AQA A-Level English Language

PREPARATION BOOKLET

STUDENT NAME: ....

1. <u>Course Information</u>

<u>Terms and Concepts</u>
Studying this course will enable you to develop a deep knowledge of how the English language works and a secure understanding of how language users communicate. You will explore data, transcripts and examples of language in use and apply concepts and methods appropriate for the analysis of language. You will undertake an independent investigation into an area of particular and individual interest at the end of Year 12 (in discussion with your teacher) and develop your skills as producers and interpreters of language. You will engage creatively with topical issues relevant to language in use and develop your interest in and enjoyment of English. You will also develop an ability to evaluate attitudes towards language and its users, engaging with current debates about language use and investigating how different contexts across time and place affect language use.

<u>Topics will include the following:</u>
• language use and varieties of language
• attitudes towards language use
• language and power
• language and gender
 • language and technology
• child language acquisition
• language change over time (from the seventeenth century to present)

<u>Basic Principles:</u>

Context
Context refers to the conditions in which a text is produced or received: when, where, how and by whom a text is produced or received. Language use can differ vastly depending on these factors.
Genre
The type of text, e.g. a newspaper article, a blog, a conversation between friends, a speech given to employees, etc.
Audience
The person or people reading or hearing the text – the reader or the listener.
Purpose
Why the text was produced (spoken or written), e.g. to persuade, to inform, to describe, etc.
Mode
Mode is either spoken or written.
Register and Formality
The type or variety of language the writer or speaker choose to use, e.g. formal / informal register. There are also varying degrees of how formal or informal texts can be.

<u>Language Levels</u>
Lexis and Semantics – the vocabulary and the meanings shaped by the word choices a language user makes
Grammar – sentence construction and functional word classes
Discourse – looking at the structure of whole pieces of text which differs according to mode, genre and context

Pragmatics – how language is dependent on context – the meaning behind what we say or write

Phonetics, Phonology and Prosodics – studying how language users interact in speech – the sounds and effects

Course outline-

Assessments

Paper 1: Language, the individual and society	Paper 2: Language diversity and change	Non-exam assessment: Language in action
What's assessed • Textual variations and representations • Children's language development (0–11 years) • Methods of language analysis are integrated into the activities	**What's assessed** • Language diversity and change • Language discourses • Writing skills • Methods of language analysis are integrated into the activities	**What's assessed** • Language investigation • Original writing • Methods of language analysis are integrated into the activities
Assessed • written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes • 100 marks • 40% of A-level	**Assessed** • written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes • 100 marks • 40% of A-level	**Assessed** • word count: 3,500 • 100 marks • 20% of A-level • assessed by teachers • moderated by AQA
Questions **Section A – Textual variations and representations** Two texts (one contemporary and one older text) linked by topic or theme. • A question requiring analysis of one text (25 marks) • A question requiring analysis of a second text (25 marks) • A question requiring comparison of the two texts (20 marks) **Section B – Children's language development** A discursive essay on children's language development, with a choice of two questions where the data provided will focus on spoken, written or multimodal language (30 marks)	**Questions** **Section A – Diversity and change** One question from a choice of two: **either:** an evaluative essay on language diversity (30 marks) **or:** an evaluative essay on language change (30 marks) **Section B – Language discourses** Two texts about a topic linked to the study of diversity and change. • A question requiring analysis of how the texts use language to present ideas, attitudes and opinions (40 marks) • A directed writing task linked to the same topic and the ideas in the texts (30 marks)	**Tasks** Students produce: • a language investigation (2,000 words excluding data) • a piece of original writing and commentary (1,500 words total)

2.Scrapbook task

You are going to compile a **language scrapbook of different types of text** found in a broadsheet newspaper. You can also add in some texts from other sources as well e.g. charity campaign letters from the post at home; music reviews from specialist magazines; and a short story or opening chapter from a novel. **Also include any genres that you particularly enjoy reading or writing.**

1. Buy a couple of different weekend broadsheet newspapers over the holiday period.

2. Browse through them and read some of the articles.

3. Find examples of the following:

- **an opinion piece** where someone is arguing their point of view on a topic (in the opinion/comment section of the paper)

- a piece of **travel writing** from the travel section

- a **piece aimed at a family audience** e.g. parents (could be a feature article on things to do in the holidays for example – usually found in the 'Family' supplement of the paper)

- a **restaurant review**

- a **fashion or home feature/column**

- a **profile** of a writer or personality (e.g. *Observer* profile)

- a piece of **sports journalism** (lots of opportunities with the Olympics coming up here)

4. Cut out your pieces and identify the **Genre, Audience and Purpose** for each piece.

5. Organise your pieces into broad categories e.g. by purpose.

6. Mount each piece in your scrapbook leaving enough room around the sides for annotations (notes). If your piece is

lengthy, you may require to trim it into sections to fit more than page.

7. **Use the language analysis grid** provided to help you to **identify and label the language features of the text.** Highlight key words and use arrows to help you to label the features. Think about the effects of the features.

8. Choose **one genre** to explore in more detail. Think carefully about **how the writer has used the different language features of the genre to appeal to the audience and achieve the purpose. Make more detailed annotations on this piece as it is your style sample for your own creative writing.** (This is module 1 GCSE stuff!)

9. Use this text as a model and **write an example of your own**, about a different topic e.g. if your example is an autobiographical piece of travel writing about Australia, you could do your own piece in a similar style but about exploring Cumbria...

10. Try to use as many features of the style sample (the exemplar piece about which you have written) as you can, to try to make your writing as convincing as possible.
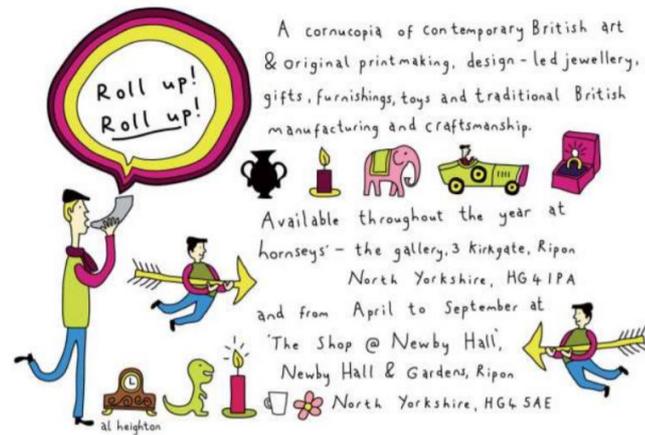
3.Meanings and Representations task

How is language used to represent this product in a particular way?

Text G
This is a card promoting a gallery.

Roll up!
Roll up!

A cornucopia of Contemporary British art & Original printmaking, design-led jewellery, gifts, furnishings, toys and traditional British manufacturing and craftsmanship.

Available throughout the year at hornseys' – the gallery, 3 Kirkgate, Ripon North Yorkshire, HG4 1PA and from April to September at 'The Shop @ Newby Hall', Newby Hall & Gardens, Ripon North Yorkshire, HG4 5AE

al heighton

The text above is taken from a past paper.

Annotate the text focussing on how it is using language and images to present the Gallery in a positive way.

4.Transcribing task

Using highlighters and brief annotations identify the following in the transcript below:

- Different topics in this conversation
- The moment when a topic is picked up and developed by a different speaker
- The moment when a topic shifts or changes, and how this is achieved
- Any unsuccessful attempts to either change the topic or return to an earlier one.

L: does anyone actually like coffee
T: i only actually ever tried it once and and and i i didnt like it
//
A: only tried once
T: i no i i like (2) i tried it once and i didnt like it at all and then i only (.) now i only drink 5
cappuccino from starbucks cos its flavoured (1) i dont i think i dont like the taste or
the smell of it
//
L: i love coffee
A: i do love coffee 10
T: but i like the cappuccino from starbucks
A: why do
T: i like that because its flavoured its raspberry
//
E: ooh 15
//
T: or banana
//
A: ooh
T: flavouring 20
L: have you ever tried the caramel coffee
A: yes
L: that is good (.) and the vanilla coffee
E: i hate coffee i really hate coffee
(laughter) 25
See
page 9
30
T: and i hate it cos all the teachers smell of it
A: yeah thats true its true
T: does anyone like tea
E: yes (.) tea is much better than coffee
T: good 30
L: i dunno (.) i dont really like it that much
T: why do you why do you like (.) like coffee (.) i mean what do you what
//
L: no I do like tea as well
T: look (.) nobody asked you that 35
(laughter)
T: why do you like (.) what do you (.) why
(laughter)
L: because it tastes nice
A: yeah i dunno 40
E: tea puts her to sleep
T: oh
E: it really does
L: its like coffee wakes me up

Transcription key
L = LYNSEY
T = TIM
A = ANGELA
E = EMMA
bold = stressed sound/syllable
// = speech overlap
(.) = micro-pause
(1)= pause in seconds
(laughter) = material that is not part of the talk being transcribed, e.g. laughter

We want you to record some spoken language: what we want you to listen for is a range of different accents. The extract should be between thirty seconds and minute – certainly no longer.

Sources you could use include:
• a natural conversation (say at home, or on the phone – though beware: you must always tell the people concerned you are doing this; leaving a voice recorder running is the best way – you can then choose a short extract from the file)
•   a short extract from a film or from a soap opera
•   a television interview
•   a DJ.

Once you have recorded your extracts, try to write them out as a transcript (you can use the example above.

5.Useful websites:

1. www.universalteacher.org.uk
Andrew Moore's teaching resource site – go to the A Level English Language
page. Useful for definitions of terms and explanations of concepts and theories

2. https://www.theguardian.com/global/series/buzzwords
How does language shape the world around us, and vice versa? Buzzwords
explores politics, speech and meaning, with plenty of linguistic tidbits thrown in
for good measure.

3. http://englishlangsfx.blogspot.co.uk/
EngLangBlog is a blog written for English Language students and teachers. The
posts give suggestions for wider reading and direct you to online resources and
articles about controversial language issues in the media.

4. http://www.bl.uk/
The British Library website – head to the 'Discover' page of their website for
information on English Language topics such as accents and dialects.

5. http://david-crystal.blogspot.co.uk/
A blog written by 'The Expert' in Language and Linguistics, David Crystal.