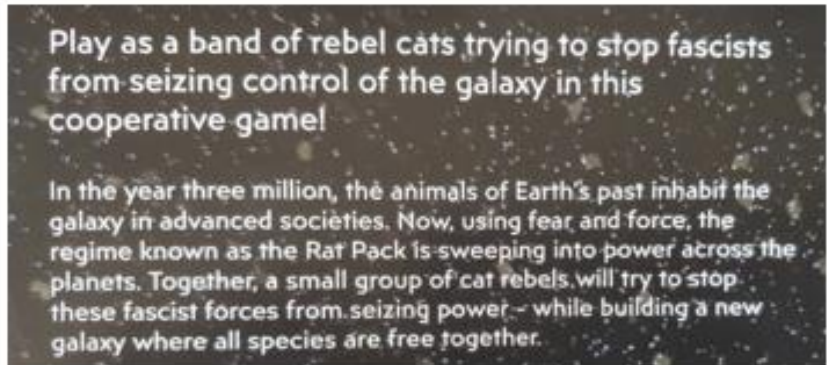
Enjoy!

Part of a recipe for a meal.

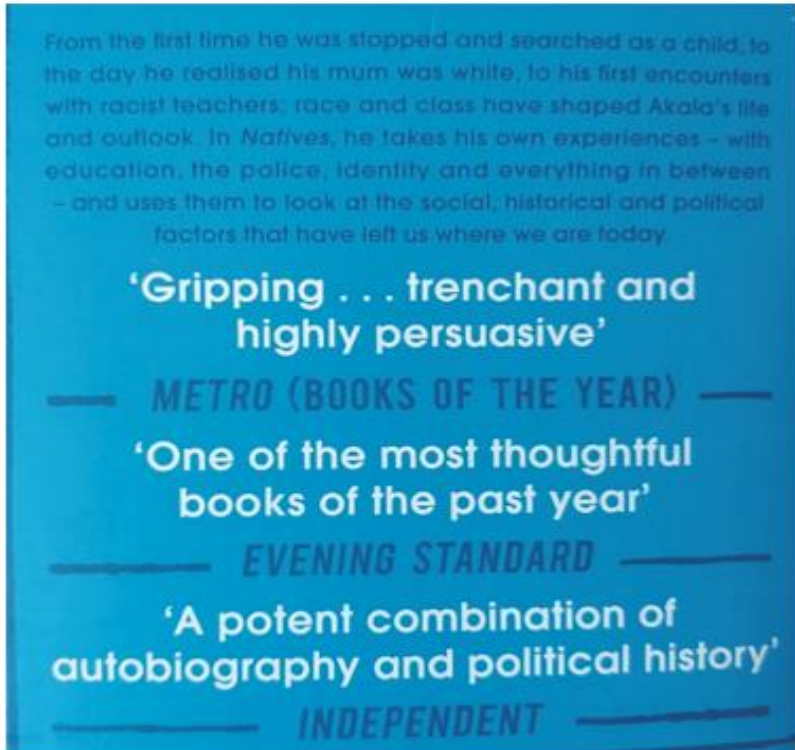
Text 3:

 <p>What refugees using our services say:</p> <p>"I want to say thank you and I really appreciate the effort you made towards making my life look beautiful, peaceful and secure." — Resettled refugee</p> <p>"Refugee Action has been amazing with us. They helped us with everything – registering our children in schools, this was a priority for us." — Dara</p> <p>"They help me a lot – Refugee Action is great. And I feel that they love me." — Joseph</p> <p>"A lot of people in this country have helped me, including Refugee Action. Now I would like to change my career and help other people." — Ada</p>	<p>A section of a charity leaflet from Refugee Action.</p>
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Text 4:

 <p>Play as a band of rebel cats trying to stop fascists from seizing control of the galaxy in this cooperative game!</p> <p>In the year three million, the animals of Earth's past inhabit the galaxy in advanced societies. Now, using fear and force, the regime known as the Rat Pack is sweeping into power across the planets. Together, a small group of cat rebels will try to stop these fascist forces from seizing power – while building a new galaxy where all species are free together.</p>	<p>A description of the boardgame, <i>Space Cats Fight Fascism</i> (TESA Collective games) on the back of the box.</p>
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Text 5:

 <p>From the first time he was stopped and searched as a child, to the day he realised his mum was white, to his first encounters with racist teachers, race and class have shaped Akala's life and outlook. In <i>Natives</i>, he takes his own experiences – with education, the police, identity and everything in between – and uses them to look at the social, historical and political factors that have left us where we are today.</p> <p>'Gripping . . . trenchant and highly persuasive' — METRO (BOOKS OF THE YEAR) —</p> <p>'One of the most thoughtful books of the past year' — EVENING STANDARD —</p> <p>'A potent combination of autobiography and political history' — INDEPENDENT —</p>	<p>The blurb from the back of a book (Akala's <i>Natives</i>, published by Two Roads).</p>
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As an extra challenge, you could gather your own little texts from around the world and see if you can apply the same questions to them!

Task 5: Keeping a Language Diary:

While the A Level English Language course will take you to new places, it also builds on things you've studied and read before. That's because it's still about English: something you've been using and learning about for years. And if you like reading novels, plays, poems and short stories, you don't have to leave them behind when you're studying English Language A Level, because all those forms use language in one way or another and they can all be part of what you study. You can also write creatively on this course.

1) Think back over the last few months to the various things you might have read, watched or listened to.

What have been your favourites recently? For example, you might have enjoyed the latest series of Gogglebox, Killing Eve, an interview between Cardi B and Bernie Sanders, a speech by a scientist taking about public health, a novel about a child entering a parallel universe, a series of articles on a news website about conspiracy theories and fake news, a TikTok of a woman in the USA performing different accents, a stand-up comedy show on YouTube or even a clip of a man trying to chase a bat around his kitchen while a relative shouts 'He's making a mockery out of you boy' in a strong Irish accent.

2) Keep a language log/ diary/ journal, where you reflect on what you have read, watched and listened to. Try to identify one or two language angles to these. Was there:

- Something interesting about an accent being used
- A new word or expression you heard that you hadn't come across before
- A paragraph of writing that you thought was particularly powerful
- An image that you were struck by
- A plot structure or character that interested you?
- A question that you might have about language like 'why do people use 'erm' so much? Or the word 'like'?' 'Or what caused us all to speak differently?'
- A good or bad experience you have had that could be explored in a review or article or a story!
- A celebrity that keeps on saying a new word or phrase

One of the ways to inspire your own creativity on the course is to think about the things that have inspired you. At some point, you'll be asked to produce your own creative writing on this course and that might be an article about a language issue, an opening to a short story, a review of a gig, film or restaurant, or even the text of a speech. The more you read, listen to and think about language, the more you'll have to draw on.

Start to do this task now and keep a track of your thoughts/ things that have interested you so you can share some of them with us on the first day back in class.

Some additional guidance:

Your thoughts/ ideas and inspirations can be typed, jotted down on paper or in a lovely notebook that has been dedicated to this language journal.

It can be in bullet points or mindmaps or just random questions dotted around the page. These are your notes.

It really will provide sources of inspiration for a potential language investigation or creative writing piece if you are consistent with it.

