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English Mastery

A young boy with dark hair, wearing a purple school blazer, a white shirt, a striped tie, and a purple V-neck sweater, is sitting at a desk and reading an open book. He is looking down at the pages with a focused expression. The background is a blurred library or classroom setting with bookshelves.

English Mastery
Education Endowment
Foundation
Research Trial 2023

An overview



Student success through empowered teaching

Teachers hold the key to unlocking students' potential, and we are here to help you on that journey.

Grown out of Ark Schools, one of the highest achieving academy groups in the UK, Ark Curriculum Plus's team of well researched and highly skilled curriculum designers and expert trainers empower teachers to provide consistent, high-quality education for all students.

We are committed to closing the disadvantage attainment gap.

This is in our Ark DNA as our schools support more than twice the national average of children from disadvantaged backgrounds, yet Ark's disadvantaged students make nearly half a grade more progress in each subject than their peers nationally.

Curriculum resources and professional development to enhance teaching expertise

Our English Mastery programme aims to transform Key Stage 3 English education in the UK by improving both the teaching and learning experience through:

- A well-sequenced and interlinked KS3 English curriculum
- A full suite of classroom planning, delivery, assessment and intervention resources
- Integrated training and professional development

A proven way to increase attainment in English

Research by The Brilliant Club, an independent education charity group, found that students on the programme made an additional four months' progress compared to peers not on the programme.

"The English Mastery programme had a significant positive effect on pupils' English scores, regardless of pupils' prior attainment and demographic characteristics." **The Brilliant Club | impact study**



English Mastery Research Trial

Why are we doing it?

We're partnering with the **Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)** and **Sheffield Hallam University (SHU)** to evaluate the efficacy of our programme through a two-year, split cohort, independent randomised controlled trial.

The trial will assess the impact of English Mastery on student progress in English across Years 7 and 8.

Who can take part and when does it run?

Applications are open. Two cohorts of schools will take part in the trial: cohort one is running from June 2022 – July 2024, and cohort two will run from June 2023 – July 2025. We're now recruiting schools to cohort two, with first teaching from September 2023. The Research Trial is open to non-academically selective, state secondary schools in England, that haven't delivered English Mastery previously and have three or more hours of timetabled English lessons for Year 7 in 2023–24 and for Year 8 in 2024–25.

How will it work?

It's a *randomised controlled trial*, so the evaluation team will randomly place the schools taking part into two groups:

1. English Mastery intervention group¹
2. Control group

Schools in both groups provide data at various points during the two academic years.²

In June 2025 students in both intervention and control schools sit a standardised English test administered by SHU to capture progress and attainment. **Download more detailed trial information.**

¹ Intervention schools will be offered a significantly reduced subscription fee of £900 per year.

² Control schools will receive monetary compensation for providing this data.

Key Findings from the 2019 English Mastery Research Trial

In 2019 we partnered with the Education Endowment Foundation to test the efficacy of English Mastery. Their evaluation report collates feedback from teachers who took part in the trial, sharing their perceptions of the programme.

- **81% would recommend to other schools**
- **75% satisfied with the programme overall**
- **84% satisfied with the training and support**
- **80% felt it reduced their workload in relation to planning and marking**

What teachers said:

“We’re actually able to think about how we deliver the content. The ability to be able to think about it as a teacher, rather than a designer of PowerPoint slides, is very liberating, and actually, a far better use of a teacher’s time.”

“My subject knowledge with grammar and how we teach grammar, has improved hugely.”



Teachers felt empowered



61%
felt skills in teaching literary classics had improved

57%
felt confidence to teach Key Stage 3 English had improved

Percentage of teachers who felt English Mastery helped improve students’...



75%
overall progress



68%
writing skills



63%
engagement



63%
reading skills



74%
grammar skills

[View the full findings](#)

NatCen
Social Research

 Education
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Foundation

The experiences of two schools



Transforming outcomes at Castleford Academy

Castleford Academy in West Yorkshire took part in our English Mastery Research Trial in 2019 when they observed a tangible positive impact on their students and a reduction in teacher workload.

“The planning has vastly reduced, so we focus on what the students need to know and much more interaction.”

Students are more confident in their responses and have improved their ability to express themselves; their vocabulary and knowledge have widened massively.

“It’s freed me up. I think my feedback to them has become more meaningful. I’m honing down into that individual’s needs.”

The best part is that students at Castleford Academy now desire to read aloud due to the introduction of interactive English Mastery lessons. The school’s decision to teach with English Mastery has led to profound changes.



Gary Vessey,
English Teacher



Empowered teachers and engaged students at Landau Forte Academy QEMS

Landau Forte Academy QEMS in Tamworth has historically struggled with students having low aspirations and below average results, alongside a high level of staff turnover. Since 2019, when Phillip Chater, Head of English decided to participate in the English Mastery research trial, he has witnessed positive effects for teachers and students.

“We now teach fewer topics in greater depth, which helps us to unlock knowledge and ensure students understand each area and related concepts.”

A noticeable difference was seen in students’ preparedness for GCSEs amidst COVID-19. Although Philip noticed gaps in students’ knowledge, these were identified quickly through formative assessments provided by the English Mastery curriculum.

“I am confident that, with the English Mastery curriculum, they will catch up.”

In addition, Philip found students are engaging better with the text, behaviour and lesson engagement have improved and students ask more focused questions and link knowledge with previous texts. Landau Forte Academy QEMS plan on adopting a knowledge-based mastery approach for all subjects.



Phillip Chater,
Head of English





What the English Mastery intervention group schools will receive

As part of the trial, these schools will pay only £900 a year for all of the following resources, development and support. This is a saving of over £6000 on the usual price for our English Mastery tailored programme.

Mastery Curriculum

Being a confident and articulate English student involves a large number of complicated skills. We are convinced that the best way to create these sorts of learners is by introducing them systematically to the wonders of grammar, vocabulary and reading for pleasure, alongside the traditional literature teaching that we all know and love.

Our curriculum is therefore divided into strands covering Literary Heritage, Writing Mastery and Reading for Pleasure.

A full suite of resources, available online via the MyMastery learning platform

The MyMastery learning platform provides easy 'anytime, anywhere' access to the full suite of English Mastery content, including teaching materials and professional development.



Integrated Professional Development

Throughout the programme, your team can make use of videos, tutorials and workshops to grow their subject and teaching expertise.

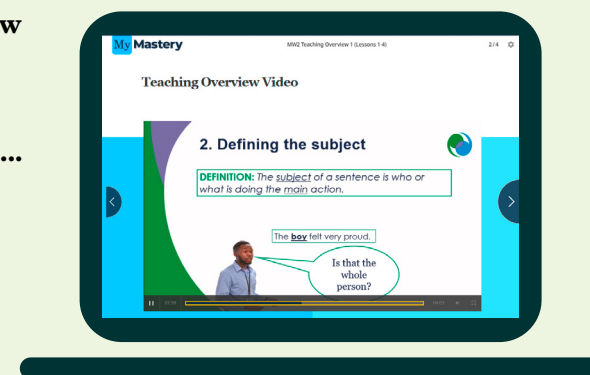
As part of the trial, you'll receive a truly personalised support experience, with year-round coaching and mentoring from a specialist Development Lead, and two in-person visits to assist with implementation, which can include in-house training tailored to your needs.

Teaching support

On-demand **teaching overview videos** provide guidance and thinking points for each lesson.

Go and find a colleague and... offers stimulus questions that are a quick way to develop and share your ideas.

Mastery Knowledge presents a brief summary and recap of what the students will be learning.



Lesson resources

We understand the importance of creative freedom when planning lessons. We also know the needs of teachers and students vary hugely.

Slide decks are provided for each lesson, including notes and guidance to support delivery.

Exercise 1: Underlining the subject
We are going to look at what a **subject** is:
DEFINITION: The **subject** of a sentence or what is doing the **main** action.

The **subject** has been underlined in all of the sentences below.

- Daniel munched his lunch.
- The rude man ate chips from Sasha's plate.
- The pencil was sharp and strong.
- The boy fidgeted in his seat.
- He felt sad and alone.
- The children decided to go to the park at the end of the school day.

Lesson 1 Writing
With your partner, use the vocabulary box to say what happened in the picture.

Lesson 1 Writing
Use the Mastery Checks to review your work.

Mastery Check 1 I have used every word from the vocabulary box correctly.	Mastery Check 2 I have commented on all the important things that happened in the picture.	Mastery Check 3 I have used capital letters and full stops correctly.
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Fully editable



Literary Heritage resources

The Literary Heritage units are the core of our KS3 curriculum. Classic texts and much-loved stories have been selected to introduce students to some of the best characters and most iconic stories in literature, as well as learning the cultural capital that will enrich their reading of similar books.

Monday, 30 November 2020


You have looked at the word **corrupt**. You can also use **corrupt** to describe an action:

to corrupt someone
To corrupt someone means to get somebody else to stop caring about right and wrong.

Do Now

1. How is Bill trying to **corrupt** Oliver?
2. Has **anyone else** in the novel tried to corrupt Oliver?
3. Has anyone succeeded in **corrupting** Oliver?

Extension: Has anyone else in the novel been corrupted by others?



Writing Mastery resources

The Writing Mastery units take a 'stage not age' approach. Units are designed to help students gain a genuine command of the English language through instruction that is appropriate for their current level of understanding.




Reading for Pleasure resources

This strand is designed to give pupils the opportunity to spend extended periods of time reading, and to learn to enjoy reading great books. Each lesson follows a four-part structure:

Vocabulary

Today we are learning the word **'route'**.



The **route** was long and straight.

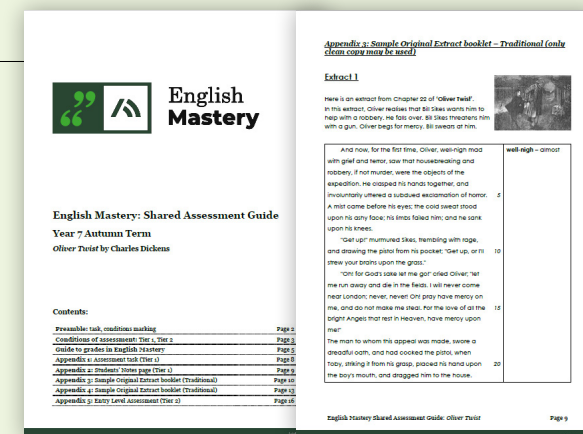
Do Now ► Reading time ► Vocabulary ► Exit Ticket (to reflect on learning)

Assessment and intervention

We provide a fully planned and integrated summative and formative assessment model that complements and advances the skills students develop during their English Mastery lessons.

Standardised assessment

These are provided for each Literary Heritage unit, as well as a wide-ranging assessment guide and standardisation booklet.



Quizzes and practice tasks

There are opportunities for formative assessment in each lesson, with practice tasks such as True & False and Quotation Hunters to check for misconceptions. Fortnightly multiple choice quizzes also allow you to identify where gaps lie, with reteach tasks provided.

Do Now Monday, 23 November 2020

Tick and fix your quiz answers.

Grammar

1. b	6. c & e
2. c	7. a
3. e	8. b
4. d	9. a, c & e
5. d & e	10. c & e

Pathways

We offer two pathways through our Literary Heritage units: Traditional and Foundation.

The Traditional pathway is for students who are at or above age-related expectations whilst the Foundation pathway supports students currently working below age-related expectations.

Next steps



1. **Register your interest** for the English Mastery Research Trial 2023 (if you haven't already)
2. **Book a call** and speak to our team to review the trial conditions and clarify any questions



Thank you for your interest

If you have any questions, please contact us at partnerships@arkcurriculumplus.org.uk or call on 020 3116 6363



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