

Welcome to A Level English Language!

What's the difference between GCSE and A Level English Language?

At GCSE, English Language often focuses on **skills** (reading, writing, SPaG). At A Level, you also study **language as a system** and **language in the real world**.

A Level English Language involves:

- Analysing how people use language in real life
- Studying how language changes over time
- Exploring identity, power, gender and technology through language
- Writing creatively and analytically
- Learning linguistic terminology

What can I read?

Anything and everything! Wider reading and contextual knowledge are both really important parts of the course. Read newspaper articles, opinion pieces, reviews – there are so many out there so find something that interests you! Read fiction too, we look at a number of different genres over the year so anything will be helpful. The most important thing is that whenever you read something, you consider **why** – why are they writing this? Why are they targeting this particular audience? Why do they use these techniques? Why have they chosen to represent themselves and the subject in that way?

Task 1: Thinking Like a Linguist

A linguist studies *patterns* in language rather than judging it as right or wrong. Look at the text message below:

"u coming later or nah lol"

Answer the questions:

1. Why might the writer choose “**u**” instead of *you*?

2. What does “**nah**” suggest about the relationship between writer and reader?
3. How does “**lol**” affect the tone of the message?

Challenge: How would this message change if it were sent to a teacher instead?

Task 2: Language in the Real World

Read the short text below:

"Don't miss out! Our new range is finally here – shop now before it's gone."

1. What **purpose** does this text have?
2. Identify two language features used to persuade the reader.
3. Who is the **target audience**, and how can you tell?

AQA A Level Link: This mirrors **AQA Paper 1: Language, the Individual and Society**, where you analyse how language choices create meanings for different audiences, purposes and contexts.

Task 3: Spoken Language Awareness

Think about how you speak in different situations.

Complete the table:

Situation	How your language changes	Why?
Talking to friends		
Talking to a teacher		
Posting on social		

media		
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AQA Key Term: This is called **language variation**, a core concept in **AQA Paper 1**, including social and contextual variation.

Task 4: Creative Meets Analytical

Write a short paragraph (5–6 lines) describing a moment from your daily life (e.g. on the bus, in school, at home).

Then answer:

- Why did you choose those words?
- What mood or identity were you trying to create?

AQA A Level Insight: In your **NEA (coursework)** you produce original writing and then write a commentary analysing your language choices.

Contact information

If you have any questions regarding English Language, feel free to get in touch with me on ajeeves@burnley.ac.uk - **we look forward to meeting you!**