

<u>Overview Document</u> <u>2026/2027</u>	Curriculum Area: English	Year Group: 8YA
	Personnel Responsible: PPR	Quality Assured by: PPR

Cycle	Topic/Unit Title – Big Question	Content Coverage	Skill development and links to other areas of this subject's curriculum
1	Can Beauty and Terror Live Together?	• Reading aloud and rereading • Role Play and Drama • Writing in role • Visualising • Story mapping Shared writing • Line Poetry and Kennings • Creating a descriptive piece about characters and events • Persuasive poster • Writing in role as a character • Playscript of a new scene	This sequence of learning builds students' engagement with Mouse, Bird, Snake, Wolf through a rich blend of reading, writing and drama. Students respond particularly positively to the creative and imaginative elements of the unit, such as designing their own creatures, completing freeze frames and writing kennings. They enjoy opportunities to express their ideas through role play, debate and graphic novel creation, which allow them to take ownership of the story and explore characters' motives in a deeper, more interactive way. Throughout the unit, students are encouraged to make meaningful connections between the text and the wider world. They draw links between the creative acts of Little Ben and Sue and real-world issues, such as environmental responsibility and human impact on the planet, particularly when debating whether humans are responsible for the destruction of the Earth. They also connect prior learning, for example revisiting earlier creative work and applying previously taught descriptive techniques to new contexts. Students are supported to explore different perspectives, question characters' decisions and reflect on consequences, helping to develop both empathy and critical thinking. By the end of the unit, students are able to articulate their opinions clearly, use rich vocabulary to describe and persuade, and demonstrate a growing understanding of how ideas can be expressed across a range of forms and purposes.

<u>Overview Document</u> <u>2026/2027</u>	Curriculum Area: English	Year Group: 8YA
	Personnel Responsible: PPR	Quality Assured by: PPR

2	Are Vikings Really Legendary?	- To engage children with a story told through a mixture of narration, speech and visual imagery - To explore themes and issues, and develop and sustain ideas through discussion - To develop creative responses to the text through drama, storytelling and artwork - To compose writing for a wide variety of purposes - To write in role in order to explore and develop empathy for characters	This unit immerses students in a rich, image-led narrative that encourages curiosity, creativity and empathy. Students respond particularly well to starting with illustrations, as this allows them to make predictions, ask questions and engage in discussion without the pressure of “right answers.” They enjoy using drama-based approaches such as freeze frames, performance reading and role-on-the-wall activities, which help them to explore Arthur as a character and deepen their understanding of key events. Creative writing opportunities, including diary entries, letters and adventure narratives, are often highly engaging, particularly when pupils are able to express Arthur’s emotions or imagine new scenarios, such as his journey to the land of the Viking gods. Across the sequence, students are supported to make strong connections between the text, their own experiences and wider themes. They explore ideas of bravery, decision-making and consequence through activities such as advising Arthur, debating his choices and writing in role, linking these to real-life situations where decisions can have different outcomes. The exploration of poetry, including creating verses about books and the golden rope, helps pupils connect emotions and imagination with language choices. By revisiting key moments through Book Talk and reflective journal writing, pupils develop a deeper understanding of how authors build anticipation, action and emotion. This unit also encourages students to see how different forms of writing—letters, narratives, poems and performances—can all communicate meaning in varied ways, supporting them to become more confident, reflective and versatile writers.
3	How are Ideas About Nature Presented in Books?	- Response to illustration - Rereading and Text marking - Role on the Wall - Personal Narrative - Poetry - Writing in Role	This unit uses rich imagery and poetic language to immerse students in themes of water, journeys and environmental awareness. Students are particularly engaged by the visual elements of the text, responding thoughtfully to illustrations and drawing on their own personal experiences of rain and water to make meaningful connections. They enjoy exploring the movement and power of water through discussion and descriptive language, as well as responding

<u>Overview Document</u> <u>2026/2027</u>	Curriculum Area: English	Year Group: 8YA
	Personnel Responsible: PPR	Quality Assured by: PPR

		Referential Writing	creatively to poetry such as Waterfall's Song. Activities such as role-on-the-wall, summarising Isaac's journey and vocabulary collection help pupils to build a deeper understanding of character and setting. Throughout the sequence, students are encouraged to make connections between the text and wider environmental and real-world issues, including water pollution, deforestation and the water cycle. They link Isaac's journey to their own understanding of rivers and natural processes, as well as to their personal experiences of weather and nature. Writing tasks, including explanations of the water cycle, persuasive pieces on environmental issues and biographical writing, allow pupils to apply their knowledge across a range of genres. By revisiting the text and reflecting on their responses, pupils develop their ability to analyse how language and imagery influence meaning and emotion. The unit also supports students in becoming more reflective learners through assessment and review, enabling them to identify strengths and areas for improvement. By the end, students are able to articulate their ideas clearly, use precise vocabulary and demonstrate a growing awareness of how literature can connect to both personal experience and global issues.
4	Can I write for meaning and purpose?	- To explore an information book in depth - To explore themes and issues, and develop and sustain ideas through discussion - To use creative responses to the text through drama, storytelling and artwork - To develop creative responses to the text - To write with confidence for real purposes and audiences	This unit offers a rich, cross-curricular exploration of poetry, science and storytelling, enabling students to engage creatively with the idea of a pebble's journey through time. Students particularly enjoy the freedom of poetry, especially when discovering that poems do not need to rhyme and experimenting with free verse, metaphor and alliteration through texts such as Seven Pebbles. Creative tasks, including blackout poetry, annotating images and describing what they can "see" in their mind's eye, allow pupils to express themselves imaginatively and build confidence in using descriptive language. Drama activities such as role play, freeze frames and thought tracking are highly engaging and support pupils' understanding of character, setting and emotion. Throughout the unit, students are encouraged to make strong connections

<u>Overview Document</u> <u>2026/2027</u>	<u>Curriculum Area: English</u>	<u>Year Group: 8YA</u>
	<u>Personnel Responsible: PPR</u>	<u>Quality Assured by: PPR</u>

			between literature, science and real-world issues. They link the journey of the pebble to their understanding of rock formation, sedimentary processes and timelines, while also exploring themes such as climate change, glacier melt and environmental responsibility. These connections help pupils to see how their learning applies beyond the classroom, particularly when writing persuasive leaflets or letters to a local MP about protecting green spaces. Students also connect past and present through their study of prehistoric life, comparing extinct creatures to modern animals and considering why they no longer exist. By engaging in discussion, group work and presentation, students develop their ability to articulate and justify their ideas, critique their own and others' work, and refine their writing through editing. By the end of the unit, students demonstrate a growing confidence in using language for a range of purposes, alongside a deeper understanding of how creative and factual learning can work together to explore big ideas about time, change and the environment.
--	--	--	--