



### Welcome

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am delighted to welcome you to the first of our Teaching and Learning Newsletters which has been especially created for our parents and carers of Year 7 students. This newsletter will be produced each half term and, inside, you will find information from each of your son or daughter's Subject Leaders conveying some of the topics that they will be covering along with some helpful information on how you can support them. I hope that you find it informative and useful and please do contact me via my email address if you have any comments or suggestions to make. I certainly see this as a partnership between home and school.

The focus of this first issue is on home-learning. Last year we relaunched home-learning, establishing the principle that each student in Year 7 will have a minimum of 45 minutes of home learning per subject per week and we asked parents and carers to work with their child/children to draw up a timetable that fits within the family schedule. All home-learning set is due in one week later. An example is below.

	4:00 – 4:45	4:45 – 5:30	5:30 – 6:15
Monday	English	Leisure time	Geography
Tuesday	After school club	Tech	Mathematics
Wednesday	MFL	RE	Family event
Thursday	Science	Leisure time	Team Sport
Friday	ICT	Music	Leisure
Saturday			
Sunday			Drama

Different subjects will set home-learning in different ways, but the principle will be the same, 45 minutes, per subject, per week. If your child completes the work within the allocated time, then they can do one of the following additional tasks (a) revise topics covered in the subject (b) read ahead for the topics coming up or (c) read around the subject topic more widely.

#### Research on Home-learning

- High quality home-learning can have an average impact of 5 months' additional progress.
- Home-learning has the strongest effect when it is set in a way that lets students practise what they have learned in the classroom.
- Home-learning has most impact when students spend 2 or more hours daily after school.

We do hope that we will have your support in this. Some parents and carers have asked for the home-learning tasks to be available online, and this is an option we will be exploring this year.

# English

## Non-fiction travel texts.

Students will be developing skills focussed on how to answer questions on two unseen texts and will be required to show understanding of the content and ideas as well as how writers have used language and structure for effect. They will also be asked to write a piece of their own travel writing.

## Home-learning

You can support your child by encouraging them to talk through their writing. For example:

- How are you going to begin and end your writing? Why and how effective will this be?
- Which words would you like to change or improve?
- Have you checked your spelling, punctuation and sentence structure? Does it all make sense?

Where the home-learning is reading, students will be asked to comment on the effect of language in a given extract. They will often be asked to select words or phrases and explain their effect. You can help by encouraging them to explain what the words make them think/feel rather than what they mean. Students are also being encouraged to read for pleasure both in school and at home. Students will be asked to complete a reading log where they are expected to log the title and name of the book, the date each reading session takes place, how many pages have been read and a small description of what they have read. Each child has been given instructions for logging their personal reading and will be given one hour a fortnight reading time.

# Geography

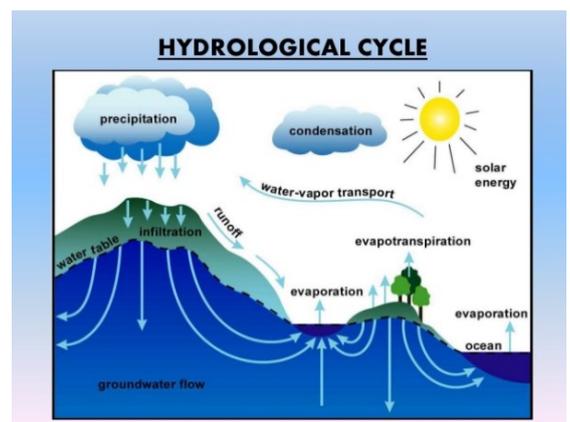
## Rivers

Students are aiming to understand, through the use of detailed place-based exemplars, the key processes of hydrology as well as how human activity influences the functioning of natural systems. The main assessment piece will require them to apply topic key words, recall information about the Nile in Africa as well as The Three Gorges Dam in China, and to understand processes related to controlling river flooding.

## Home-learning

You can support your child by encouraging them to talk through their planning with you e.g. for a discursive argument discussion prompts could be:

- How have they introduced the topic?
- What points are they going to include?
- What facts can support the point they are making?
- Where in the world have they studied an example of this?
- Have they tried to balance their point of view?



For tasks such as learning key words or processes, they need to be able to recall meanings as well as spellings of the key words in addition to understanding how processes work. You can help by encouraging them to explain the words to you and by getting them to try to use them in context; asking students to change a diagram to words or vice-versa will help them to show understanding of how processes lead to change.

# History

## Medieval England

Key topics will be the Battle of Hastings and the impact of William the Conqueror. Areas for focus will be the feudal system, the Domesday Book, rebellions and the development of castles. Students will use these topics to develop their skills of source evaluation and historical debate. For example, students will study a picture of a castle and suggest why it was so difficult to attack by using their knowledge of defensive features and weapons. They will consider the most important impact of William's rule on England by identifying ways in which the country changed during this time.



## Home-learning: cover sheets in exercise books show the topic for each unit

Students complete a research task specific to the topic being studied (this half term it is on English castles.) If students complete this before the due date, they can go on to practise key word spellings and revise key knowledge by creating mind maps etc. You can use the lesson questions on the topic cover sheet to check for understanding, can they give you a verbal or even written answer to the question?

At this early stage in their historical studies, students tend to tell a story rather than explain why events happen and what the consequences might be. You can support your child by asking them to describe what happened, then why it happened and finally, what do they think happened as a result of events. Using connectives and conjunctives, such as: because, this meant that, as a result, therefore, will help your child to develop their writing in history.

Research suggestions:

<http://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryMagazine/DestinationsUK/CastlesinEngland/>

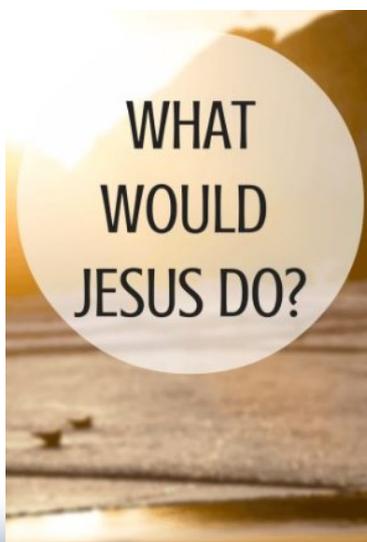
<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/familydaysout/top-10-castles>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pR26RMI9T8c> (Dan Snow on youtube with a trebuchet; search also Warwick Castle and trebuchet)

<http://www.spartacus-educational.com>

## RE

### What Would Jesus Do?



Students are invited to consider vocation, what this is, and what this means for them today. We will explore some miracles performed by Jesus ahead of exploring modern examples of vocation (through Oscar Romero and Mother Theresa). Students will finish by exploring the idea of church leadership and marriage as a vocation.

### Home-learning

This takes the form of a menu, whereby students select one piece of work to complete from a sheet. The tasks are varied and ordered by difficulty; we encourage students to challenge themselves when selecting tasks. It would be helpful if this expectation was reinforced at home when your child selects their home-learning task.

## Autumn Term Programme

Subject	Topic Title	Main Task Assessment
Textiles	Personalised Planner Cover	Design and making of final product
Resistant Materials	Animal Mobile Phone Holder	Design and making of final product
Food & Nutrition	Food Ingredients	Organisation and working together
English	Travel Texts	AQA exam paper
French	Moi et Mes Loisirs -Introducing	Listening and writing assessment
German	Meine Welt und meine Schule Introducing yourself and talking	Reading and writing assessment
Computing	HTML creating webpages, basic coding & algorithms.	Online safety, binary numbers and bitmaps & vectors.
Science	Cells Matter  Heating and Cooling Movement of the human body Simple chemical reactions Fuels and burning  Gas exchange in humans Pure and impure substances EXPO	Written tests completed in class for all topics listed using past KS3 science questions.  EXPO is a poster presentation usually completed in pairs.
Art	Core Art Skills	Beach still life drawing
Maths	Operations, place value, special	Termly test
Music	Elements of Music	Spooky music composition

## A word from your Year Leader

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all parents and carers for your help and support so far. We understand that moving into secondary school can be intimidating at times. However, students have already flourished with your support; we hope that this relationship between school and home will continue to ensure that your child has a happy and successful school career.

### Top Tips#

Phones, tablets and Social Media are probably the biggest distraction for all students; when doing home-learning it is important that students do not have the distraction of their phones or tablets. This also applies to bed time when we recommend that phones/ tablets are stored out the sight during this time.

Provide a clear and calm space for home-learning to be completed. Any music played should be of a calm genre and in the background, not through headphones.

Keep an eye on the planner to make sure homework is written in correctly. Make sure they are writing the subject in the correct column and recording the due date.

We promote positive learning at St Edward's and it really helps when this is reinforced at home. Ask your child what they have earned merits for, encourage them to take pride in their work and to proof read it for errors.

Use the table in this newsletter to ask your child about their learning; look through your child's exercise books, praise high standards of presentation: underlining dates/titles and ensuring that all work is in neat handwriting. Prompt them with questions to test their knowledge or ask them to teach you about a topic; encourage them to review misconceptions, to turn their classwork into revision notes or to read around the topic.

Students are given a full week to complete a home learning task: this should be a substantial piece of work. Giving them a full week means that students should have time to see a teacher if they are struggling rather than submitting an incomplete piece of home-learning.

Mr Howes

For further updates please find us on:



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