

Year 9: Reading Dystopian Short Stories (18 hours)

Rationale and ambition for The Purbeck School English Curriculum:

- Our English curriculum aims to transmit a culturally enriching knowledge of literature to students by drawing from the literary Canon and also texts that reflect wider voices in a diverse society, developing the cultural capital of students at the school.
- Our English curriculum aims to develop empathetic and engaged citizens through careful text choice, reflecting contemporary concerns and debates such as those about class, gender and intolerance and discrimination.
- Our English curriculum aims to support students in developing confidence in expressing their own views and opinions.
- Our English curriculum aims to prepare students for work and life through the development of soft skills such as communication, teamwork, adaptability, problem solving, public speaking and leadership.
- Our English Curriculum aims to offer suitable challenge to students of all abilities.
- Our English curriculum aims to offer opportunities for creativity with written and spoken language.

Key concepts:

The concepts that The Purbeck School English curriculum aims to support student progression in are:

- 1.) **Form, structure and coherence** – understanding that texts are organised with intent.
- 2.) **Spelling, punctuation and grammatical rules** – understanding word classes, key spellings, sentence forms and varied punctuation.
- 3.) **Awareness of Impact and Intent** - Understanding that writing is shaped by the priorities of a writer and the needs of a reader, including the teaching of genre, audience and purpose.
- 4.) **Context** – understanding how production and reception shape meaning.
- 5.) **Evidence** - Understanding how to read and listen for meaning and use evidence from texts to support personal critical viewpoints.
- 6.) **Methods** - Understanding how writers and speakers choose from a variety of methods to communicate and engage readers and audiences.

<p>What are students going to be studying?</p>	<p>A series of short stories and extracts from larger works: 'The Pedestrian', 'The Lottery', 'The Hunger Games', '1984', 'Harrison Bergeron'</p>
<p>Why are students studying this content and what are the links to our rational and ambition?</p>	<p>The Pedestrian':</p> <p>Ray Bradbury's short story 'The Pedestrian' is a compelling piece of literature that meets the requirements of our English curriculum by drawing from the literary canon and reflecting wider voices in a diverse society. Additionally, the story addresses contemporary concerns and debates about intolerance and discrimination, making it a tool for developing empathetic and engaged citizens.</p> <p>Firstly, 'The Pedestrian' reflects the literary canon by embodying the dystopian genre, which has been an integral part of classic literature. The story offers a critical reflection of contemporary views on technology and progress. Bradbury uses vivid imagery to depict a future world where science and technology have taken over, leaving little room for creativity and human interaction. This theme resonates with Aldous Huxley's 'Brave New World,' where the totalitarian government controlled every aspect of individual lives. However, unlike Huxley's work, Bradbury's protagonist, Leonard Mead, is not a rebel or a revolutionary against the system but instead a pedestrian, one who walks in the streets.</p> <p>Through Mead, Bradbury explores the idea of non-conformity and individualism in the face of a society that values technological advancement over human interaction. In the story, Mead is the only pedestrian walking in a fully automated society. The robotic police, as well as the autonomous cars, have supplanted human decision-making and action. When Mead is confronted by the robotic police, he is deemed an abnormality and a threat to the social order. This disturbing image of a society in which human autonomy and creativity are suppressed resonates with the dystopian genre, where one questions the price of technological advancement.</p> <p>Further, 'The Pedestrian' meets the requirements of our English curriculum by reflecting wider voices in a diverse society. Bradbury uses the character of Leonard Mead to highlight the alienation and isolation that arise both in dystopian societies and modern-day societies. Leonard Mead walks to escape loneliness and boredom, which are difficult realities, especially for those who have no friends or family. He yearns for human connection because it is an integral part of the human experience. In the story, Mead's presence on the street causes the robotic police to take notice; for a society that values technology and automation above all else, a human walking on the street is a threat to the social order.</p> <p>Bradbury's story resonates with contemporary concerns about loneliness and mental health. The pandemic has led to a worldwide increase in social isolation, prompting a re-evaluation of the importance of human connection. 'The Pedestrian' offers a poignant reflection on the effects of isolation and speaks to the importance of empathy and human connection in our daily lives.</p> <p>Finally, 'The Pedestrian' is a tool for developing empathetic and engaged citizens. Bradbury's story forces readers to evaluate their understandings of progress and development. The story encourages readers to reflect on the cost of technological advancements, especially as they lead to an erosion of human autonomy and creativity. Additionally, the story highlights the importance of empathy</p>

and human connection. It encourages students to consider the emotional and psychological impact of social isolation and loneliness, which are concerns in the world today.

In conclusion, Ray Bradbury's 'The Pedestrian' is a compelling work of literature that meets the requirements of our English curriculum. It embodies the dystopian genre and reflects contemporary concerns about technological advancements, isolation, and loneliness. The story highlights the value of empathy and human connections in a world that furthers technological advancement at a price. Through the character of Leonard Mead, Bradbury highlights the importance of individualism and non-conformity in maintaining human autonomy and creativity. This story is a powerful tool for developing empathetic and engaged citizens, ultimately creating a more equitable society.

'The Lottery':

Shirley Jackson's short story "The Lottery" has earned a place in the American literary canon, and its themes of community, tradition, and the dark side of human nature make it a relevant and thought-provoking text for contemporary readers. Here, I will examine how "The Lottery" meets the requirements of our English curriculum by providing a culturally enriching knowledge of literature and reflecting contemporary concerns about discrimination and intolerance.

The first requirement of our English curriculum is to transmit "culturally enriching knowledge of literature" to students by drawing from the literary Canon and texts that reflect wider voices in a diverse society, developing the cultural capital of students in the school. "The Lottery" certainly meets this standard. As a staple of American literature, "The Lottery" offers a unique window into the period of the 1940s and 1950s, a time of considerable social change in the United States. It shows the impact of the Second World War on American society and how social norms shifted during this period. The short story is set in a small town that appears to be a typical Midwestern American community, yet it soon becomes clear that these people have a dark tradition: each year, they conduct a lottery in which one person is brutally stoned to death by the community. By setting her story in a seemingly idyllic small town and then revealing the horror behind the tradition, Jackson challenges readers to question their own assumptions of what is "normal" or "natural" in their own cultures.

Moreover, Jackson's short story incorporates a variety of voices and perspectives that are representative of the diverse nature of American society. The characters in "The Lottery" are distinct, with varying temperaments, from the stoic and resigned to the morally compromised and despondent. The characters also reflect class and gender disparity, with women and children occupying secondary roles and men holding dominance and decision-making power. Jackson's use of a diverse cast, with competing interests, opinions, and experience, enriches the short story's depth and complexity.

The second requirement of our English curriculum is to develop empathetic and engaged citizens who can critically analyze contemporary concerns and debates related to issues such as class, gender, intolerance, and discrimination. "The Lottery" meets this standard in powerful ways. Through the dichotomy of violence and civility, the story highlights the dangers of blindly following tradition and the importance of critical thinking. The lottery is a tradition that is entrenched in the community's history and is

considered sacrosanct by the elders. However, it is revealed that the tradition is not what it seems, and the senseless ritual is merely an excuse for the community to release their darkest impulses and beliefs. The lottery also reveals the dangers of groupthink and the susceptibility of society to conform to antiquated beliefs that do not align with contemporary ethics and values. The story's themes make it an ideal text for engaging students in critical analysis and reflection.

Furthermore, Jackson addresses contemporary concerns by highlighting the dangers of discrimination and intolerance. This theme is evident in the symbolism used in the story, with the black box representing the past and the choices made by previous communities. The winning ticket, which is revealed in the end, is a reminder that marginalized individuals and groups are disproportionately affected by inequality and that the unchecked cruelty of the majority can lead to calamitous consequences. The story acknowledges the importance of empathy and respect for diversity, as society must create a safe space for everyone to thrive. Jackson's ability to discuss contemporary issues in the form of a disturbing and bleak tale highlights the power of storytelling to address social issues in evocative ways.

In conclusion, Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery" is an exemplary text that meets the requirements of our English curriculum. The short story's cultural significance, as well as its relevance to contemporary issues, make it an ideal candidate for developing students' cultural capital and critical thinking skills. Additionally, the story's themes of violence, tradition, and community, as well as its vivid characters and complex setting, make it an engaging and thought-provoking text for students. "The Lottery" can provide students with insights into societal issues such as discrimination, intolerance, and the importance of critical thinking in contemporary times.

'The Hunger Games':

The Hunger Games, a novel by Suzanne Collins, is an excellent fit for our English curriculum. The book, and its sequels, have become critical and commercial successes, and its themes offer readers valuable and immediate insights into the world today. The novel tells the story of Katniss Everdeen, a sixteen-year-old resident of District 12, one of the many districts of Panem, the fictional future version of North America. The Capitol, the governing body, annually selects a male and female from each district to participate in a deadly reality show known as The Hunger Games. The contestants fight to the death until only one remains. In this essay, we argue that The Hunger Games is a suitable text to include in our curriculum because it aligns with our objectives of developing cultural capital and nurturing empathetic and engaged citizens.

The Hunger Games is popular with young people worldwide, with over 100 million copies sold and a successful film franchise. Collins wrote this book explicitly for young adults, and its success suggests they are more than ready to engage with the themes within. It is no surprise, given its accessibility, that critical acclaim and success have ensued. The Hunger Games has won many awards, including a place on the New York Times bestseller list for 260 weeks.

The novel offers a unique lens into the dystopian world, where power and control have become a way of life. The Capitol maintains control over the districts by instilling fear through The Hunger Games. The privileged watch the games on television as entertainment

while the residents of the districts are forced to participate or be subjected to the Capitol's wrath. This narrative highlights the pervasiveness of sociopolitical issues in modern society, making it an excellent fit for our curriculum objectives.

The text also reflects ethical concerns over the treatment of less powerful individuals within society. The book presents a metaphor for oppressed groups' struggles against the institutions and power structures that crush them. We see direct parallels to the struggle against discrimination and intolerance in society. After reading the book, students can understand the subtext underpinning their experiences and see the ways in which oppressive mechanisms work.

The Hunger Games is an ideal fit for our English curriculum, given its cultural significance, literary value, and relevance to contemporary debates. It aligns with our objectives by offering students an opportunity to experience contemporary stories that reflect issues of class, gender, and discrimination, while also speaking to more significant sociopolitical problems. The Hunger Games is a great way to teach young adults the steps they can take to change the world, to understand the power structures that shape it, and to recognize their place in it. It is a text that many students will read during tutor time and a good introduction to the dystopian genre at the start of the unit.

'1984'

Throughout history, literature has served as a reflection of the society in which it is produced. One such work is George Orwell's 1984, which has become a classic in the world of dystopian literature. The novel captures a society under the rule of a totalitarian government that exerts complete power over the population, stripping its citizens of individuality and freedoms. The themes in 1984 relating to power, control, and censorship make it a fitting addition to our English curriculum. This essay will explain why 1984 is a good fit for our English curriculum based on the two criteria outlined in the remit.

Firstly, 1984 offers a deep exploration of societal power structures that are still relevant today. Power dynamics, as explored in 1984, are evident in real-life cases of authoritarianism and political regimes. Through the novel, students can study how power can be established and maintained, and how people under oppressive regimes can still stand up against it. The ruling class in 1984 uses various sophisticated methods of control such as propaganda, censorship, and manipulation to subjugate the masses, and students will become more critical of contemporary power structures as they learn about these methods of control.

Moreover, with the rise of communication technologies, it has become clearer how information can be controlled information to sway public opinion towards certain practices and values, or away from others. Indeed, contemporary debates, such as those about freedom of speech or cancel culture, echo the concerns raised in 1984. The novel explores the dangers of using propaganda to distort truth and create false realities. This is a valuable lesson for students to better understand the media today and how they can stay vigilant so that they can interpret what they are being told critically.

Secondly, the novel is a representation of the typical fears of societies that lack individual definitions of ethical behaviour. Given that the society in 1984 is defined solely by the government and its leaders, this connects with real-world debates, about class, gender, and

discrimination. The novel raises important questions about the intersection of power, control and individual freedom given how marginalized populations often are the ones upon whom autocratic societies' pressures are double and often inhumane. Students can reflect on ways that these issues are present in today's society as well.

Orwell's novel makes students question what kind of society they want to live in. Even though the novel was published over 70 years ago, the events in the book serve as a warning of what could happen if freedom is curtailed. It is a cautionary tale of how humans could eventually lose everything they value most. The core themes of the novel give a glimpse into the consequences of allowing authority to infringe on individual freedom. This helps students appreciate the need to be critical of political institutions and stay vigilant to ensure they do not slip-slide toward totalitarianism and other harmful practices.

In conclusion, we should include Orwell's novel, 1984, in our English curriculum. Through studying the novel, students can develop greater historical and critical awareness of the societal structures they are part of and explore how society might marginalize or discriminate against others. This exploration can improve their moral reasoning abilities, as it opens their minds to issues that stretch well beyond their own experiences. The novel serves as a warning of the dangers of authoritarian rule and the destruction of personal liberties. Through this type of learning, students can become more engaged and empathetic citizens who are better able to contribute to, and critique, a diverse and rapidly changing world.

'Harrison Bergeron':

In his short story Harrison Bergeron, Kurt Vonnegut presents a dystopian society in the year 2081, where the government enforces absolute equality through the use of handicaps imposed on the population. Vonnegut's story is a powerful social commentary on the dangers of an extreme interpretation of the principles of equality that can lead to the suppression of individuality and creativity. As such, Harrison Bergeron meets the requirements of the English curriculum by fulfilling two of its main objectives: to draw from the literary Canon and to reflect contemporary concerns and debates about class, gender, intolerance, and discrimination.

Vonnegut's story is not only a work of science fiction but also draws from the literary Canon, especially the tradition of dystopian literature, which includes works such as George Orwell's 1984 and Aldous Huxley's Brave New World. Like these famous works, Vonnegut's story presents a bleak vision of the future, where the government has taken control of every aspect of people's lives, including their thoughts, emotions, and physical abilities, to create the illusion of equality. However, this equality is only achieved by limiting the abilities of those who are considered more intelligent, talented, or attractive by society's standards, while those with lower abilities are given artificial handicaps to make them equal to others.

The use of handicaps is one of the main themes of Vonnegut's story and a metaphor for the dangers of extreme egalitarianism. The government believes that by reducing people's abilities and talents, they can create a society where everyone is equal and no one is better or worse than others. However, this utopian vision is based on the assumption that people are inherently unequal in their abilities and talents, and thus cannot be truly equal without external interventions. As a result, the government's handicaps are not only physical but also mental, emotional, and social, affecting people's sense of self-worth and identity.

	<p>One of the most striking examples of the use of handicaps in the story is the character of Harrison Bergeron himself, who is portrayed as a genius, athlete, and rebel. Harrison, unlike the other characters in the story, has not been handicapped for fear of causing him pain or injury. Instead, he is locked up in a prison for the gifted, where he dreams of overthrowing the government and returning freedom to the people. Harrison's character represents the spirit of individualism and creativity that the government fears and wants to suppress at all costs.</p> <p>Another example of the use of handicaps is the character of Hazel Bergeron, Harrison's mother, who is portrayed as mentally handicapped. Hazel's handicap forces her to forget things quickly and limits her ability to think critically or express complex thoughts and emotions. However, she is content with her life and does not question the government's policies or actions. Hazel's character represents the complacency and ignorance of those who accept the government's propaganda and do not question the status quo.</p> <p>By presenting these characters, Vonnegut raises important questions about the nature of equality, creativity, and individualism. He suggests that true equality cannot be achieved by suppressing people's individuality and talents but by celebrating diversity and allowing people to develop their abilities and talents to their fullest potential. He also implies that creativity and individualism are essential for social progress and innovation because they challenge the status quo and bring new ideas and perspectives to the table.</p> <p>Furthermore, Vonnegut's story also reflects contemporary concerns and debates about class, gender, intolerance, and discrimination. The theme of equality is central to these debates, as many people argue that these issues are caused by systemic inequality and that the only way to address them is by creating a more just and equal society. However, the story shows that an extreme interpretation of equality can lead to unintended consequences, such as the suppression of individuality and creativity, which may also perpetuate inequality and discrimination.</p> <p>In conclusion, Harrison Bergeron meets the requirements of the English curriculum by drawing from the literary Canon and by reflecting contemporary concerns and debates about class, gender, intolerance, and discrimination. Kurt Vonnegut's story is a powerful social commentary on the dangers of an extreme interpretation of equality that can lead to the suppression of individuality and creativity. By presenting characters that challenge the government's policies and propaganda, the story raises important questions about the nature of equality, diversity, and progress in society. As such, Harrison Bergeron is not only a work of fiction but also a vehicle for cultural enrichment and critical thinking that can help students develop cultural capital and become more empathetic and engaged citizens.</p>
<p>How does this unit link back to content of prior learning?</p>	<p>Year 7 and Year 8:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dystopian unit is an interleaved unit where students encounter different text types that they have visited in years seven and 8 to reinforce the knowledge of these text types. • The creative writing aspects of the dystopian unit return to the core concepts of the year seven unit – considering sentence variety and punctuation and imagery in writing and returns to the structural analysis of short stories and of own creative

	<p>writing introduced in year eight. The unit builds on these skills by introducing narrative voice and narrative hooks and focuses on allowing students to play with these elements in their own writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texts are analysed at both language and structural levels which was first taught in previous years. • Analysis of genre features building on explorations of genre features in year seven and eight. • Animal Farm was a dystopian text that students studied and now the exploration of this genre is expanded through a range of short stories and related poetry and news articles. • The same writing frames for analytical writing and creative writing are used in year nine as students are familiar with them from earlier years however, the expectation is that students should be able to embed all composites of effective literary analysis into their writing. <p>Year 8:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The short story analysis in year 8 focused on structural features. The structure of texts is analysed in this unit and interleaves knowledge from year eight returning to key vocabulary knowledge previously learnt such as exposition.. • Conventions of genre covered when looking at 'Fairy Tale' conventions in year 8 and terminology now expanded to Y9 dystopian genre conventions. • Use of the same writing frames for analytical writing as used in earlier schemes that year • Themes of year 8 poetry mirror themes of texts chosen so students can bring conceptual knowledge across years.
<p>Which concepts are being developed?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E.g. Form, structure and coherence – <i>understanding that texts are organised with intent.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shifting focus in writing for effect / paragraphing rules / structural terminology when looking at writing / develops / widening and narrowing viewpoint / returning to / contrasting / beginning / middle / end / exposition / foreshadowing / analepsis and chronology / panoramas / zooming in and zooming out / tone / first person; second person; omniscient third person; dual narrators. • Spelling, punctuation and grammatical rules – <i>understanding word classes, key spellings, sentence forms and varied punctuation.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Purbeck School writing mat expectations for sentences / punctuation. Focus on semi colons / colons / ellipsis - Nouns / Noun phrases / Verbs / Adjectives / Adverbs / Pronouns / Adverbials - Starter quizzes / knowledge organiser tests focus on spelling, sentence forms, word classes and punctuation. • Awareness of Impact and Intent - <i>Understanding that writing is shaped by the priorities of a writer and the needs of a reader, including the teaching of genre, audience and purpose.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Genre and conventions of genre including: tropes / themes / character types / typical narrative structures / genre elements with reference to Dystopian genre - Understanding and discussion of how writers use language and structure (across forms) to achieve effects on readers. - Students will write to describe and narrate/ analyse and present personal viewpoints on a text / comment on genre conventions

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Context – <i>understanding how production and reception shape meaning.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literary context of dystopian writing. Contemporary contexts – debates about AI. ● Evidence - <i>Understanding how to read and listen for meaning and use evidence from texts to support personal critical viewpoints.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand plot and characterisation across range of texts / personal response to key events and characters from the text and/or aspects of poetry or non-fiction writing/ ability to draw evidence from across a whole text to support personal responses. - Accurate use of quotations and quotation marks / embedded quotations / quotations using a comma and colon / <i>silver bullet</i> analysis of key words / shorten quotations / independently select quotations to support viewpoint from across the whole text to support critical viewpoints ● Methods - <i>Understanding how writers and speakers choose from a variety of methods to communicate and engage readers and audiences.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Characterisation through actions, description and dialogue; opportunities to discuss wide range of methods when close analysing extracts from the text including: metaphor / verb choice / imagery / semantic fields / imagery - Opportunities to use methods in own creative writing. - Opportunities to develop scaffolded oracy through text discussions. - Opportunities to discuss types of hooks used by writers in narratives: question hook / mysterious hook / figurative language hook / action hook / dialogue hook. - Structural terminology used when analysing how extracts and short stories are structured as listed above in the ‘form, structure and coherence section’
<p>How will this unit link to the content of future learning?</p>	<p>GCSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Structural analysis of the short stories to lead to students being ready for demands on Language Paper 1 Q3 and 4 and Q5 when crafting their own short pieces of writing. ● Language analysis of short stories to lead to students being ready for demands of Language Paper 1 Q2 and Q4 ● Exploration of characterisation through action, description and dialogue are transferable skills to other texts. ● Themes selected in short stories including: gender and class are revisited through all three set GCSE texts and some of the poems from the cluster. ● Texts are linked to literary context which is AO3 in GCSE literature. ● Assessments are focused on Language Paper 1 Question 5 <p>A level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Themes selected in short stories including: gender, race and class are revisited in chosen A level texts and some of the poems from the cluster. ● Analytical and oracy skills developed.

<p>Assessment 1: Success criteria –</p> <p>What do we expect the students to know and be able to do?</p>	<p><i>You are at the lottery that has just taken place and have witnessed the events that have happened.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write a descriptive account of what you have just witnessed from an unusual narrative perspective.
<p>Assessment 2: Success criteria –</p> <p>What do we expect the students to know and be able to do?</p>	<p>Write a short story as suggested by this picture (dystopian image).</p>