

A LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE PREPARATION AND SUMMER LEARNING 2025

Welcome to A Level English Language! Now that you've decided to study English Language at A level, you'll need to do a bit of preparation.

This information 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.

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1. Exam Board Specification: Click on the link below for more course details

[AQA | English | A-Level | A-level English Language](#)

2. Suggested reading list:

- Any books, websites or articles on English Language by David Crystal particularly Rediscover Grammar which would be a useful purchase.
- Texts and Contexts by Adrian Beard
- Language – A Student Handbook edited by Dan Clayton
- You just don't Understand by Deborah Tannen
- English Accents and Dialects by Hughes/Trudgill/Watt

3. Interesting Websites or Blogs you might want to dip in or out of.

- Andrew Moore's website is a good place to start. There is a lot of info here, so start by browsing for different topics <http://universalteacher.org.uk/>
- If your knowledge of grammar isn't up to scratch, improve it by using www.englishbiz.co.uk/grammar
- The British Library has a fantastic site with a vast range of resources.
- www.bl.uk Try 'The history of the English Language'.
- If you're looking for a brief introduction to some key aspects of linguistics, try the site for the Linguistic Society of America: lsadc.org/web2/index.html
- Under 'Field of Linguistics', you'll find useful articles e.g. by Deborah Tannen (useful for studying gender theories).
- Try the Museum of Human Language – a virtual site
- www.geocities.com/agihard/mohl/mohl.html
- Look up interesting words in www.worldwidewords.org
- Listen to a variety of British accents on YouTube: One Woman, 17 British Accents – Anglophenia

Your PC and the internet is of course an unlimited linguistic resource! Use it to look up articles about how language is used and to read people's ideas about language.

The opinion pages in The Guardian online is a good starting point. You should also familiarise yourself with a range of online texts.

Visit The Student Room to explore how blogs work.

And then there's your smartphone. Use it to record your friends' conversations – with their permission of course! – and then listen to how they communicate. Do the guys interrupt the ladies all the time? Do the girls really talk about their feelings and make-up? You could find this useful when studying identity or language and gender.

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4. Tasks or activities

Actively engage with both non-fiction and fiction texts such as articles, web pages, novels and short stories

There are some important areas that will be the basis of your study of the language of texts taken from everyday sources. You will have to become confident in using them.

There are a number of linguistic frameworks and related concepts to come to grips with. Linguistic Frameworks, Lexis, Semantics, Grammar, Phonetics / Phonology, Pragmatics, Discourse, Graphology, Register, Mode, Idiolect, Sociolect, Dialect, Accent, Representation.

Don't panic, just list and look up some of these words, begin to compile a glossary and learn a few for now.

And finally, a fun activity:

ACTIVITY 1

List as many words for 'drunk' as you can, trying to cover as many different registers (levels of formality and informality). Try to think about what your parents and grandparents would say, and also think about different contexts, e.g. what would you say to a police officer / teacher and what would you say to your friends.

Next you need to get your words in rank order, from most formal to least. Once that's done, try applying some lexical labels to them. Do you have examples for each of the following terms? If not, can you add some for the categories you don't yet have?

Formal	Technical	Informal
Colloquial	Impolite	Slang
Taboo	Dialect / Regional	'Posh' Slang
Old Fashioned	Older People's Slang	'Youth' Slang