Year 8 Curriculum Newsletter Spring Term 2

English



What are we studying? Fiction study: Dystopia. In this unit students will examine and explore a series of extracts from out best Dystopian novels, including 1984, The War of the Worlds and more recent, The Hunger Games amongst others. They will study the context of the genre, the tropes and conventions within the extracts as well as key plot ideas, whilst developing reading skills..
Assessments: End of unit assessment, assessing reading and analysing skills.
How can parents help? Please assist your child with completing their spelling books, test them on this vocabulary, ensure they complete their Lexia minutes.

Science



What are we doing this half term? (1) Biology - Respiration topic is completed and students start the photosynthesis topic, (2) Chemistry - Reactivity series of metals is completed and students start looking at Earth structure , (3) Physics – Electricity topic is completed and students start the Forces topic.

Assessments: Low stake quizzes at the end of each topic.

How can parents help? Ensure your child has the correct equipment such as a pencil, ruler and their own scientific calculator. The BBC KS3 bitesize is a useful resource for homework tasks and revision - https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zng4d2p.

It would be useful to have a KS3 Science revision guide to aid students in preparation for summative assessments - https://www.amazon.co.uk/KS3-SCIENCE-REVISION-LEVELS-GUIDES/dp/B008MWXGFO

Religion, Philosophy and Ethics (RPE)



This term students will be exploring the concept of free will and determinism and writing a film review for the movie 'The Adjustment Beareau'.

How can parents help? Students will need to learn their key vocabulary carefully and will need to come to lessons ready to think deeply about the questions in class. You can support your son/daughter by encouraging them to see two sides of the argument, ask them about their RPE lessons at school and for them to explain to you the philosophical enquiry that has taken place in class that day.

Maths



What are we doing this half term?(1) Standard Form: Converting to and from with positive and negative indices, as well as adjusting to correct standard form. (2) Venn diagrams with probability and HCF/LCM (3) 3D shapes: Nets, Surface area and Volume of prisms.

Assessments: There will be an open book unit assessment after each topic and a bigger assessment covering all of the work since September before the end of term.

How can parents help? Ensure your child has the correct equipment for every lesson such as a pencil, ruler and their own scientific calculator. Encourage your child to engage fully with SPARX (the maths homework platform) spending at least 40 minutes per week doing their home learning.

Art



What are we studying? Year 8 students are starting a project based on 'Amazing Architecture'. This includes studying a variety of local and international buildings and Architects. Students will be studying one and two point perspective.

Assessment: Students are graded holistically throughout the project based on the 4 assessment objectives detailed in their sketchbooks.

How can parents help? Please ensure that your child completes all their Art & Design homework activities for this project. Visiting local and national landmarks and discussing works of art and architecture at home can enable students to gain confidence in sharing their thoughts and ideas.

Computer Science



What are we studying? Web design in HTML

Assessment: On the topic above students will answer a mixture of multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-response questions.

How can parents help? Encourage students to revise using: https://www.w3schools.com/

History



What are we studying? For the second half of the Spring Term we will first of all be completing an assessment in our studies so far of the Tudors and Stuarts. We will then be moving on to a study of the impact and legacy of the British Empire. We will be looking at the causes and impact of the Empire; the good and the bad, and assessing the role the Empire had in forming the modern world we live in today. We will be considering why the Victorians considered the Empire a good thing and the time, and why attitudes towards the Empire and Britain's behaviour in the past have changed now to be more critical.

Assessment: The Tudors and Stuarts - Spring 2

How can parents help? Encourage your child to watch historical documentaries i.e Gandhi and reading books i.e Black and British, a Short Essential History by David Olosuga. Also Visit the Museum of London, Docklands.

Geography



What are we doing this half term? Y8 students will be continuing to explore rivers, and then investigate life in India. Throughout these topics students will develop their enquiry and analysis skills.

Assessments: An end of topic written assessment, short and long answer questions.

How can parents help? Ensure your child has the correct equipment including glue, scissors and a green pen for peer and self-assessment. Make sure the literacy sheet is fully completed and test students to confirm that they know the keywords and definitions. Make sure the revision notes for the assessment follow the guidance on the revision help sheet, to include definitions, diagrams and explanations to aid in learning the information. Testing students on the information on their revision pages helps build their confidence, that they can recall relevant information.

French



What are we studying? Food and drink including ordering food and buying at a market using quantities. Vocab and grammar test to consolidate knowledge for the end of module assessment

How can parents help? Encourage your child to make a bank of flashcards to revise words and phrases. Encourage your child to learn these words and phrases by testing themselves or by testing them. Encourage your child to share what they have learnt in class.

Spanish



What are we studying? Food and drink including ordering food and buying at a market using quantities. Vocab and grammar tests to consolidate knowledge for the end of module assessment.

How can parents help? Encourage your child to make a bank of flashcards to revise words and phrases. Encourage your child to learn these words and phrases by testing themselves or by testing them. Encourage your child to share what they have learnt in class.

Drama



What are we doing this half term?: Students in year 8 will be following a story that explores the dangers of Joyriding. Students will learn about Forum Theatre and the work of Augusto Boal, whilst also exploring a plot that explores the impact of joyriding on a group of young people. Students will also learn numerous drama techniques such as nightmare sequence, reportage and will develop their ability to spontaneously improvise.

Assessment: Students will be assessed on how they create and perform a piece of Drama and will complete a written test to assess key knowledge.

How can parents help?: Help your child by encouraging their critical thinking. Ask them their opinion about films, TV series or Theatre seen.

PE



What are we studying? Skills, techniques and strategies are continuing to be built on from the Spring term. Students will rotate through the curriculum on a half term cycle, experiencing a different set of sports and activities from invasion games, net games, striking and fielding games, gymnastics and dance.

Assessments: Students will be assessed throughout the practical blocks of work.

How can parents help?: Please ensure students complete home learning tasks on time and that they are organised with their full kit on PE days.

Food and Nutrition



In Year 8 the focus is on developing and refining the basic skills taught in year 7, developing accuracy and control across a range of equipment. More complex dishes featuring meat, chicken and alternative proteins are introduced. These intermediate skills build on the foundations of the basic skills learned in year 7 and prepare students for year 9. Our students come from a variety of different cultures so a focus in year 8 is International and British cuisines. This year also introduces the concept of different nutritional needs based on life stage, and food choice based on ethics. Students are exposed to a variety of food related messages from different sources so in year 8 we focus on how different factors affect food choice such as religion, celebration, dietary needs, peer pressure and the media.

Practical lessons continue and include: Irish Soda Bread, Veggie Nachos, Sausage Noodles, Fruit muffins, Thai fishcakes, Garlic Dough Balls.

How will they be assessed?

Students will be given regular verbal feedback within their practical lessons 'in the moment'. This allows students to act upon this feedback immediately for the maximum impact on progress.

Students will be assessed via written and practical assessments.

Home Learning

Students are set practical evaluations to reflect upon their practical outcome and own personal performance in practicals.

In addition, where students provide ingredients for practicals they will continue to develop their weighing and measuring skills at home when preparing their ingredients for lessons.

Students are encouraged to practice their practical skills out of lessons by helping to prepare and cook meals at home.

To be successful in this subject, students will need to be good at and enjoy:

Learning how to cook independently

Developing organisational and time management skills

Developing problem solving skills and the ability to overcome challenges.

DT Graphics (Rotation)

What are we doing this half term? Students will be using analysis, enterprise and teamwork skills in order to design and make a prototype of a flat-pack product. In completing the project, students will look at sustainability and material management, developing an awareness of intellectual property, and will look at how products are assembled. They will also look at the importance of prototyping within the design process. The project aims to develop students' awareness of designing for a target audience, managing materials, prototyping and working with others.

Assessments: Students will be assessed in the areas of Investigation (analysing flat-pack products and analysing their appropriateness for the fair), Designing (designing different products that could be sold) and Evaluating (evaluating the final product).

How can parents help? Students will be designing a product for a real world situation, so discussing what customers might want from the products they buy would be useful.

Design Technology (Rotation)



What are we doing this half term? We will be looking into forces that act upon materials when we use the in products and polymer based materials. We will manufacture a pen holder from acrylic and crate a small night light. We will be trained how to use the pillar drill, polishing machine, plastic heating equipment, the vacuum former and soldering irons. We will focus on finishing skills to create high quality products. We will also cover the concept of quality assurance, quality control and tolerance within manufacturing.

Assessments: Students will be assessed on the Acrylic pen stand practical work which they have the opportunity to focus on quality. Students will be assessed on their small night light, in which their soldering skills and ability to construct a vacuum formed case will be the focus.

How can parents help? Take an interest in the project work and skills they are learning and discuss them. Help them look at products made from polymer materials and try and work out how they are made and constructed.

DT Textiles –(Rotation)

What are we doing this half term? Students will use recycled fabrics or clothing to design a Puggly Mascot. Throughout the project, students will look at quality control, fabric construction, hand-sewing, machine stitching, embroidery, applique, seam allowance and templates. The Puggly mascot project will allow students to develop independence whilst using the sewing machine, as they will have to ensure that they have sewn in the correct places to construct the product accurately. This particular Textiles project will challenge their problem-solving skills and ability to work to a high quality.

Assessments: Design sketches will be assessed as well as the practical outcome of the mascot itself.

How can parents help? Discuss the project, look at existing mascots for a variety of events or teams. Help them to experiment or practice sewing skills at home.

Music



What are we doing this half term? Year 8 will be continuing with their Blues project, developing their ensemble performance skills to put together a performance of the 12 bar blues chords, walking bassline and some improvisation. They will also develop their understanding of key terms related to Blues and other pop styles.

Assessments: One listening assessment based around key terminology and one performance assessment.

How can parents help? Please ensure your child has a pen, a pencil and their Music book each lesson and provide help with learning the key musical words.