

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Specification: Cambridge International (9093)

The College is introducing A Level English Language from September 2023 as a one year course. This versatile, academically rigorous A Level complements our existing broad post-16 curriculum and is suitable for students interested in a wide range of other A Level subjects, in particular Arts and Social Science courses.

There are four components to the CIE specification, with details outlined below:

Unit 1: Reading

Candidates will be exposed to a wide variety of texts from a range of genres and will be tasked in the examination with exploring two unseen texts in order to analyse techniques and methods employed by such texts to meet their purpose and target audience. This will involve the study of grammar and syntax, form and style, as well as structural and linguistic choices made by writers to create effects.

Unit 2: Writing

Candidates will create texts of their own which reflect the repertoire of material studied for Unit 1. They will be encouraged to write in a range of styles and levels of formality with a focus on technical precision, variety of punctuation and sentence forms, as well as other techniques designed to impact the reader. The examination itself requires candidates to write two original pieces in different styles, one of which must be accompanied by a commentary outlining the linguistic choices made.

Unit 3: Language Analysis

This paper tests methods by which language is explored and commented upon and requires theoretical study and original research to be integrated in order to cover the two broad topics that will be examined. The first of these topic areas is language change over time, illustrating the fluidity and flexibility of English as a medium of communication in both writing and speech. The second topic examined is Child Language Acquisition, where exemplification of the ways in which children develop spoken and written proficiency from birth until the age of eight will be tested against theoretical models and frameworks introduced by, among others, Piaget, Skinner and Chomsky.

Unit 4: Language Topics

Broadening the study of the English Language yet further, this paper requires candidates to explore two more areas of English usage within society. The first section of the paper focuses on English as a world language, exploring current global variations as well as the evolution of English into the preeminent lingua franca it has become. The second section of the paper focuses on language and the self, looking to place individual users of English into both a social and a psychological framework by exploring speech communities and considering the relationship between language and thought.

Who should study English Language A Level?

While the subject at A Level is inclusive and partners any combination of subjects, it is particularly beneficial for those studying Sociology, Psychology, Philosophy and Modern Foreign Languages, given that there is some degree of content and methodology overlap. Similarly, those studying History or Geography will see some areas of commonality of material and approach. English Language A Level can also be studied in tandem with English Literature, where the focus on forensic analysis of texts will lend support. Above all, the subject will serve to satisfy intellectual curiosity about the way we communicate on a daily basis, while it will also function to improve students' written and spoken proficiency.

