

Year 9 Spring Curriculum Update

January 2024

YEAR 9 SPRING TERM OVERVIEW

Tutors have been working closely with students in the first to help them settle into their new GCSE courses and begin their learning journey. Study support sessions for each subject are provided each week for students within each Curriculum Area so that students can obtain both additional support and help.

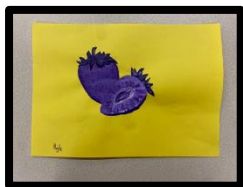
Year 9 tutors have sent representatives from their groups to the library to select new books for 'Read to Succeed'. The school librarians are always keen to help and advise students who are looking to branch out and extend their reading choices, and they must remember that the library is open at break and after school for students to borrow additional books to read for pleasure.

The Extracurricular activities have been updated for the new year too, and this now includes a Book Club available for students to attend once a week. The activities list contains many opportunities for students; so check out the copy on Firefly or the copy available in each tutor room on the tutor board.

There have been several sporting successes so far this year. At the Walnut Tree campus: Year 9 netball team won their game against St Pauls; they were four goals down and turned it around. The Year 9 girls football team also came third in our group, just missing out on qualifying to the semi-final! At the Brooklands campus success has occurred with the basketball players Rony, Edem, Shehan and Jeffrey taking part in a Milton Keynes tournament playing well together as a team and representing the school fantastically.



Sammy, Jack, Corey and Luca also all showed great sportsmanship plating with their teammates from Walnut Tree in representing the school in the football County Cup. More fixtures between schools across the city will continue to be played this term and we look forward to more success on this front.



There has also been success in the creative arts with many students performing in dances and the ensemble of Godspell at Christmas at the Venue. A special mention to Cameron Chambers and Rupert Sripathy who performed an amazing comedy piece with the Drama Club for Christmas at the Venue in front of a packed auditorium. In Year 9 Art lessons students have been learning about acrylic paint application, colour theory and the use of tone. A special mention to the following

students for their outcomes: Leah Swart, Awo Mohamoud, Anupriya Vijayaskar, Migle Siautile, Megan Denehan, Nika Zueva.

Year 9 tutor groups at Brooklands have been challenging one another within their tutor group to develop their interactions and conduct. A particular highlight was when six students raced to open a door for Ms Bright! Staff have commented on how their conduct has improved and this reflected on the last assembly of term in which each tutor group shared their highlights and targets for the new year.

In PSHE students will continue to rotate around a range of topics which will include controlling governments and specifically what it means to have and live in a fair democracy, as well as online safety and how this impacts them offline, in the real world.

The Year 9 Student Council is going well and students have been sharing their opinions on the quality of marking and feedback, their views on the October Advanced Learning Days, and also been developing their own project proposals for the stamp of approval from Mr Bennett and Ms Alexander. We will share more about these in our next newsletter.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Throughout this term, students will continue to build and develop their interpretation and analysis skills, securing their knowledge of the skills that underpin the GCSE English Language exam.

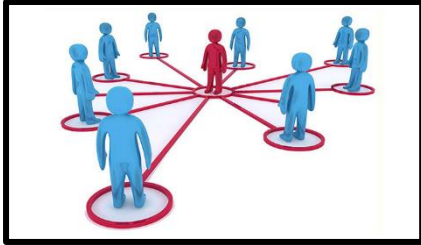
Through the theme of Perspectives, students have studied a range of fiction and non-fiction texts. Students were introduced to skill of evaluation and were able to form opinions as to the extent to which they agree with a given statement. Students have reinforced their understanding of language and structure methods to allow them to evaluate the effectiveness of writers' methods.



In the second half term, students will develop their ability to write for a purpose by crafting a speech giving their perspective on a given topic. Students will learn how to develop a clear argument using a range of rhetorical devices to persuade their audience.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

This term students are studying poetry under the theme of Relationships. They have been analysing poems that explore the importance of human connection, ideas about human experience, identity and societal issues that affect the speaker's relationship with their community.



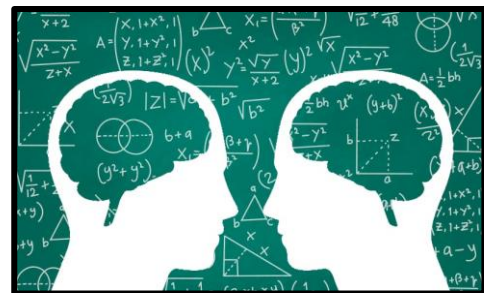
In the first half term, students focused on developing their written analysis of poetry. This included looking at specific language choices, poetic devices and structural techniques and how these have been used for deliberate effect to develop a

writer's message or concept.

In the second half term, students will be presenting their interpretation and analysis of a poem, exploring issues of prejudice. Last term students presented in groups, whereas this term they will present independently; this will be a great opportunity for students to further develop both their confidence and articulation skills.

MATHS

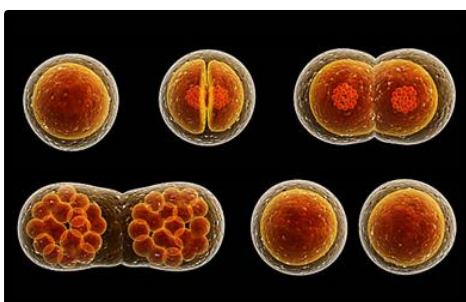
In Spring term 1, students continue their study of Algebra, building on their knowledge of substitution, coordinates, plotting graphs and finding the equation of a linear graph. Sequence of learning will be Coordinates, Sequences and Graphs. In Spring Term 2, the learning will include Construction of Triangles and Loci, Transformation of 2D shapes. This is students' first time learning about these topics, and students will explore these areas in full.



SCIENCE

BIOLOGY

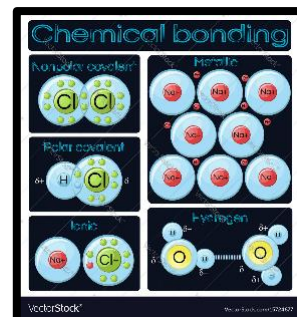
This term students will be continuing to develop their understanding of Biology in their second module – B2: Scaling up. In the first half term they will explore the different processes that cells can use to access useful substances, carrying out practical investigations into osmosis and diffusion to see this in action. They will also go on to learn about stem cells and the potential uses of these in medicine to grow new tissues and organs for transplant.



In the second half term students will move on to looking at whole body systems, including the respiratory and circulatory systems in mammals and structures and transport systems in plants. Heart dissections will be demonstrated with each class able to observe a dissection being carried out by their teacher – something students are always eager to see.

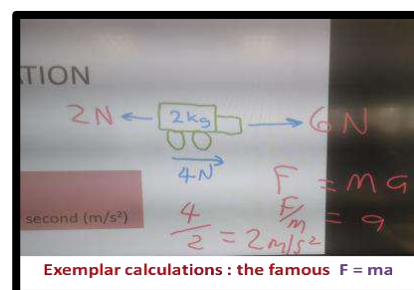
CHEMISTRY

This term we will be continuing our study of structure and bonding linking the forms of chemical bonds to the properties of the substances they form. We will move on to look at the history of the periodic table and then the allotropes of carbon, discussing their structures, properties and for the Triple Scientists, a little bit of Nano-chemistry.



PHYSICS

This term we will continue with the sequence of learning for “Forces and Motion”, with students continually employing specialist terms to categorise quantities they measure, types of forces, as well as key language to describe motion. They will have an opportunity explore in practical lessons the relationship between forces and the motion, and deformation (change of shapes), through observation. We will be applying a number of scenarios local to Milton Keynes, which included the *indoor Skydiving*, the *Skating* at the rink, as well as the mini golf, to bring to life the three laws of motion that were proposed by Isaac Newton and extended the proverbial “falling of the apple” to the “falling” of the Moon around the Earth.



ANCIENT HISTORY



Students in Year 9 have continued learning about the Persian Empire and have recently completed their study of King Cambyses. They have been investigating how he is described by many historians as ‘mad’ for his actions whilst King. These actions include, losing an army of 50,000 men in the desert, insulting ancient Egyptian Gods and murdering family members for comparing his reign as King to a lettuce.

ART

Year 9 acts as an excellent Art foundation, with students studying up to four areas of Art – Painting and Drawing, 3D, Printmaking and Textiles. Classes rotate through different materials, processes and techniques throughout the year, so please ask your child what they are currently working on. In Painting & Drawing, students will build compositional skills through photography of fruit and vegetables looking closely at the work of Dawn Eaton and Natasha Clutterbuck. Students will develop these images into a portfolio of work using tone and colour, through painting and drawing.



In 3D, students will concentrate on cakes and biscuits using the media of ceramics, card, plaster and Modroc to create a feast for the eyes inspired by the work of Claes Oldenburg. In Printmaking, students will develop primary and secondary source imagery into mono, block and intaglio print methods with a series of Pop-Art inspired outcomes by Andy Warhol. In Textiles, students will explore colour, texture and pattern of sweets using heat transfer techniques, CAD design and stitch inspired by Lucy Sparrow. Students are supported with after school sessions run by their teachers to challenge, extend and scaffold their learning. A homework project accompanies each rotation, so please ask your child about their plans for their independent outcome. Independent Learning is set on Firefly.

Support sessions will take place at Walnut Tree on a Tuesday 3-4pm
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BUSINESS STUDIES

This term students will be completing their work on Unit 1: Business in The Real World. Students are currently exploring the different internal and external stakeholders of business and considering the



different and sometimes conflicting needs and wants of each stakeholder group. Students then move on to look at the topics of Business Location in the context of both site location and geographical location, different types of business growth including organic and external growth and vertical and horizontal integration. Business Planning is studied, including the different sections of an effective business plan and how to plan for the growth of a business. After February half term, students will move

onto their Marketing unit, considering the different ways a business can research the market and decide upon their target customers through techniques such as market segmentation. Students will then be introduced to the concept of the Marketing Mix which is also known as the Four Ps of Product, Price, Place and Promotion. Students will have the opportunity to design a product with a 'Unique Selling Proposition', determine a selling price and then create an overall marketing strategy. Students will complete their second central assessment and develop their understanding of how to complete an effective 'long answer' question.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Students have been linking theory to practice in Child Development this term. We have been looking at physical, intellectual, language, emotional and social development from birth to 15 months old. We have established what milestones babies should be meeting, what different professionals' roles and responsibilities are in supporting development, and what activities, resources and equipment we could use to support development. Students will have had hands on experience in making playdough and completing the supporting activity plan, identifying how it supports not only physical development, but all areas of development, in line with babies/toddlers expected milestones. Students will be able to evaluate the activity, stating what they enjoyed, what went well, what they would change and how they could improve the activity next time.



We have just started exploring the next age bracket which is 18 months to 3 years, where we will continue to investigate all areas of development, including holistic development and what the expected milestones are for this age range. We will also be establishing how professionals help babies and children to meet their next expected milestones and how we work with parents to achieve this.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Using a network, both in an individual setting and in any business is mandatory and our Year 9 will be studying the fundamentals of networks, the types of networks, hardware needed for networks, purposes of a network and how we are a connected world. Students will have the opportunity to use the knowledge they have learnt to be able to identify what networks are suitable for different scenarios. The unit will give students an understanding on just how they can watch millions of hours of videos on a range of devices with just a few clicks.

They will then move on to Network security and cybersecurity to learn and understand what network threats are out there and how to prevent them.



Using the video tutorial link below can also help add to the knowledge learnt in lessons:

<https://student.craigndave.org/videos/slr1-3-computer-networks-connections-and-protocols>

<https://student.craigndave.org/videos/slr1-4-network-security>

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.

CREATIVE MEDIA

Using a past exam paper students are provided with a “client brief” and asked to create a media product in one of the following sectors: audio/moving image, publishing or interactive. Students have shown initiative when interpreting the client’s needs for “Green for Teens” and engaged fully in the process of ideas generation; selecting and refining ideas until satisfied their idea met the requirements of the brief. Activity 1 will be completed early in the term, Ideas Log, which summarised their research, influences and final idea.



Students will then annotate pre-production planning material (thumbnail sketches) to demonstrate to the client exactly how their ideas have been implemented within the planned media product – Activity 2. Activity 3 will allow students to participate in practical experiments using DSLR camera and Adobe Photoshop to combine media elements and ensure their creative outcomes fulfils the original brief. Their creativity and perseverance are to be noted; the hard work will pay off when it comes to the real exam!

DANCE

This term students will learn how to choreograph their own work. They learn skills and approaches that they apply to stimulus to develop a language of performance which will allow them to string phrases of movement together into coherent dance performances. Students learn to imagine and experiment with dance phrases, on different planes, at different speeds, danced forwards or backwards and in binary or ternary structures. This toolbox of strategies helps each student to tackle choreographic assessments with the skills the AQA exam board looks for.

Next half-term students learn about the written exam at the end of the course and the writing skills of analysis and evaluation they need to develop to answer the longer questions for higher marks. With these two units complete, students then have a strong foundation to apply to future practical and written assessments for this course.



DT



Now that Year 9 students have learnt about papers and boards through making their own paper, we move on in term 2 to the introduction of electronic systems and students will create a circuit with a speaker. The design element is to design and make the housing for the speaker, using the materials available.

In Year 9 students can expect an hour a week of homework and they sit a mock exam in the summer term.

DRAMA

We've had a great start with the Year 9 classes. Their creativity and focus at the start of the year learning Stanislavskian, naturalistic acting techniques were used in performances that rate very highly for GCSE. The first term finished with a huge switch of style by exploring Brechtian non-naturalistic acting techniques.



This half term we explore the basis of all modern acting; physical theatre at a much deeper and less literal level than we did in Year 8. We study the physical theatre practitioners 'Frantic Assembly' and Steven Berkoff with their works 'Lovesong' and 'The Trial'. Students are learning to use their whole body for expression, to trust their intuition and to exaggerate their emotional expression. Students finish this half term with a big challenge to perform the opening of Franz Kafka's 'The Trial' in a physical theatre performance style.

Students are developing their ability to act in many different styles on different stage types and with different people quickly and confidently. It is a real joy to see how far they have come along already. In the next half of the term, we introduce the set text students need to know for their final written exam. We will explore it practically and students will learn how to approach the play as a designer, director, and an actor.

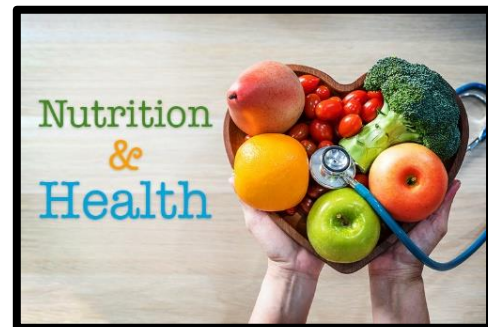
ECONOMICS



Students will continue to study unit 3.1 – How markets work. Learners explore how prices are determined in a market using supply and demand. They look at intermarket relationships to understand the impact that changes in supply and demand in one market can have on other markets. The section concludes with an investigation of price elasticities, including at how they are calculated and interpreted.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

This term students will continue to extend their knowledge of nutrition, hygiene and safety. There will be a particular focus on dietary needs through life and of particular groups of people. Students will develop their cooking skills considering how to upskill dishes and how to finish and plate food to a high standard. Students will carry out investigation working looking at the chemical and functional properties of ingredients in recipes and develop the investigation skills needed to prepare them for their non-examined assessment in Year 11.



GEOGRAPHY



Students are continuing their study of natural hazards, specifically weather hazards. The challenges of Typhoon Haiyan – the strongest storm to ever make landfall when it hit the Philippines – will be explored, along with an understanding of global atmospheric circulation which drives the winds and how climate change may change these hazards.

We will also look at the extreme weather events experienced by the UK and explore flooding in Cumbria as an example of it. Students will become familiar with the causes, effects and responses to this and other natural hazards, enabling them to apply their knowledge to current natural hazards in the news. We will also develop our skills at presenting and analyzing information graphically when looking at trends in extreme weather events over the last 50 years.



HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE



This term we will learn about the different factors that can affect an individual's growth and development, then we will explore life events that occur in an individual life and consider how these can impact on people's PIES development.

HISTORY

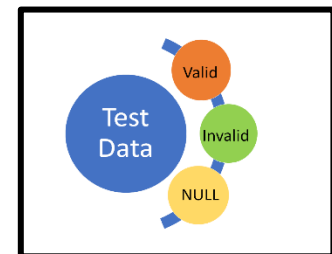
The study of the inter-war period that Year 9 started back in September, has reached Topic 3 'Origins and Outbreak', the final part of the 'Conflict and Tension' module. In essence the first part of the Spring Term is dominated by an examination of the causes of the outbreak of World War II in 1939. This term will see GCSE historians compare the relative importance of a range of causes. An emphasis is placed on the idea that it was the desire to prevent another war that contributed to the outbreak of war in 1939. Hence students are not only taught about the historical events but also get challenged more and more to think like historians by offering alternative historical arguments.



Once the 'Conflict and Tension' unit has been completed Year 9 move on to the second GCSE unit – 'Germany 1890 – 1945'. In this unit students initially find out about the history of Germany whilst it was ruled by Kaiser Wilhelm. In doing so students will delve into an assessment of just what made Germany such a difficult country to rule at the start of the Twentieth Century. This unit also involves a lot of work comparing, explaining and evaluating different written interpretations of the past so as to ensure that GCSE history students gain a real insight into the nature of historical study.

IT

In IT this term, students will be improving their spreadsheet skills. Various projects involving the use of various spreadsheet functions to solve a given problem will be learnt. Students will also be looking at data testing. The importance and purpose of testing, types of test data and types of testing will be looked at.



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LANGUAGES

FRENCH

In this half term, students will be looking at the world of education. They will revise school subjects and facilities, whilst learning about giving opinions about teachers, uniform and school rules. They will begin to learn to talk about necessity by using “il faut”. In the next half term, students will be learning about sports and hobbies and their opinions thereof. They will be learning more about the past and future tenses to be able to give more information.



GERMAN



Year 9 students are building up pace with their German studies ahead of beginning the GCSE course next term. Students will learn to describe their family, including physical appearance and hobbies, including sport, music, and film. They will begin to learn about celebrity culture, learning about key figures in the German speaking world.

In the fourth half-term, students will learn to describe school subjects, school buildings, jobs, and the character traits they need to do those jobs, linking to the learning from earlier in the year. They will learn the difference between masculine and feminine job titles. Students will also have an introduction to the future tense. Year 9 students will continue to be exposed to GCSE style questions and had excellent success with them so far.

SPANISH

Students are going to be learning about cyberspace. We will discuss the positive and negative influence of the Internet and we will talk about the changes our lives and the way we interact with the world around us. We will also look and consider the type of influence social networks have on society. The students will also study the film “El Laberinto del Fauno”, which will provide them with opportunities to explore not only Spain after the Civil War, but also magic realism at its finest.

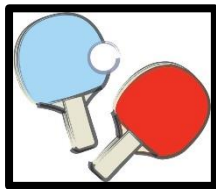


MUSIC

Students are working with a contemporary composer to compose a piece of music for the Ligeti String Quartet. We visited the Stables back in October 2023 to be inspired to compose. They explored a range of string writing from Pizzicato to adding a soundtrack to the live composition. Students will complete this project ready for the live performances in March.



PE



This term will see students experiencing both individual and team sports. Table Tennis will also feature during this half term as students look to build upon their learning from Year 8. There is a focus in Year 9 on the tactical aspects of the sport, focusing on students being able to play longer rallies as they become more confident in playing the different types of shots available in the Sport.

Students will participate in football lessons where we aim to develop more of their tactical understanding of the game as they move into Key Stage 4. Students will also be experiencing Rugby in this term, with Year 9 Girls having the opportunity to develop their knowledge of the sport of Rugby. They will learn about attacking tactics and be able to experience the opportunity to create their own attacking tactics which they will take into the conditioned games towards the end of the half term.



These sports are being complimented by fitness lessons which we hope to encourage positive attitudes towards health for the future.

CNAT Sport Science students will continue with unit R180 students will look at warmups and cool downs considering all the previous content on extrinsic, intrinsic, and psychological factors that affect a performer or sports situation.

PSYCHOLOGY

Students will be continuing with their work on the first topic we study, Criminal Psychology. The students continue to find this topic fascinating and have the opportunity to reflect on their own attitudes towards crime and punishment and how these might change as they learn about research into the topic.

Students will answer key questions associated with crime by the end of the topic, such as:

- How are offenders punished and are these punishments effective?
- What does research into the influence of television on aggression tell us about our behaviour?



Students have the opportunity to think critically about the explanations of criminality, punishments and treatments used with offenders. They will also reflect on data for punishments and treatments on reoffending rates.

RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS

Last half term students participated in an ALD which explored five BIG Philosophical and Ethical Questions. This gave them an opportunity to discuss and debate, and to develop their critical



thinking skills. This half term, students will develop their knowledge of how Christians practise their faith. They will address questions such as what are sacraments? Why are churches so different from each other? Why is baptism so important? This topic moves from the exploration of what Christians believe, to looking at why Christians do particular rituals and traditional practices.

SOCIOLOGY

Research methods are a key area within Sociology and appear on both paper 1 and paper 2.

Therefore, Year 9 students will start to explore research methods in the spring term. This sequence of lessons will begin by looking at the research process and sampling. Sampling methods will be applied to the students within that lesson, therefore, making it easier for them to remember and recall them in CAPS and exams. They will continue to expand their knowledge on a wide variety of research methods including questionnaires, interviews, and observations. As part of research methods, students will be asked questions such as:



'Identify and describe one sampling technique.' (4 marks). *'Identify and describe one reasons sociologists may use a non-probability sampling method in their research.'* (4 marks)