

Year 8 Spring Curriculum Update

January 2024

YEAR 8 SPRING TERM OVERVIEW

Last half term Year 8 have demonstrated incredible resilience, dedication and kindness. We, a Key Stage 3 team, are so very proud of the effort our students have put into their learning. We have been focusing on acts of kindness and building a sense of community across the year group.

Our lovely tutor groups have collectively been reflecting on their own achievements so far this year – and there have been many! Most impressively, our students have been able to set themselves goals for the new year; these range from being respectful to everyone and being on time to our lessons.

As a key stage, we are so proud of the maturity shown through these reflections. A huge congratulations to 8EHR at Brooklands for achieving over eight thousand positive points on ClassCharts and at Walnut Tree a huge congratulations to 8SAW achieving over five thousand positive points. The most impressive demonstration of how fantastic our year group is that all tutor groups have achieved over five thousand positives. This is a brilliant display of the hard work and effort shown by all of Year 8.

We are looking forward to this new term and all the wonderful achievements to come. We have lots of exciting events happening in the new year with upcoming Advanced Learning Days. The new year is a perfect time to try something new and will a plethora of enrichment activities on offer at Walton High there is certainly something for all students to get involved with. We will be sharing key details about all that is in offer in tutor time – we have everything from Ancient Greek to Special FX make up. We challenge all to try something new.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

This term students explore texts from a range of diverse writers, linked to the theme of Hidden Figures.

In the first half term students will present their findings on an analysis of *Noughts & Crosses* by Malorie Blackman. They will work together to develop their discussion skills, ensuring they are able to prove their analysis through use of supporting evidence.



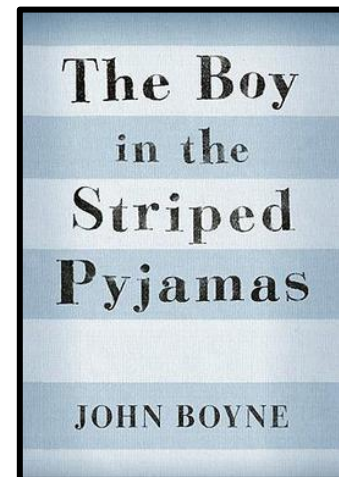
In the second half term, students will learn how write imaginatively, adapting tone, register and style to match purpose and audience. They will build on prior skills from Term 1 and create a narrative/description inspired by a picture and/or title.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

This term students are studying the novel, *The Boy in Striped Pyjamas* by John Boyne. So far, they have been making interesting predictions of the book based on the first few chapters and learning contextual information about WW2 and the Holocaust to help develop their understanding of the plot.

In the first half term students learned how to annotate the novel effectively to explore their own ideas and interpretations about key characters. Furthermore, they explored how John Boyne has used language to create effects.

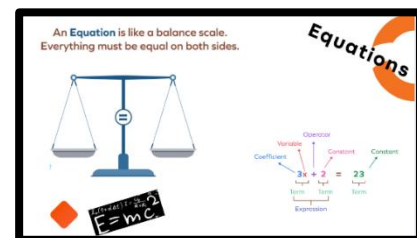
In the second half term, students will finish reading the novel and focus on developing their written analysis of characters. This will include looking at the relationship between key characters, whilst selecting evidence and specific language choices from across the novel as a whole.



MATHS

In Year 8, we place a lot of emphasis on Collaborative Learning. Learners are encouraged to share their ideas, thoughts and opinions which will be discussed in a structured way across all lessons using our thinking and talking for learning ideology. This ensures that learning is active and thought provoking. It also ensures that all learners are engaged in the learning process and not just a few who might be asked questions by the teacher.

In the first half of the Spring Term, Year 8 students would explore the world of Algebra. The emphasis on developing students' understanding of algebraic notation, expressions, and formulae and solving equations. These skills will be applied to solve problems in inequalities.

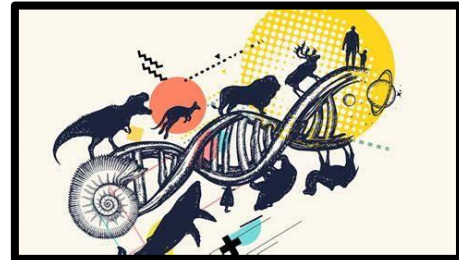


The second half of the Spring Term will be focused primarily on probability. We will look in depth on what probability is as well as calculating probability. There will be cross references with real life situations, allowing students to see and experience the real use of probability as well as cross-curricular links which will provide the opportunity for students to explore how probability can be used in other subjects such as Science. From relative frequencies to mutually exclusive events, students will start to appreciate how using probability will allow them to learn the possibilities of outcomes of random experiments.

SCIENCE

This term students will advance their scientific knowledge and understanding of Chemistry and Biology. They will develop scientific skills through numerous experiments and investigations that help answer questions about the world around them. This will equip them with the scientific knowledge required to understand the uses and implications of science, today and for the future.

During this Biology topic they venture into genetics and evolution, cultivate their knowledge and understanding of what makes us each unique and how species change over time. They will explore new areas of science and make their own opinions based on scientific evidence.



They can also broaden their knowledge and understanding beyond the curriculum during science club. KS3 Science club runs on a Tuesday 3:15-4:15pm at Walnut Tree and Wednesday 3:15-4:15pm at Brooklands. Students last term engaged in topics such as: Flame tests, light boxes and colours, microbiology, looking at surface tension and Chemistrees.

ART

Students at Walnut Tree, who study Art in their creative rotation, are engaging in the Bugs project. Students experience 2D and 3D outcomes exploring pencil, pen, ceramics, print and paint. This project aims to build on observational skills and focus on mark making in a range of materials. Students will explore the illustrative work of Abby Diamond and analyse her work to improve their subject specific vocabulary.



Students at Brooklands, who study Art in their creative rotation, will be exploring Day of the Dead. This project aims to equip students with a knowledge of culture around the theme and build a confidence in the use of tone, colour and an understanding of colour mixing using acrylic paint. Students study the work of Tim Burton and produce a piece of work in response to this. They produce a final skull design developing knowledge from previous projects.

Individual Learners project accompanies each creative rotation, so please ask your child about their plans for their independent outcome. Independent learning is set on Firefly for students to refer to after the lesson.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

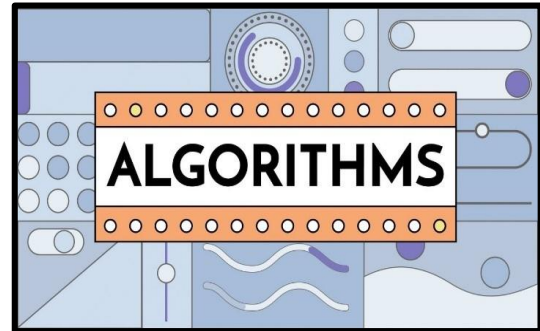
Throughout this term students will start their journey into the world of Python programming. Year 8 will start off with learning what an Algorithm is to properly plan out their programs. Through this they will learn the theory and syntax needed to start to solve set problems and challenges using Python. To download a free version of the software to use to practise at home click on the below links:

Python for windows PC:

<https://www.python.org/downloads/windows/>

Python for mac OS:

<https://www.python.org/downloads/macos/>



Do come along to our support sessions on Tuesdays in BE1 at Walnut Tree and on Thursdays in BC6 at Brooklands to help you enhance your learning in this topic.

DANCE

This half term students will launch into learning about hip-hop style of dance. When hip-hop started it was not mainstream, it was a street style of performance that raised awareness of many critical cultural issues. It has a remaining influence on many facets of culture. Students learn many features of the dance style; 'krumping', 'tocking', 'breaking' and 'popping', but my favorite and most accessible would be 'tutting.' Students are really enjoying the unit and are creating such great sequences in the lesson, fun times.

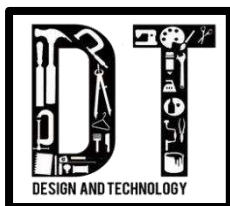
Next half term we look at Graffiti Art; another street explosion of culture that is not mainstream but has a powerful, influence in the today's world.

Students combine their knowledge of Hip Hop styles to choreograph a piece that focusses on the beauty of the outside and of the immediate experience rather than something framed in a luxury performance space. This is about making dance accessible and for all.



DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Design Technology students in Year 8 learn about mechanical devices, different movements, levers and linkages, and cams and followers. Students make their own mechanical toy from scratch. The design element is marked on their ability to create an object of their choice which utilises all their mechanical knowledge. There is a DT club for KS3 at Brooklands and Walnut Tree. Students need to ask their teacher for details.



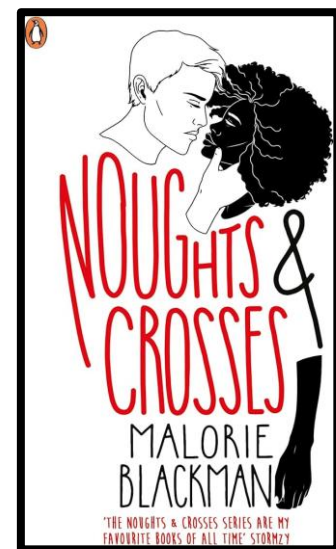
DRAMA

Last term finished with many brilliant performances from Willy Russell's 'Blood Brothers.' Current Year 8 generally scored higher in their performance work than previous cohorts, Year 8 students. We saw strong and believable characters. Most students gained an S+ or GD- grade for this unit which would translate to a level 6 or 7 at GCSE.

This half-term we will learn the key skills necessary for current theatre, television, and film where characters are shown without dialogue. Actors will need to learn how to physicalise a character. The unit is called physical theatre and students learn to 'own' the stage. This unit leads on to demonstrate how physical theatre can be used to show changes of emotion and abstract concepts which we pick up again in Year 9.

In the second half of the term, physical skills are applied to modern play. We explore Malorie Blackman's play 'Noughts and Crosses'. This was recently adapted for television and is still available on BBC I player. The play follows Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet' but inverts the status quo by placing crosses as the ruling class who rule against the noughts and their struggle against prejudice, poverty and low status. We chose this play to show how acting can challenge an audience to question their assumptions and accepted ways of thinking.

After school activities are focused on the school show this half-term and we invite you to see 'Godspell' at The Venue at the end of half term. After half term we return to KS3 and 4 drama clubs, workshops and Venue show preparation. This term is also where students make their preferred choices for GCSE, and we are available to answer any questions about the course.



FOOD AND NUTRITION

Students will build on knowledge learned the previous year adding more detail and understanding of the Science of Food. They will cover healthy eating in more detail looking at macronutrients and



micronutrients and their functions in the body. They will enhance their knowledge on food safety and hygiene by learning about conditions for bacteria growth and food poisoning. Students will develop their practical skills by making Chow Mein, Carrot and Orange Muffins, Veggie pizza and Fruit Crumble.

GEOGRAPHY

This term we are turning our attention towards the ‘Americas’ – the entire landmass from Canada in the North to Argentina in the South! We will look at urban areas – their functions, layout and how they can be made more sustainable. This will lead to some local fieldwork where students will be asked to look at how sustainable their local area is.

Next, we will also study a hurricane and contrast it to the effects and responses of a cyclone we looked at when studying Africa last term. Then we will look at tropical rainforests – at their features, how people are impacting them and the importance of their conservation having looked at the causes and impacts of climate change in Year 7.



HISTORY

Three big enquiry questions drive Year 8 lessons across the Spring Term: -

- (i) Why did the First World War break out in 1914?
- (ii) What was the nature of fighting during the First World War?
- (iii) What impact did the First World War have?

The First World War unit not only develops the ability of students to assess the importance of causes, to analyse the significance of events and to apply criteria to the evaluation of sources but requires students to be reflective and emotionally intelligent learners. Students will be given the opportunity to work with a host of stimuli – photographs, film and audio clips for example, alongside learning how to work with different types of text, whether that be scholarly works, war poetry,



letters or diary extracts. Lessons will delve into details about specific battles and teach students how to deploy factual detail in an effective manner, but equally as importantly, will give students an appreciation of the long-term legacy of the First World War.

There are numerous documentaries, films, books and historical fiction titles that Year 8 students would benefit from reading. Firefly does give details on suggested reading and resources.

LANGUAGES

FRENCH

This half term, the students will be learning about the world of media: describing different types of media, how and why they are used and their opinions about them. They will also learn about technology and learn how to talk about how they use technology in their everyday life. They will learn how to give reasons how they have used technology in the past, such as listened to music or watched films.



GERMAN

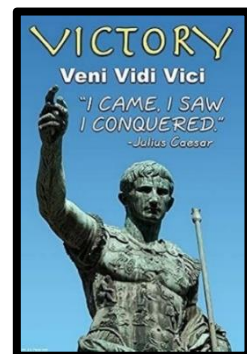
Year 8 students are looking at the world of work and how German is important for their futures. Students will learn about the relevance of German in the modern economy and jobs market. Students will learn to describe jobs and the character traits they need to do those jobs. They will learn the difference between masculine and feminine job titles. They will link daily routine to this topic by talking about what daily life looks like for different jobs. Students will also have an introduction to the imperfect tense.



In the fourth half-term, students will build on their knowledge of free-time activities and hobbies to talk about hobbies they've done in the past. They will learn how to form the perfect tense for regular verbs using haben (to have) and how the word order changes when adding time phrases. They will continue to develop new skills such as dictation and reading aloud.

LATIN

Students will continue to learn about relative pronouns, which will help develop their understanding in English of our own 'who', 'whom' and 'whose'. We shall also be learning a new tense (the pluperfect) and a new case (the genitive). They will continue to develop their vocabulary skills through regular vocabulary homework and work on derivatives in class. They will discover aspects of Roman palaces and life in Britain through the Latin stories which they read, as well as exploring the lives of famous Roman leaders and the Roman interest in Ancient Egypt.



MANDARIN

In this half term, we will learn to give directions and to describe our town. Students will be planning their weekend and comparing their lifestyle with people beyond our borders.

We will also learn to describe different future jobs, careers, and housing preferences, whilst being able to express their opinions. During the week of Chinese New Year and Spring Festival, we will explore Chinese cultural festivities in greater depth.



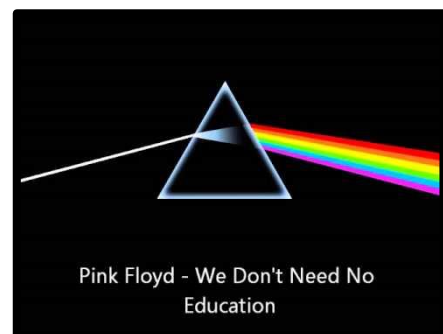
SPANISH



Students will start one of the all-time favourite units on food and going out. They will learn how to order in a restaurant and how to make sense of a menu in Spanish. There will be lots of cultural insights on recipes and traditional aspects of food sharing such as tapas and more. They will be able to make reference to three-time frames and express wishes and intentions.

MUSIC

“We don’t need no Education”- Year 8 have the opportunity to perform live on stage with Pink Floyd Tribute act live at the Venue in February. Through this activity students will learn to perform and sing a series of memorable hooks and riffs from Popular Music. In the second half term we will take a trip around the globe to explore musical traditions from a variety of places. We stop off at a new country/continent each week and look at the instruments and musical systems in India, Africa, Jamaica and China, all whilst continuing to build on our instrumental and music making skills.



PE

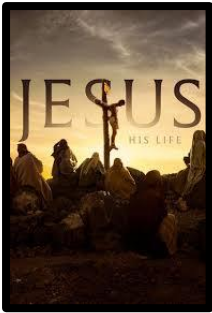
This term our Year 8 Girls will be receiving instruction in Hockey and Dodgeball. In Hockey, our girls will be building on the knowledge they have learned from Year 7 where they will look at offensive and defensive tactics that can be employed within the game. They will also explore in greater depth the different key characteristics of the positions around the field, as some of our girls will start to show an aptitude towards either attack or defence. More conditioned and larger team sized games will be the order of the day for the final few weeks of the module, where the girls will be given the chance to showcase their skills and to see the game of hockey in full flow. They will be introduced to the different safety equipment that is used within Hockey and they will be given instruction in how to play corners.

Our Year 8 students will also begin their instruction in Dodgeball, where they will be taught the rules and regulations of the sport, and be taught the correct techniques for throwing, catching, and dodging the ball on the court. Most importantly, our students will learn about footwork and how best to use their footwork to enable them to have the most impact within the sport. They will draw upon knowledge learned from their Strength and Conditioning module in Year 7, and the Netball and Basketball modules which include instruction in footwork also.



In Table Tennis, students will develop basic skills in isolated practices to build confidence before progressing into attacking and defensive conditioned games. The students will also gain knowledge in the rules and regulations of table tennis to adapt an officiating role. Year 8 boys are completing units of table tennis and Fitness. Students will develop basic skills in isolated practices to build confidence before progressing into attacking and defensive conditioned games. The students will also gain knowledge in the rules and regulations of table tennis to adapt an officiating role. In Fitness students will learn about the different methods of training, how these can be adapted to different training environment and how these can be applied to different sports. In the second half of the half term, our Year 8 Boys will begin Orienteering, where they will learn about the rules of orienteering, map reading skills and how to understand the Key. Orienteering is a fabulous skill for our students to practice and many students who enjoy orienteering will later go on to pursue Duke of Edinburgh's Award at various levels in KS4.

PHILOSOPHY



This half term students' will continue their study of the Abrahamic religions with the study of Christianity. They will be following the story of the life of Jesus beginning by look at the nativity, as well as the life, works, miracles and mission of Jesus Christ. Within these lessons, we explore three key Ultimate questions – Does God Exist, How do we Treat Others, and Is there Life After Death?