

Welcome to English Language!

Now that you've decided to study English Language at A level, you'll need to do a bit of preparation. This pack contains a programme of information sheets, activities and resources to prepare you to start your A level in September. It is aimed to be used after you complete your GCSE throughout the rest of the summer term and over the summer holidays to ensure you are ready to start your course in September.

The resources include:

- Key pre-knowledge topics that are required for you to be successful in your course with activities associated with the topics, which test your key knowledge and understanding of the building blocks required to be successful in this subject.
- Suggested reading and associated websites where you can research the topics you will be exploring in your A level course.
- Suggested visits and activities over the summer holidays including places of interest that will generate enthusiasm and engagement.

Pre-knowledge topics

In order to be able to access the course you will need to learn the metalanguage of language. An aspect of this is concerned with 'Grammar'.

- **Revise** parts of speech – feel confident that you can identify and label different word classes, e.g. nouns, verbs, etc. and different sentence types, e.g. simple, compound, exclamatory, etc. You will have lots of knowledge of this already but there are also lots of websites/ books that you can use to help you with this.
- **Create** a 'Guide to Grammar' book for Key Stage 4 pupils **explaining** what the different word classes/sentences are and giving lots of examples.

Things to consider:

- **What** should you include for this age group?
- **How** can you explain this using language which they will understand?
- **How** can you make the book interesting to this age group? e.g. colour, images, pop-ups, etc.?

In addition to the above tasks please see the English and Media centre activities on the following pages which act as a great introduction to a range of topics covered throughout the course.

Worksheets included:

- 1. Becoming a Student of Language
- 2. Leap into Language – Language Profile
- 4. Do We Need New Words?
- 7. Textercise
- 13. A Language Diary

1. 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. Write a paragraph or two explaining what you already know (either through study or general knowledge), and a paragraph explaining 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			
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 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			

2. Leap into Language – Language Profile

One of the most interesting aspects of studying language is that you learn more about your own language use, so let's make this first task all about you...

- Create a 'language profile' of yourself by answering the following questions and then writing them up as a set of bullet points that highlight what you think are the most interesting and important aspects of the language you use:
 - What's your earliest language memory? Can you remember a nursery rhyme, song or picture book from when you were very little?
 - Have your family or extended family kept any records – video, audio, family memories – of any of your earliest words?
 - Have you kept any old school books from when you were learning to read and write?
 - Where were you born and where in the UK, or the wider world, are your family from? Go back a few generations if you like and think about any other languages that your family members might speak, or other places your family members might have lived.
 - Are there any words or expressions only you or your family use, which others don't really understand?
 - Do you or your friends at school use language in any ways that you notice as being different from other people around you? These could be other people in your year, your teachers, your family, whoever.
 - Do you listen to or watch anyone on TV, online or in films or music videos who uses language in a way that interests or annoys you?
 - Do you ever look at or hear someone else using language in a way that you find is totally new or strange to you?
 - Have your teachers or family ever talked to you about the way you speak?

One of the most useful resources for language on this course is **you**. Language is made up of so much more than the words we see printed on a page, so when you are thinking about language, come back to these ideas here to keep the range wide. We are often told there is a right way and a wrong way to use language, but the more you study about language, the more you'll realise that it's more complicated and interesting than that.

And you'll also start to build up a bigger picture of the different influences on your own language identity as this course goes on – all the factors that influence who you are linguistically and how you can choose to behave with language in different situations.

4. 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.
- 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, follow some of the links on pages 30-36 but in the meantime, [this article by one of the world's most respected slang lexicographers](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-27405988) (i.e. people who compile dictionaries of slang), Jonathon Green, is a very good read:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-27405988>

Recent New Words

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.		

Word	Definition	Have heard/seen this word being used	Have used this word myself
Gaslight	To manipulate or trick someone by pretending that they cannot trust what they see or hear until they doubt their own sanity.		
Twerving	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.		
Nonbinary	A word describing a sexual identity that does not conform to binary categories of male and female.		
Hamsterkaufing	Stockpiling food like a hamster storing food in its cheeks (from German)		

WFH	Working From Home		
Mansplaining	A patronising way of explaining something (by a man to a woman).		

7. Textercise

One of the things you will quickly notice about the study of language at A Level is that you don't just look at serious, weighty books. You might have studied quite a lot of literary fiction on your English courses so far and even when it hasn't been literature, it has probably been what is broadly termed 'literary non-fiction'. 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 you will find eight 'texts'. These might not be the kind of texts you've analysed before, but they are all worth analysing because they have been created to communicate 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.
- Choose three texts and use the questions below to make some quick notes about how they compare in their uses of language.
- Once you've done this, think about gathering your own set of texts from the world around you. Like these texts here, your texts could be written, spoken, online, serious, silly, informative, clever and/or important. Try to find at least five interesting texts and use the same questions to help you think about them.

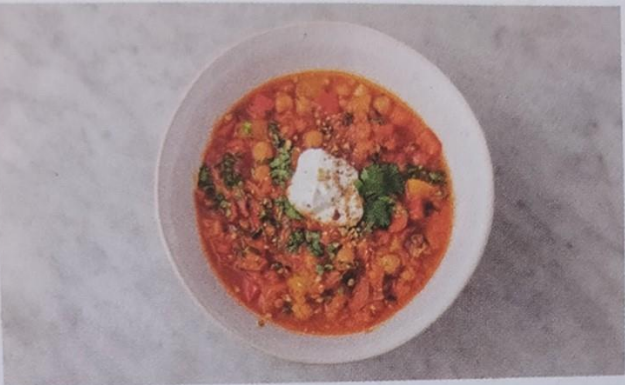
Questions to ask about your choice of texts

- 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?
- How easy or difficult is it to analyse some of these texts? Does it feel like you can analyse them in the same way as a piece of literature, for example?

While analysing these types of text might be a new experience for you, the ways in which you explore and analyse them will build on things you've done before. Some of that will take you back to

the work you might have done at Primary school with grammar (verbs, nouns and phrases, for example) and some will build on the work you've just been doing for GCSE.

The Texts

<p>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.</p>	<p>A radio DJ presenting a trailer for a show.</p>
 <p>6. Serve</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Enjoy!</p>	<p>Part of a recipe for a meal.</p>
<p>What refugees using our services say:</p> <div> <p>"I want to say thank you and I really appreciate the effort you made towards making my life look beautiful, peaceful and secure."</p> <p>– Resettled refugee</p> </div> <div> <p>"Refugee Action has been amazing with us. They helped us with everything – registering our children in schools, this was a priority for us."</p> <p>– Dara</p> </div> <div> <p>"They help me a lot – Refugee Action is great. And I feel that they love me."</p> <p>– Joseph</p> </div> <div> <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."</p> <p>– Ade</p> </div>	<p>A section of a charity leaflet from Refugee Action.</p>

Play as a band of rebel cats trying to stop fascists from seizing control of the galaxy in this cooperative game!

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.

A description of the boardgame, *Space Cats Fight Fascism* (TESA Collective games) on the back of the box.

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 *Natives*, 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.

'Gripping . . . trenchant and highly persuasive'

— **METRO (BOOKS OF THE YEAR)** —

'One of the most thoughtful books of the past year'

— **EVENING STANDARD** —

'A potent combination of autobiography and political history'

— **INDEPENDENT** —

The blurb from the back of a book (Akala's *Natives*, published by Two Roads).



A dog food carton.

And it's controlled beautifully by Jack Harrison who beats his man and whips a ball across the face of goal. It's an inviting ball aaaaand it's Ben White who gets on the end of it to put it past the keeper's outstretched hand. First goal of the season for the central defender and what a great team goal that was.

Part of a radio commentary on a football match.



A tweet from a local record shop on Record Store Day.

13. 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.

- 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.
- Keep a language log 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?

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.

Suggested Reading and Research

Language is all around us and therefore discussion of language use and the way it changes is always in the press. Tony Thorne writes an interesting blog that explores many issues, one of them being the impact of Covid 19 on language. It is well worth a read:

<https://language-and-innovation.com/2020/04/15/coronaspeak-part-2-the-language-of-covid-19-goes-viral/>

Below you will also find a suggested reading list – including websites, ted talks, etc. No one is expecting you to spend your entire summer reading every book on this list. But challenge yourself to do at least one bit of wider reading, as research has proven that wider reading is key to achieving the highest grades in English Language.

I have also included some further suggested reading and research worksheets from *The English and Media Centre*. These include:

- 14. Language on the Page
- 15. English Language for Your Ears
- 16. Online Resources for English Language
- 17. Experience a University-style Lecture

Child language

Armstrong, M. (2006) *Children Writing Stories* (OUP)
Goodman, Y.M. and Prisca, M. (eds) (2007) *Critical Issues in Early Literacy: Research and Pedagogy* (Routledge)
Kress, G. (1996) *Before Writing: Rethinking the Paths to Literacy* (Routledge)
Marsh, J. (ed.) (2005) *Popular Culture, New Media and Digital Literacy in Early Childhood* (Routledge)
Pinker, S. (1995) *The Language Instinct* (Penguin)

Global English

Jenkins, J. (2009) *World Englishes: A resource book for students* (Routledge)
Kirkpatrick, A. (2007) *World Englishes* (Cambridge University Press)
Melchers, G. and Shaw, P. (2011) *World Englishes* (Routledge)
Mesthrie, R. (2010) *Varieties of English*, vols. 2 and 3 (Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin)
Sergeant, P. and Swann, J. (eds) (2011) *English in the World: History, Diversity, Change* (Worlds of English) (Routledge)
Mooney, A. and Evans, B. (2015) *Language, Society and Power: An introduction*, 4th edition (Routledge)

Language and gender

Baker, P. (2008) *Sexed Texts: Language, Gender and Sexuality* (Equinox)
Talbot, M. (2010) *Language and Gender* (Polity Press)

Language of journalism

Finch, G. (2013) *Word of Mouth: A New Introduction to Language and Communication*, 2nd edition (Palgrave Macmillan)

Loughlin, L. (2000) *The Language of Magazines* (Intertext series) (Routledge)

Reah, D. (2002) *The Language of Newspapers*, 2nd edition (Intertext series)

Language and power

Fairclough, N. (2014) *Language and Power*, 3rd edition (Routledge)

Mooney, A. and Evans, B. (2015) *Language, Society and Power: An introduction*, 4th edition (Routledge)

Regional language variation

Barton D. and Hamilton, M. (1998) *Local Literacies: Reading and Writing in One Community* (Routledge)

Beal, J. (2008) *A Handbook of Varieties of English* (Mouton de Gruyter, New York)

Hughes, A., Trudgill, P. and Watt, D. (2012) *English Accents and Dialects: An Introduction to Social and Regional Varieties of English in the British Isles*, 5th edition (Routledge)

Variation over Time

Aitchison, J. (2000) *Language Change: Progress or Decay* (CUP)

Baugh, A. C. and Cable, T. (2012) *A History of the English Language* (Routledge) Graddol, D., Leith, D., Swann, J., Rhys, M. and Gillen, J. (eds) (2007) *Changing English* (Routledge)

Leith, D. (1997) *A Social History of English* (Routledge)

Seargeant, P. and Swann, J. (eds) (2011) *English in the World: History, Diversity, Change* (Worlds of English) (Routledge)

Spufford, M. (1985) *Small Books and Pleasant Histories: Popular Fiction and Its Readership in 17th-century England* (CUP)

Simpson, P. and Mayr, A. (2010) *Language and Power: A resource book for students* (Routledge)

Websites

<http://atp.uclan.ac.uk/buddypress/diffusion/?p=736> Thorough exploration of the development of language and gender studies.

www.babelzine.com Babel Magazine (cutting edge research in Linguistics, aimed at a wide range of language lovers).

www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00gx2dt

1996 Reith Lecture by Jean Aitchison, a Professor of Language and Communication in the Faculty of English Language and Literature at the University of Oxford.

www.bl.uk/ The British Library

<http://college.heinemann.com/shared/onlineresources/E00654/chapter1.pdf> Link to a section on Scaffolding Literacy Instruction by Adrian Rogers and Emily M. Rogers

www.corpora4learning.net/resources/corpora.html

This page offers short descriptions of the most widely known English language corpora.

www.dialectsarchive.com/ Recordings of varieties of English around the world.

www.englishandmedia.co.uk/emag/ Emagazine is a quarterly subscription magazine, with website for A Level students of English subjects.

www.gutenberg.org/ Project Gutenberg for free ebooks

www.knowledgepresentation.org/BuildingTheFuture/Kress2/Kress2.htm | A Gunther Kress presentation on 'Reading Images: Multimodality, Representation and New Media', 2004
<http://linguistics-research-digest.blogspot.co.uk/> Summaries of recent articles about linguistics

<http://linguistics.slif.qmul.ac.uk/english-language-teaching> A student site about multicultural London English – loads of examples and transcripts.

www.literacytrust.org.uk The National Literacy Trust covers a wide range from early years to adult literacy, but has interesting articles and details of resources for the 'Talk to Your Baby' campaign – regularly updated.

www.llas.ac.uk/resources/gpg/2827 An article overviewing the history of language and gender.

<http://technonanny.wordpress.com/> Originally available through the Teachit website, this is a blog written by a grandmother to Louise and Spike, who has been following them around with a voice recorder for over a year. (<http://www.teachit.co.uk/index.php?CurrMenu=205>)
www.ted.com/ Relevant talks on the TED site.

www.universalteacher.org.uk/contents.htm#langua Includes a range of topics on English language for A level students.

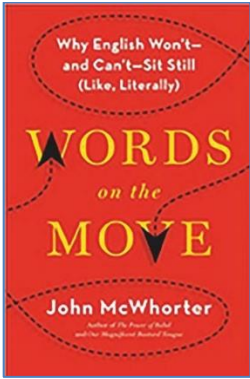
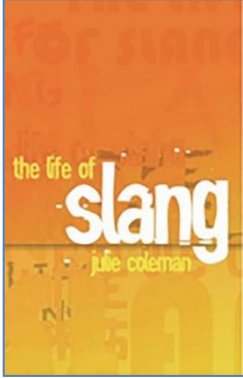
14. Language on the Page

A lot of really good books have recently been written by academic linguists and general language experts for the general public about what language is and how it works. We've suggested a few recent favourites below.

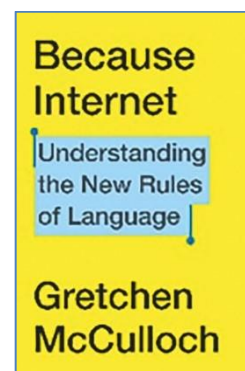
We're not expecting you to read all these books – but we won't stop you if that's what you want to do.

- Choose one or two and use the links here. Most of these will take you to the 'Look Inside' pages on Amazon which give you a sample to read, while others will take you to extracts or an Audible sample. A few take you to a review or an interview.
- Dip in and out of a few of them, looking for what they say about some of the main issues to do with English, making a note of some key quotations you could use further down the line.

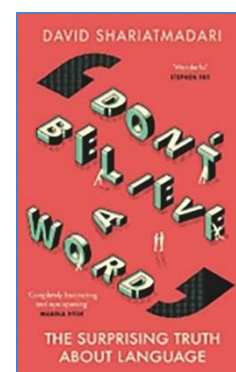
Some Reading Suggestions

<p><u>John McWhorter: <i>Words on the Move</i></u> <u>https://preview.tinyurl.com/wordsmove</u></p>	
<p>Julie Coleman: <i>The Life of Slang</i> (Short interviews about the book) <u>https://youtu.be/DIqk6MdLWRw</u> <u>https://youtu.be/HkAwIVoNUx0</u></p>	

Gretchen McCulloch: *Because Internet*
<https://tinyurl.com/cosinternet>

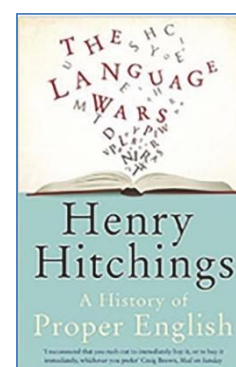


David Shariatmadari: *Don't Believe a Word*
<https://tinyurl.com/notbelieve>

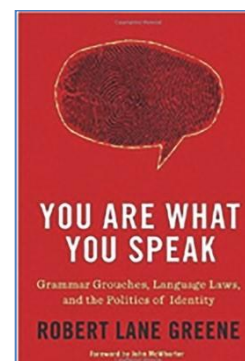


Henry Hitchings: *The Language Wars*
(A review)

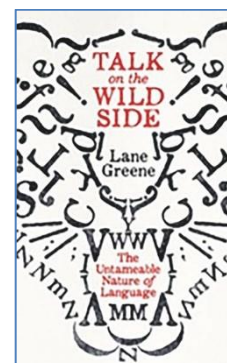
See page 61 in the accompanying 'emagazine Resource Pack – Language'



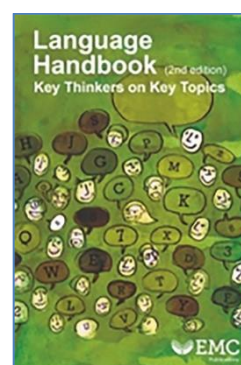
Lane Greene: *You Are What You Speak*
<https://tinyurl.com/vocabsticklers>



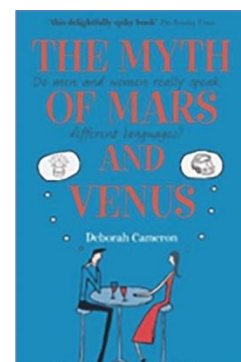
Lane Greene: *Talk on the Wild Side*
<https://tinyurl.com/talkwildside>



Dan Clayton (ed): *EMC Language Handbook (2nd edition): Key Thinkers on Key Topics*
<https://tinyurl.com/emclang>



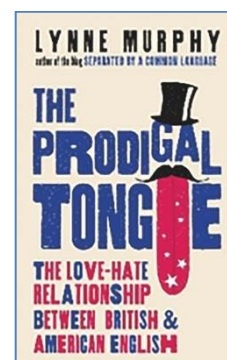
Deborah Cameron: *The Myth of Mars and Venus*
<https://tinyurl.com/mythmarsvenus>



Abby Kaplan: *Women Talk More Than Men... and Other Myths About Language Explained*
<https://tinyurl.com/womenmentalk>



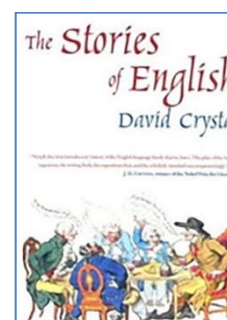
[Lynne Murphy: *The Prodigal Tongue*](https://tinyurl.com/prodigaltalk)
<https://tinyurl.com/prodigaltalk>



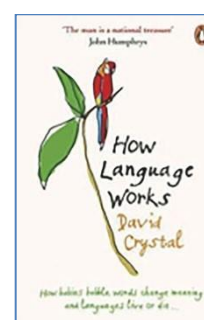
[Jane Setter: *Your Voice Speaks Volumes*](https://tinyurl.com/voicevolumes)
<https://tinyurl.com/voicevolumes>



[David Crystal: *Stories of English*](https://tinyurl.com/crystalstories)
<https://tinyurl.com/crystalstories>



[David Crystal: *How Language Works*](https://tinyurl.com/crystalworks)
<https://tinyurl.com/crystalworks>



15. English Language for Your Ears

In the last few years, more and more linguists have been getting their ideas and interests out to the public through radio programmes and podcasts. In some cases, these are linked to big publishers and broadcasters (the BBC in the UK and Slate in the USA), while others are independently produced. There's now a really good range out there and plenty to choose from.

- Have a browse through the suggestions here and listen to one or two in more detail. Most of the radio programmes can be accessed directly through the link provided and the podcasts through the links or via an app like Spotify.
- If possible, use the platform recommended and validated by your school to share what you listened to with friends. Which podcast would you most recommend and why?
- Follow up the suggestions from your classmates.
- Keep listening to any of the podcasts you enjoyed (or try out some others), follow the ones you like on Instagram or Twitter and let the presenters know what you thought. Many of these podcasts will engage with their listeners and pick up ideas that you want to discuss, so get involved.

The BBC's [Word of Mouth](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qtnz/episodes/player) programme presented by Michael Rosen, has a huge archive of previous programmes all available for download. Some recent highlights have been selected for you here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qtnz/episodes/player>

- [A Debate About American English](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08g5533) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08g5533>
- [Will Emoji Be the Future of English?](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08ffvp6) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08ffvp6>
- [The Language of Lying](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000dfpy) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000dfpy>
- [Romani Language](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m00050qw) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m00050qw>
- [Black British Identity and Black-related Words](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0004l93) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0004l93>
- [Solving Crime with Language](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m00027n6) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m00027n6>
- [Language, Gender and Trans Identities](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b09r4k4l) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b09r4k4l>

[Lexicon Valley](https://slate.com/podcasts/lexicon-valley), presented by John McWhorter can be found here and a few particularly relevant ones have been highlighted below: <https://slate.com/podcasts/lexicon-valley>

- [Women's Language](https://slate.com/podcasts/lexicon-valley/2020/03/vocal-frywomen-language) <https://slate.com/podcasts/lexicon-valley/2020/03/vocal-frywomen-language>
- [Like, Sort Of...](https://slate.com/podcasts/lexicon-valley/2019/11/politeness-in-the-english-language) <https://slate.com/podcasts/lexicon-valley/2019/11/politeness-in-the-english-language>
- [Language on the Internet](https://slate.com/human-interest/2019/07/john-mcwhorter-and-gretchen-mcculloch-onbecause-internet.html) <https://slate.com/human-interest/2019/07/john-mcwhorter-and-gretchen-mcculloch-onbecause-internet.html>

The BBC's **Seriously** podcast isn't just about language but you'll find a few interesting language programmes on there, including this one featuring Susie Dent on American English:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08qxd02>

Another BBC programme, **The Verb** often has language issues up for discussion. A few selected episodes are:

- [Puns and Wordplay](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000dj45) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000dj45>

- Sports Writing <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000c2ls>
- How to Write Out Sexism <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0002zyh>

Other podcasts include the following:

The Language Revolution



<https://thelanguagerevolution.co.uk/>

Accentricity



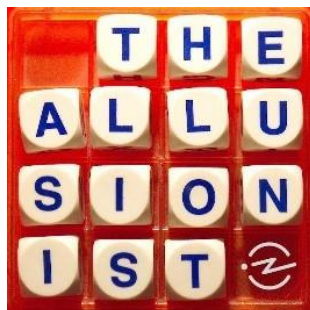
<https://www.accentricity-podcast.com/>

The Vocal Fries



<https://vocalfriespod.com/>

The Allusionist



<https://www.theallusionist.org/>

Lexitecture



<http://www.lexitecture.com/>

Lingthusiasm



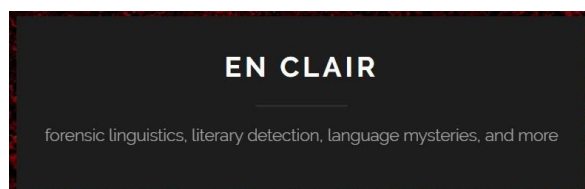
<https://lingthusiasm.com/>

Talk the Talk



<http://talkthetalkpodcast.com/>

en clair



<http://wp.lancs.ac.uk/enclair/>

16. Online Resources for English Language

Many linguists and university linguistics departments have an online presence that's accessible and interesting for the general public, as well as those who are studying language at school, college or university. Along with these, you can find online resources from the BBC, British Council and British Library. A few of these have been selected for you below. They start with the most accessible and move on to ones that are a little more complex or demanding in nature. Dip into a few of these and see what you make of them. They are all interesting in different ways!

Perhaps once you have had a look at the few of them, you could write a short report on two or three that you were particularly interested in. What grabbed you? What else would you like to know more about? Were there any ideas you'd like to challenge and argue about?

British Library

- British Accents and Dialects: <https://www.bl.uk/british-accents-and-dialects>
- English Language and Literature Timeline: <http://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/evolvingenglish/accessvers/index.html>
- Texts in Context: <http://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/texts/context.html>

The Open University has always been good for this, and recently one of their linguistics lecturers, Philip Seargeant, posted a link to a range of their online resources

- What is Language? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LwG9SNeCof8>
- The History of English in 10 Minutes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3r9bOkYW9s>
- A Brief History of Emoji: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tTXLuZHYf4>
- Narrative in Journalism and Politics: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCP_ifjRZgA
- Filter Bubbles and Fake News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eaolE1blpWk>
- Why Do We Swear? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TsFm-pN_XJ0

The dictionary makers (lexicographers) are also very good at making their work with the English language really accessible.

- **The Oxford Dictionary** blog: <https://public.oed.com/blog/>
- **Macmillan Dictionary** blog: <http://www.macmillandictionaryblog.com/>
- Australia's **Macquarie Dictionary** blog: <https://www.macquariedictionary.com.au/blog/>
- The US's **Merriam-Webster Dictionary**: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/>

Queen Mary University London (QMUL)

Resources aimed at students, teachers and the general public on accent attitudes, changing language in the UK and lots more.

- Accent Bias in Britain Project: <https://accentbiasbritain.org/>
- Teach Real English Resources: <http://www.teachrealenglish.org/>

University of York

Lots of very useful resources on aspects of language use and how people feel about it

- The York English Language Toolkit: <https://englishlanguagetoolkit.york.ac.uk/>

University College London (UCL)

Helping you understand what grammar is and how it works.

- Englicious Grammar Resources: <http://englicious.org/>

Lancaster University

- Corpus-based teaching resources that explain how you can use technology and digital databases to track changes and variations in English: <http://corpora.lancs.ac.uk/bnclab/search?display=resources>

Tony Thorne's *Language and Innovation* pages

- Tony Thorne is a linguist at King's College London who collects and tracks slang usage, among other things: <https://language-and-innovation.com/>

Deborah Cameron's *A feminist guide to language* blog

- Deborah Cameron is one of the country's leading experts on language and gender and her blog is funny, thought-provoking and insightful: <https://debuk.wordpress.com/>

17. Experience a University-style Lecture

OK... so you're thinking of heading into an A Level rather than a degree but it's always interesting to see what's further down the path, should you choose to take it. As more and more universities provide material online and reach out beyond their own students to the wider community, you will find lots of interesting and accessible resources available, including lectures and MOOCs (interactive, self-taught online courses).

Some lectures and talks have been chosen to give you a taste of a few interesting areas.

- Watch a few minutes of these and choose a couple to watch all the way through. Don't worry about making notes at this stage; just follow the line of argument and think about the ideas being offered.
- Once you have listened to a couple of lectures, try to jot down a few notes at the end. What were the key ideas? Did you understand the arguments being made? Were there any things you weren't sure about and might need to look up?
- If you can, arrange with a classmate to listen to the same lecture and swap notes via the platform recommended and validated by your school. Sometimes, two of us can listen to the same lecture and come away with very different ideas or see a different importance to the points being made.
- Many of the links from the TED talks offer suggestions for other language-based lectures. Follow a few of those links and keep a note of which of these you found interesting, and some key ideas from them. Many of these could come in useful later on in the course.

emagClips

- Professor Tim grant on Forensic Linguistics <https://www.englishandmedia.co.uk/video-clips/clip-listing/leaping-into-language-emagclips>

TED Talks

- Lera Boroditsky on the links between language and thought
https://www.ted.com/talks/lera_boroditsky_how_language_shapes_the_way_we_think
- John McWhorter on digital language and texting
https://www.ted.com/talks/john_mcwhorter_txtng_is_killing_language_jk
- Deb Roy on children's language development
https://www.ted.com/talks/deb_roy_the_birth_of_a_word
- Anne Curzan on what makes a word 'real'
https://www.ted.com/talks/anne_curzan_what_makes_a_word_real
- Erin McKean on making up new words
https://www.ted.com/talks/erin_mckean_go_ahead_make_up_new_words
- Claire Bowerman on where English comes from
https://www.ted.com/talks/claire_bowerman_where_did_english_come_from
- John McWhorter on made-up languages in sci-fi and fantasy
https://www.ted.com/talks/john_mcwhorter_are_elvish_klingon_dothraki_and_na_vi_real_languages

And others

David Crystal interviewed by Cambridge University Press

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=59GMlpAdVok>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v8jofTbIxM>

Online Courses

If you are feeling like you really want to immerse yourself in some language study over the next few months (And why not?) **Future Learn** have a selection of online courses you can sign up for, including some excellent ones on Language and Linguistics. Here are a few we would recommend:

- Understanding English Dictionaries <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/understanding-dictionaries>
- An Introduction to Sociolinguistics: Accents, Attitudes and Identity <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/accents-attitudes-and-identity-an-introduction-to-sociolinguistics>
- Introduction to Intercultural Studies: Language and Culture <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/intercultural-studies-language-culture>

Suggested visits and activities

Language is all around us, so unlike other subjects, you don't necessarily need to visit a specific place to be immersed in the English Language. You can just as easily listen in on a conversation on the bus and question why the participants are using language in that particular way. Is it because of what they are talking about, where they are, their relationship with the person that they are talking to or because of what they want the person to do as a result of speaking to them?

You can do the same with written language, thinking again about why the person has used those specific words, images, sentences. Is it because of the technology that they are using, their age, their occupation, their relationship with the reader of the text?

If you want to go on a specific visit, here are a couple of suggestions for you:

- Visit *The British Library* in London to view the archives to see how language has changed over time. If you can't go in person, visit an online exhibition which focused on the English Language.
- Visit a theatre or conference centre to watch and enjoy a play / monologue or to hear renowned linguists speak about the English Language. Not only will this be great entertainment but this might be useful for the NEA where you could decide to write your own playscript.
- Visit some young children, this could be family or friend's children, or you could try to organise a more formal visit to a primary school or nursery. Listen to and interact with young children to see how they use language? What are they able to do? What area of language do they struggle with? Are they able to read/ write? What support do they need with this?