

Year 7 Curriculum Overview English 2023-24

Year 7	Term 1		Term 2	Term 3	
Unit Title	Literary Heritage – How has our literary heritage influenced the way we use the English language?		Secrets and Spies – Stormbreaker and Spy writing	Forest and Fairies – A Midsummer Night’s Dream and A Monster Calls	
Approximate Number of Lessons	40 (including Cog A and Guided reading lessons)		40 (including Cog A and Guided reading lessons)	35 (including Cog A and Guided reading lessons)	
Curriculum Content	Students study various fictional and non-fictional text extracts from Beowulf up to 21 st century from a range of literary genres including the study of Shakespeare’s Sonnets. Students will develop their knowledge of key British writers and understanding of how historical context influenced writers and texts.		Students study <i>Stormbreaker</i> , a modern piece of spy fiction developing analytical skills. Students also study a wide range of fiction and non-fiction extracts from to develop grammatical accuracy and writing skills.	Students study A Monster Calls written by Patrick Ness and William Shakespeare’s <i>A Midsummer Night’s Dream</i> exploring historical context, characters, symbolism, themes, language and structure while continuing to develop grammatical accuracy and writing skills.	
Links to prior learning	At KS2 prior learning should include a range of stories, plays, poetry and non-fiction. The unit builds on subject specific terminology through more advanced and challenging texts.		The study of <i>Stormbreaker</i> builds on prior knowledge of narrative structure and language devices from KS2 and autumn term. The writing unit builds on knowledge of sentence structures and grammar linking to prior learning at KS2 and the autumn term. Students make links to Sherlock Holmes in literary heritage unit when reading Stormbreaker.	Students will be building on their reading and writing skills gained at KS2 and use the contextual knowledge from the autumn term, continuing to apply and develop analysis skills from the spring term	
Cultural Capital Opportunities	Find some famous quotations that we still use today from the authors studied. Can you visit a live performance of a play or access one online?		Read Andrew Lane – Young Sherlock series Watch Guy Ritchie’s Sherlock Holmes films (with parental consent) Read Anthony Horowitz – Alex Rider series Read Charlie Higson – Young James Bond series	Go for a family walk in a forest and write or draw something creative inspired by your visit. Research the Cottingley Fairies.	
Assessment Focus	Baseline/ secondary ready assessment	Double page spread demonstrating understanding and knowledge of our literary heritage.	Creative writing -Narrative – assessing planning and writing part of a spy story. Passport Strands: Accurate and effective use of sentence structure and punctuation, structure and organisation, language, spelling.	Reading – extract from A Midsummer Night’s Dream and tasks leading to an analytical paragraph	Summer End of Year Exam

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		Passport Strands: Accurate and effective use of sentence structure and punctuation, structure and organisation, language, spelling.		Passport strands: Analysis of language, analysis of structure, Inference, deduction and prediction, context and comparison	
Name of Knowledge Organiser	Literary Heritage		<i>Stormbreaker</i> and Spy Writing	Forests and Fairies	

STORMBREAKER & SPY WRITING KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

LITERARY CONCEPTS

Literary Terms

Exposition -The beginning of a story when the setting, characters and situation is introduced
 Climax -When the conflict in the story reaches its worst, most critical, point
 Conflict - When the main character/s in the story encounter a problem
 Resolution -The ending of the story where the conflict is resolved – either positively or negatively
 First person narrative – when you are told everything that happens in the story from the perspective of one character, using the pronouns ‘I’ and ‘we’.
 Genre – the general theme of a type of writing
 Tense – the time describe by a verb e.g. past/present/future
 Third person narrative – when the story is told by a narrator using the pronouns ‘he’, ‘she’ and ‘they’.

Grammatical Terms

Adjective – a word which describes a noun e.g. green, big, small, unusual
 Adverb – a word to describe a verb e.g. quickly, loudly, slowly
 Noun – a person, place or thing (there are different types on noun you should know too)
 Verb – an action e.g. running, ran, sleep, shouting, shouted
 Article – a/an/the
 Complex sentence – a sentence containing an independent clause and at least one dependent clause
 Compound sentence – a sentence with two independent clauses joined by a comma, semi-colon or conjunction
 Coordinating conjunctions - And, but, or, so
 Main clause - A clause that can form a complete sentence standing alone.
 Minor sentence - A type of sentence that does not contain a main verb. They may contain no verb at all, or they may contain a non-finite verb
 Simple sentence – a sentence consisting of only one clause
 Subordinate clause - A clause, typically introduced by a conjunction, that is dependent on a main clause.
 Subordinating conjunctions - Although, whenever, unless, whereas, as, if, while, when, because, until
 Prepositional phrase - A phrase which includes a preposition (a word describing the location of something)
 Personal pronouns - I, you, he, she, we, they

Linguistic Terms

Alliteration – when words next to or near one another begin with the same letter or sound
 Connotation – word linked to another (often through theme)
 Hyperbole – use of exaggeration
 Metaphor – the direct comparison between one thing and another without the use of ‘as’ or ‘like’
 Onomatopoeia – the formation of a word from a sound associated with what is named
 Personification – when human characteristics are given to an inanimate object
 Repetition – when a word or phrase is repeated more than once
 Rhetorical question – a question to which an answer is not expected
 Simile – when an object is compared to another using ‘as’ or ‘like’

KEY CHARACTERS

Alex Rider - 14-year-old boy whose parents have died. He is raised by his uncle.
 Ian Rider - Alex’s uncle, who travelled a lot and tragically dies.
 Jack Starbright - An American and employed by Ian as a housekeeper and Alex’s carer.
 Mr Blunt - Chief Executive of the Special Operations Division of MI6
 Mrs Jones - Head of Operations for the Special Division of MI6
 Herod Sayle - An Egyptian man raised in England and owner of Sayle Enterprises
 Mr Grin - A butler who has once been a carnival performer
 Nadia Vole - A German lady who works for Herod Sayle and escorts Alex when he visits Sayle Enterprises
 Yassen Gregorovich - A Russian assassin

CULTURAL CAPITAL: WIDER READING

Ally Carter – *Gallagher Girls* series
 Andrew Lane – *Death Cloud, Red Leech, Black Ice, Fire Storm, Snake Bite, Knife Edge, Stone Cold, Night Break* (Young Sherlock series)
 Anthony Horowitz – *Stormbreaker* series, *The Power of Five* collection, *The House of Silk & Moriarty* (Sherlock Holmes novels), *Trigger Mortis* (James Bond novel)
 Charlie Higson – *Silver Fin, Blood Fever, Double or Die, Hurricane Gold, By Royal Command* (Young Bond series)
 Eoin Colfer – *Artemis Fowl* series
 Mark A. Cooper – *Jason Steed* series
 Robert Muchamore – *Cherub* series

EXTENDED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Storyboard the text as you read to avoid confusion
 2. Create character pages with key information about appearance and their actions, including key quotations where appropriate
 3. Identify key quotations and write about devices used and connotations of key words.
 4. Mind map how each theme is explored within the text.
 5. Create a piece of writing (fiction/non-fiction) inspired by the text.
- You could:
- change the narrative perspective
 - write a book/film review
 - re-write a section of the text with an alternative outcome
 - write the opening to a sequel

CHAPTER SUMMARIES	LITERARY CONCEPTS: THEME								
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Funeral Voices – Alex receives the news his uncle has died in a car accident. Alex attends the funeral where he meets Mr Blunt. When returning home, he notices his uncle’s office has been ransacked. 2. Heaven for Cars – Alex is not convinced his uncle’s death was an accident and begins investigating. He finds his uncle’s car but ends up in a fight with a man he saw at the funeral. 3. Royal and General – Alex attends a meeting with Mr Blunt and breaks into his uncle’s office and finds a file named ‘Stormbreaker’ but Alex is then shot. 4. “So what do you say?” – Alex wakes up and Mr Blunt introduces Mrs Jones and they reveal his uncle worked for MI6. Alex is told about Herod Sayle, a business man his uncle was investigating. Alex is asked to work for MI6. 5. Double O Nothing – Alex is sent out on training with K-Unit. 6. Toys Aren’t Us – Alex completes his training with K-Unit and meets Smithers who gives Alex some special gadgets for his mission. Mrs Jones warns Alex that Yassen Gregorovich, an assassin, has been seen at Sayle Enterprises. 7. Physalia Physalia - Alex, under the alias of Felix Lester, travels to Sayle Enterprises. He meets Herod Sayle and his butler Mr Grin. 8. Looking for Trouble – In his room Alex finds a map. Alex is shown to see Stormbreaker by Nadia Vole. Later he goes exploring to snoop and is caught by Nadia Vole. 9. Night Visitors – Alex plays snooker and eats dinner with Herod Sayle. Alex is woken at 1:30am by a noise. He sees Mrs Vole and Mr Grin getting in a convoy of trucks and sneaks into one. At a secluded beach Alex sees a submarine, Yassen Gregorovich, and men unloading metal boxes. 10. Death in the Long Grass – Alex goes for a walk around Port Tallon and ends up walking through a field where two people on quad bikes attempt to kill him. 11. Dozmary Mine – In the library in Port Tallon, Alex finds a book about Dozmary Mine which contains a map identical to the one he found in his room. Alex goes to the mine to go investigate. 12. Behind the Door – In the mine Alex finds a laboratory where scientists are loading test tubes into the Stormbreaker computers. Alex is caught by the armed guards but manages to escape and return back to his room where he is met by Mr Grin. 13. The School Bully – Alex is taken to Sayle’s room. Sayle reveals his plan after explaining he’s seeking revenge against the Prime Minister who used to bully Sayle at school. Sayle leaves the room explaining Mr Grin will return to kill Alex. 14. Deep Water – Alex struggles to get free but is then freed by Vole who reveals she was working with his uncle. Vole then triggers a trapdoor and Alex is plunged into a tank with a Portuguese man-of-war. Alex manages to escape. 15. Eleven O Clock – Alex manages to harpoon himself to the underbelly of a cargo plane flown by Mr Grin. With a gun he grabbed from a guard he tells Mr Grin to fly to the Science Museum. 16. Twelve O Clock – Alex arrives at the Science Museum just as Sayle finishes his speech. Alex shoots, destroying the ignition device. Sayle vanishes. 17. Yassen – Alex is debriefed by MI6 but is then captured by Sayle and... 	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Morality</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Technology and Modernisation</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Coming of Age</td> <td>Lies and Deceit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Perseverance</td> <td>Power</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Violence</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Morality	Technology and Modernisation	Coming of Age	Lies and Deceit	Perseverance	Power	Violence	
Morality	Technology and Modernisation								
Coming of Age	Lies and Deceit								
Perseverance	Power								
Violence									
	<p style="text-align: center;">VOCABULARY</p> <p>acid – strong or sharp sense of smell alcove – a small space often on the edge of a room cantilever – a projecting horizontal beam fixed at one end only churn – to be agitated cloying – overly sweet coup – a brilliant and notable success crude – not expertly made drone – a noise of a constant low pitch din – a loud noise embassy – a building where diplomats work expedition – a journey organised for a particular purpose goad – provoke by constant criticism hangar – a building where aircraft is stored indignant – angered at something unjust or wrong languidly – weakly or lazily lull – a moment of calm maritime – relating to ships or navigation ornate – to be marked by complexity and detail personnel - the department responsible for hiring and training employees pervade – to spread or diffuse through punctuate – to interrupt periodically quaint – attractively old-fashioned quay – a wharf often built parallel to the shoreline rendezvous – a meeting planned at a certain time retort – to answer back ricochet – to rebound off a surface surge – move forward totter - move without being stable, as if threatening to fall unparalleled – radically distinctive visa – a document which allows somebody into a country waif – homeless child or orphan</p>								

FORESTS & FAIRIES KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

A Monster Calls by Patrick Ness

ABOUT THIS AUTHOR

Patrick Ness was born in October 1971 in America. He moved to London in 1999 and now holds dual citizenship.
 He writes young adult fiction and won the Carnegie Medal for 'A Monster Calls' in 2012.
 He also wrote the screenplay for the film version of the book.
 The original idea for A Monster Calls came from a writer called Siobhan Dowd who sadly died before she could write the novel.
 Other titles he has written include; The Knife of Never Letting Go, Monsters of Men and More Than This.
 He currently teaches creative writing at Oxford University and writes reviews for The Guardian newspaper.

KEY VOCABULARY

Theme	Pagan
Symbol	Deity
Protagonist	Grief
Antagonist	Bereavement
Narrative	Elemental
Exposition	Immortality
Conflict	Torso
Climax	Chemotherapy
Resolution	Supernatural

Characters in the Novel

Conor O'Malley - The protagonist of the book, thirteen-year old Conor is very responsible for his age, due primarily to the fact that his mother was diagnosed with cancer a year before the start of the book. Conor is her primary carer because Conor's mother and father had divorced five years before her diagnosis.
The Monster – A giant creature who takes the shape of a yew tree. Conor's pain, grief, and inability to accept his feelings and his mother's impending death is what calls the monster to him. The monster says that it has been called Herne the Hunter, Cernunnos, and the Green Man in the past—all implying that it is a natural spirit of pagan lore. The monster comes to tell stories to Conor to try and help him heal, and to help him understand that life and human emotions are complex and resist simple answers.

LITERARY CONCEPTS:

THEMES:
 Death, Denial and acceptance, Dreams and versions of reality, Family and Growing up, Storytelling, Isolation, Love
SYMBOLS:
 The Yew Tree – a symbol of healing and immortality, often found in graveyards.
 Clocks – symbols of time passing.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

<p>Conor's Mother – Though it is only explicitly stated that Conor's mother is sick, details that Ness includes heavily implies that she has cancer: Conor's mother has lost her hair and wears a scarf, goes through rounds of treatments, and is often exhausted and nauseous. As Conor's mother's condition deteriorates over the course of the book, she feels increasingly guilty about the responsibility that Conor has been forced to take on in caring for her.</p> <p>Conor's Grandmother – Conor's grandmother is cold and somewhat strict, and Conor doesn't like her very much.</p> <p>Conor's Father –Conor's mother and father divorced when Conor was seven years old, and Conor explains that he barely remembers what it's like to have a father in the house. Conor's father now lives in America with his new wife, Stephanie, and a new baby.</p> <p>Lily Andrews – Conor's best friend and classmate. Conor's mother and Lily's mother have been friends for a long time, and Conor and Lily grew up together.</p> <p>Harry – The school bully, who has been targeting Conor ever since Conor learned of his mother's diagnosis. Harry is often accompanied by Anton and Sully.</p> <p>The Evil Queen – One of the characters in the monster's first tale. The evil queen is the young prince's stepmother, and she is much younger than the king (though many of the villagers in the kingdom are suspicious of her and suspect that she is a witch using magic to make herself young). In the story, the monster saves her from being burned at the stake for a murder that she did not commit. The evil queen has an allegorical connection to Conor's grandmother, because she also makes herself seem younger and effectively takes over Conor's household.</p> <p>The Parson – One of the characters in the monster's second tale. The parson is the head of a great parsonage, and preaches against the Apothecary for his use of the old ways to heal people.</p> <p>The Young Prince – One of the characters in the monster's first tale. The young prince is the grandson of a king, and his stepmother is the evil queen.</p> <p>The Apothecary – One of the characters in the monster's second tale, who is described as greedy and very disagreeable. The Apothecary is a healer, and asks the parson to harvest the yew tree that grows in his parsonage.</p> <p>Miss Kwan – One of the Conor's teachers. Miss Kwan tries to help Conor and asks if Harry, Anton, and Sully are bullying him. When she tells Conor she can't imagine what he's going through, however, the statement only isolates him and makes him feel even more upset.</p>	<p>In the book, the monster says that it has been called many names in the past: Herne the Hunter, Cernunnos, and the Green Man. All of these are variations of pagan deities associated with nature. Herne the Hunter is a ghost in English folklore associated with Windsor forest. He is said to have antlers upon his head and ride a horse. Cernunnos is a Celtic horned god. Little is known about this deity other than the fact that it is depicted with the antlers of a stag and is also identified as a god of nature and life.</p> <p>The Green Man is a representation of a sculpture or other representation of a face surrounded by or made from leaves, which makes it an apt name for the monster, who takes the form of a yew tree. The Green Man is usually interpreted as a symbol of rebirth or the life cycle, and is often used as a representation of various horned gods (such as Cernunnos or the Greek god Pan). The Green Man is often viewed as a pagan symbol, and yet images of the Green Man frequently appear carved into churches. This fact is also fitting for the story, as the monster takes the form of a yew tree that is found next to a church.</p>
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A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM – WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

CONTEXT	KEY CHARACTERS
<p>William Shakespeare went to a grammar school where he was taught Ancient Greek.</p> <p>The play is set in Ancient Greece and follows the rules of a comedy from Ancient Greece.</p> <p>When the play was written, Elizabeth 1st was Queen. She decided not to get married which many people disagreed with. Many Elizabethans believed in and feared magic.</p> <p>Midsummer Eve was the night of the summer solstice on June 23rd when English men and women would spend the night outdoors around bonfires telling tales of fairies and witchcraft.</p> <p>The play is thought to have been first performed around 1596 at the country house of a young nobleman as part of his wedding celebrations.</p> <p>In Greek mythology Theseus and conquered the Amazonian warrior women and defended Athens from them, and taken their queen as his wife. Theseus is a symbol of stability and power.</p>	<p>Theseus – the duke of Athens, a strong and strict ruler of the city.</p> <p>Hippolyta – Theseus' bride, a fearless warrior.</p> <p>Egeus – Hermia's stubborn father who wants her to marry Demetrius or be put to death.</p> <p>Hermia – Egeus' daughter who is in love with Lysander.</p> <p>Lysander – In love with Hermia and runs away to the forest with her.</p> <p>Demetrius – wants to marry Hermia and is disgusted by Helena's love for him.</p> <p>Helena – Hermia's friend who is desperately in love with Demetrius.</p> <p>Oberon – King of the fairies.</p>

ACT SUMMARIES	Titania – the fierce queen of the fairies. Bottom – a weaver and actor who has his head turned into a donkey. Puck – Oberon’s mischievous servant.								
<p>Act 1: Hermia and Lysander love each other but are not allowed to get married so they decide to run away into the forest to get married in secret. Demetrius wants to marry Hermia. Helena loves Demetrius. They follow Hermia and Lysander into the forest.</p> <p>Act 2: In the forest, Oberon and Titania are arguing. Oberon sees Demetrius and Helena arguing and commands Puck to use the potion on the Athenian man to make him fall in love with Helena. However, the first Athenian man Puck sees is Lysander, so he puts the love potion on him. Lysander falls madly in love with Helena.</p> <p>Act 3: Puck sees Bottom in the forest and transformed his head into a donkey’s head. He puts the love potion on Titania, who falls madly in love with Bottom. Puck puts the love potion on Demetrius so that he falls in love with Helena. As a result, both men love Helena so there is chaos. Puck eventually drops a herb in Lysander’s eyes to put him back to normal.</p> <p>Acts 4: Oberon finds Titania and Bottom and decides that he has had enough fun. Puck drops a herb in her eyes, she wakes and leaves Oberon.</p> <p>Act 5: The lovers return to Athens where Bottom and the other actors perform their play at the wedding of the three happy couples: Egeus and Hippolyta, Lysander and Hermia and, Demetrius and Helena.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">THEMES</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>Courage</td> <td>Gender</td> <td>Friendship</td> <td>Love</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fate</td> <td>Jealousy</td> <td>Order/Disorder</td> <td>Appearance/Reality</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">EXTENDED LEARNING ACTIVITIES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Storyboard the text as you read to avoid confusion 2. Create character pages with key information about appearance and their actions, including key quotations where appropriate 3. Identify key quotations and write about devices used and connotations of key words. 4. Mind map how each theme is explored within the text. 5. Create a piece of writing (fiction/non-fiction) inspired by the text. 	Courage	Gender	Friendship	Love	Fate	Jealousy	Order/Disorder	Appearance/Reality
Courage	Gender	Friendship	Love						
Fate	Jealousy	Order/Disorder	Appearance/Reality						
LITERARY CONCEPTS	CULTURAL CAPITAL: WIDER READING								
<p>Blank verse – writing with a regular rhythm but no rhyme</p> <p>Climax – point of greatest tension in a story</p> <p>Contrast – the use of opposing ideas</p> <p>Dramatic irony – when the audience know something that the characters on stage do not</p> <p>Exposition – the setting and characters in the opening of a story</p> <p>Iambic pentameter – a form of blank verse with 5 pairs of stressed and unstressed syllables (de/dum de/dum de/dum de/dum de/dum)</p> <p>Metadrama – a play within a play</p> <p>Monologue – a long speech by a single character</p> <p>Plot – the story’s sequence of events</p> <p>Resolution – the final outcome of a story</p> <p>Soliloquy – when a character speaks their inner thoughts/feelings directly to the audience</p> <p>Symbol – an object that means more than its literal meaning e.g. the rope / the forest</p>	<p><i>The Usborne Illustrated Stories from Shakespeare</i></p> <p>Christopher Paolini – <i>The Inheritance Cycle</i></p> <p>C.S Lewis – <i>The Chronicles of Narnia</i></p> <p>J.K Rowling – <i>The Harry Potter</i> series</p> <p>J.R.R Tolkien – <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> series & <i>The Hobbit</i></p> <p>Lewis Carol – <i>Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland</i></p> <p>Kenneth Graham – <i>Wind in the Willows</i></p> <p>Marcia Williams – <i>Mr William Shakespeare’s Plays</i></p> <p>Marcia Williams – <i>Bravo, Mr. William Shakespeare</i></p> <p>Phillip Pullman – <i>His Dark Materials</i> series</p> <p>Susan Cooper – <i>King of Shadows</i></p> <p>Terry Pratchett – <i>The Wee Free Men, A Hatful of Sky, Wintersmith, Shall Wear Midnight, The Shephard’s Crown</i></p>								

Bible Stories

The Garden of Eden - Adam and Eve

God fashioned Adam from dust and placed him in the Garden of Eden. Eve is created from one of Adam's ribs to be Adam's companion. Adam is told that he can eat freely from all the trees in the garden, except from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Satan arrives disguised as a snake and convinced Eve to eat from the tree. He tempted her by saying she would become like God. Eve eats and convinces Adam to do as well. God banished them from the Garden of Eden.

Story of Noah

Noah was a righteous man and walked with God. Seeing that the earth was corrupt and filled with violence, God instructed Noah to build an ark in which he, his sons, and their wives, together with male and female of all living creatures, would be saved from the waters. According to the biblical story (Genesis 8:11), a dove was released by Noah after the flood to find land; it came back carrying a freshly plucked olive leaf, a sign of life after the Flood and of God's bringing Noah, his family and the animals to land.

Judas

Judas Iscariot, one of Jesus' twelve apostles, betrayed his master to the authorities. This act led to the crucifixion and death of Jesus. Judas offered to betray Jesus to the religious authorities. They agreed to pay him 30 pieces of silver for doing so. After learning that Jesus was to be crucified, Judas attempted to return the money he had been paid for his betrayal to the chief priests and committed suicide by hanging.

Beowulf

Set against the coming of Christianity, this is the story of the last hero: in 507, a monstrous troll wreaks havoc in the mead hall of the Danish king, Hrothgar. He offers rewards for the death of Grendel, so Beowulf, a great and boastful Geat warrior, arrives with his thanes.

Historical Context:

- ❖ 500AD: The tale is thought to have been created as an oral tale at around this time.
- ❖ 700AD: Beowulf was written by an unknown Anglo-Saxon poet.
- ❖ Historical Figures: Many of the characters (though not Beowulf) were included in the poem because Anglo-Saxons needed oral poems to protect their histories and as an early form of propaganda.
- ❖ Wyrð: An Anglo-Saxon concept, like fate or destiny. Beowulf's story is ruled over by Wyrð.
- ❖ Warrior culture: A society in which strong Anglo-Saxon kings demanded bravery and loyalty from their warriors. In return, the warriors received some of the treasures won in war.

Stylistic Features and Symbols:

- ❖ Monsters: Hideous, evil creatures. In Anglo-Saxon literature they represent external threats which must be defeated for society to remain safe.
- ❖ Oral storytelling: Anglo-Saxon tales were told in speech and were not written down until much later in history. Elements were often changed or exaggerated, though the names were kept consistent.
- ❖ Kenning: A short metaphorical description of a thing used in place of the thing's name. A ship might be called a "sea-rider," the sea might be called the "whale-road" or a king a "ring-giver."
- ❖ Alliteration: The repetition of consonant sounds. As Anglo-Saxon poetry existed in oral tradition long before it was written down, alliteration helped remember the thousands of lines they were required to know by heart.

Geoffrey Chaucer

Chaucer is often called 'The Father of English Literature' and is considered to be the greatest poet of the Middle Ages. He had an interesting and varied life. He was a philosopher, soldier, an astronomer, a courtier, an MP, a spy, a diplomat and a poet.

Born: 1343

Died: 1400

The Canterbury Tales

- ❖ Geoffrey Chaucer wrote *The Canterbury Tales*, a collection of stories in a frame story, between 1387 and 1400. It is the story of a group of thirty people who travel as pilgrims to Canterbury (England). During their travels, each of the pilgrims has their own story to tell.
- ❖ The Tales were unfinished at the time of Chaucer's death.
- ❖ In total there are 24 Tales. The Tales were written before the printing press was invented and therefore were copied out by hand. Mistakes and changes were often made.
- ❖ There is no way of knowing which order Chaucer intended for the Tales to be told in.
- ❖ *The Canterbury Tales* was different to most other writing from the Middle Ages because it contained stories about a wide range of people.

Stylistic Features:

- ❖ The poetic meter, or rhythm, used throughout *The Canterbury Tales* is **iambic pentameter** meaning unstressed and stressed syllables. The pattern is called *iamb* and *iambic* for a poetry structure. Lines generally have five iambs each, for a total of ten syllables per line; "penta" is the Greek word for "five." Therefore, it is called **iambic pentameter**.
- ❖ Lines are paired off into rhyming couplets which means that each pair of lines has similar-sounding words that rhyme at the end.

William Shakespeare

Biography

Shakespeare was an English poet and playwright and is widely considered to be the greatest writer in the English language. He wrote 38 plays and 154 sonnets.

Born: Stratford-upon-Avon on 23rd April 1564.

Died: 23rd April 1616 (age 52)

Shakespeare wrote at the time of two monarchs: Queen Elizabeth I and James I. The plays that he wrote during the period of Queen Elizabeth are generally happy and joyful, reflecting the mood at the time. However, darker plays were written in the era of James I, which was far more unstable.

Shakespeare wrote 154 sonnets mostly in the 1590s. These short poems deal with issues such as lost love. His sonnets have an enduring appeal due to his formidable skill with language and words.

Shakespeare's plays have been studied more than any other writing in the English language and have been translated into numerous languages.

Play Genres:

- ❖ Histories
- ❖ Tragedies
- ❖ Comedies

Shakespeare's Recurring Key Themes

- ❖ Power
- ❖ Nature
- ❖ Love and Relationships
- ❖ Conflict
- ❖ Appearance Vs Reality
- ❖ Order, disorder and change

Charles Dickens

Biography

Dickens was a Victorian English writer and is still much loved for his contribution to classic English literature. He is remembered as one of the most important writers of the 19th century.

Born: In Portsmouth on 7th February 1812

Died: 9th June 1870 of a stroke

The Victorian era describes the period in which Queen Victoria sat on the English throne – between 1837 and 1901 (most of Dickens' life). Whilst this was a time of industrial revolution, it was also an extremely harsh time to live, and the differences between the lives of the richest and the poorest were intensified. The Victorian era was a period of great change. In this time, the population of England doubled – from 16.8 million 1851 to over 30 million in 1901.

Though Dickens was aware of what his readers wanted and was determined to make as much money as he could with his writing, he believed novels had a moral purpose—to arouse innate moral sentiments and to encourage virtuous behaviour in readers.

Dickens' novels:

- ❖ Reflect how Dickens felt
- ❖ Have the child's perspective
- ❖ Have characters based on previous experiences
- ❖ Show the reality of London to the rich
- ❖ Often criticises society

Dickens' Recurring Key Themes:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| ❖ Criminality | ❖ Weather/Darkness |
| ❖ Role of the Father | ❖ Redemption |
| ❖ Social Hierarchy | ❖ Guilt and Innocence |
| ❖ Dickens' criticism of time and society | ❖ Greed/Wealth and selfishness |
| ❖ Children and their treatment | ❖ Good vs Evil |
| | ❖ Fate and Free will |
| | ❖ The 'undisciplined love' |