English Mastery

English Mastery Secondary

Working hand in hand with schools to deliver immediate impact and sustained subject excellence



Ark Curriculum+

Hello!

Welcome to English Mastery Secondary.

At Ark Curriculum Plus, we believe every student deserves access to a rich, ambitious and diverse English curriculum that develops knowledge, literacy and love of reading, regardless of their starting point.

As the next phase of curriculum reform takes shape, schools using English Mastery Secondary will be well placed to respond. The programme's coherent curriculum design, rich literary content and integrated approach to assessment, underpinned by an inclusion-first approach, provide strong foundations for the changes ahead.

Alongside the curriculum sits a subject excellence programme that combines high-quality resources with expert implementation support. While the programme provides a clear and coherent framework, it also gives departments the flexibility to adapt delivery to suit their context, ensuring teachers retain ownership of how they bring the curriculum to life.

The programme repurposes teachers' time, enabling them to focus on the things that make great teaching and learning: co-planning, intellectual preparation, adaptive teaching and responsive use of formative assessment.

Informed by a wide research base and evidence of impact, English Mastery Secondary is tested every day by teachers and subject leaders in Ark schools and continually refined through feedback from our partner schools.

How does it work?

Success starts with confident teachers consistently delivering brilliant English lessons. That's why you'll have a dedicated subject expert guiding you through our 5-Step Improvement Process, alongside face-to-face induction, flexible CPD, and immediate access to practical planning, teaching and assessment resources.

We partner with hundreds of schools, including some of the largest MATs in the country, united by a shared mission to help all students make progress in English and enjoy it.

I hope you will join us!

MICHLYN CAFFREY
HEAD OF ENGLISH SECONDARY, ARK CURRICULUM PLUS



Put simply, what we do works!

Independent evidence, student results and feedback from partner schools shows our programme works.

Since developing English Mastery Secondary in 2014, we have continually improved the programme through over 10 years of teacher and leader feedback and independent evaluation. The Brilliant Club found that the programme delivered an additional four months' progress for students.

OUR MASTERY LEADS AGREED:

100%

Having a dedicated Development lead has helped them **embed the programme effectively**

93%

There's **greater consistency** in teaching and learning across department/MAT/ teaching team

86%

Teachers have been able to use **planning time more effectively**

WHAT PEOPLE VALUE MOST ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

"The way it's crafted makes the difference. The programme is all about enhancing long-term memory: you can see a golden thread running through English Mastery, linking every lesson and scheme."

DOMINIC QUIGLEY
KEY STAGE 3 LEAD

EARL MORTIMER COLLEGE

"Pupils are able to access a greater depth than peers without the Mastery programme; it is evident that the centrally planned approach equips them so well for GCSEs, A levels and even university."

CORAL BUTLER-HARDY
ENGLISH TEACHER AND HEAD OF YEAR 9

ARK PIONEER ACADEMY

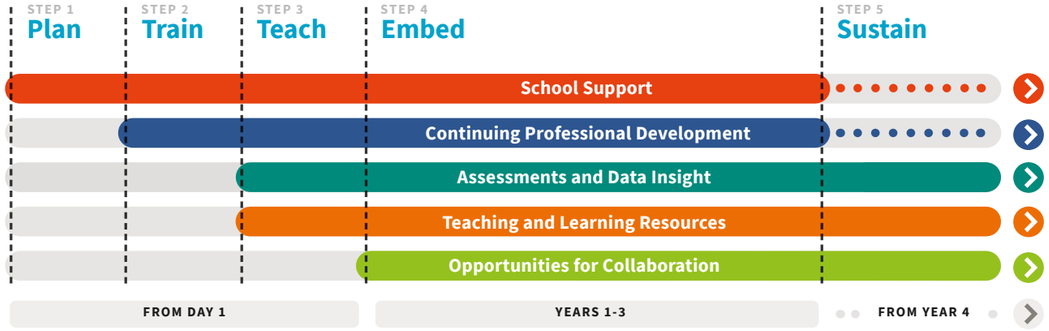


Framework for success

The 2021 EEF School Planning Guide* highlighted that 'the best available evidence indicates that **great teaching** is the **most important lever** schools have to **improve outcomes** for their pupils.'

To achieve powerful teaching that changes lives, teachers have told us they need to have strong subject knowledge, the best evidence-based pedagogies, rigorous assessment and effective planning, all working together.

Our Subject Excellence Programmes follow the AC+ 5-Step Improvement Process, which is based on over a decade's experience of transforming results in one of the most respected MATs and hundreds of schools nationwide. Improvement is a journey – that's why you will have a dedicated subject expert to guide you step by step, helping you achieve and sustain excellence.



STEP 1
Plan

You will receive a structured **diagnostic call** and your AC+ subject expert will help you to prepare an improvement plan to identify areas of focus to achieve the greatest impact with all your teachers.

OUTCOMES
SLT confidence | Clear plan agreed

STEP 2
Train

Your subject leads and teachers will receive face-to-face **induction training** and cutting-edge **online training**, getting everyone engaged and immediately building confidence.

OUTCOMES
Teacher confidence

STEP 3
Teach

Curriculum-integrated **subject-specific CPD**, **planning and teaching resources**, **assessments** and precise **diagnostic data** supports your teachers to repurpose their time into higher value activities. The best practice resources strengthen the quality of teaching and provide consistency across your school.

OUTCOMES
Consistency | Repurposed time | Ambitious curriculum

STEP 4
Embed

Once the foundations are set, we work with you to attain excellence in subject teaching. We provide **in-school leadership and teacher coaching** and offer support through **school visits**, **joint learning walks** and an **intensive programme leadership course**. Teachers access a **programme of subject pedagogy** and **on-demand videos**. This approach ensures outstanding subject teaching in your school.

OUTCOMES
Pupil progress | Pedagogical expertise

STEP 5
Sustain

Longer term, we collaborate to build sustained impact. **Induction** and **CPD** support new staff. Regular **teaching resources** and **CPD** updates keep your offerings current and informed. **Benchmarked assessments** provide ongoing confidence. You'll remain part of a **network** of similar schools, staying up-to-date on new research. Together, we'll annually evaluate programme success, maintaining maximum impact for your pupils.

OUTCOMES
Consistency | Pedagogical expertise | Pupil progress

** Access the 2021 EEF School Planning Guide: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/introducing-eef-school-planning-guide-2020-21*

A fully integrated programme

All the components of English Mastery Secondary work together to ensure your school, staff and students get real impact from the evidence-led subject excellence programme.



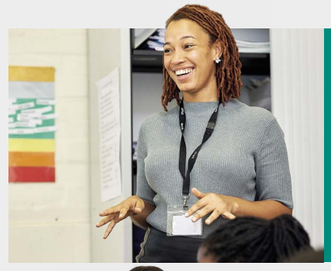
SCHOOL SUPPORT

From day one, your dedicated subject expert collaborates with teachers to create a tailored improvement plan for your school. They'll then support you to success through the five steps over multiple years.



CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teachers and leaders get immediately actionable CPD at point of need. It supports subject knowledge, pedagogic delivery, curriculum design and more. Flexibility is key, with online or in-person sessions.



ASSESSMENTS AND DATA INSIGHT

Formative assessments for data-led instruction are available in each lesson, unit, term and year. Standardised assessments, directly linked to the curriculum, identify pupil learning gaps for targeted intervention.



TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Curriculum-integrated planning tools and resources ensure successful programme delivery. From day one, you access carefully sequenced support for consistent, impactful, engaging lessons, built on best-practice pedagogies.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION

You join a subject teaching network, fostering the exchange of best practices. Teachers and leaders connect at in-person CPD events, including induction, creating a community of practice.

Dedicated school support

From day one, you'll have a dedicated English Mastery Secondary subject expert from our team of educators. They each have a background in or currently teach secondary English. They'll collaborate with your leaders and teachers to create a tailored improvement plan for your school. Then they'll help **introduce**, **embed** and **sustain** the programme over multiple years, ensuring a lasting positive impact on your students.

M360 diagnostic call

After a thorough review, a diagnostic call with your subject expert helps identify key focus areas for maximum impact to build an improvement plan to achieve these goals consistently with all teachers.

School visits

Your subject expert will regularly visit your school for joint learning walks with the Mastery Lead to observe programme delivery. You can also involve them in co-planning or they can run customised CPD workshops.

Online development sessions

Our regular one-to-one sessions offer coaching and mentoring for your Mastery Lead. These are carefully designed to work for each stage of your implementation journey.

Support for you

Get in touch with your subject expert by phone or email, whenever you need advice or have questions. No query is too small and no problem too big. We are here to help!

Meet some of our team on page 22

"The amount of support available in getting the best out of the programme is exceptional. The resources are of high quality."

SAMANTHA COSGROVE
MASTERY LEAD AT BOLTON MUSLIM GIRLS SCHOOL

100%

of Mastery Leads say that their AC+ subject expert provides tailored, responsive support that **meets the specific needs of their school**.



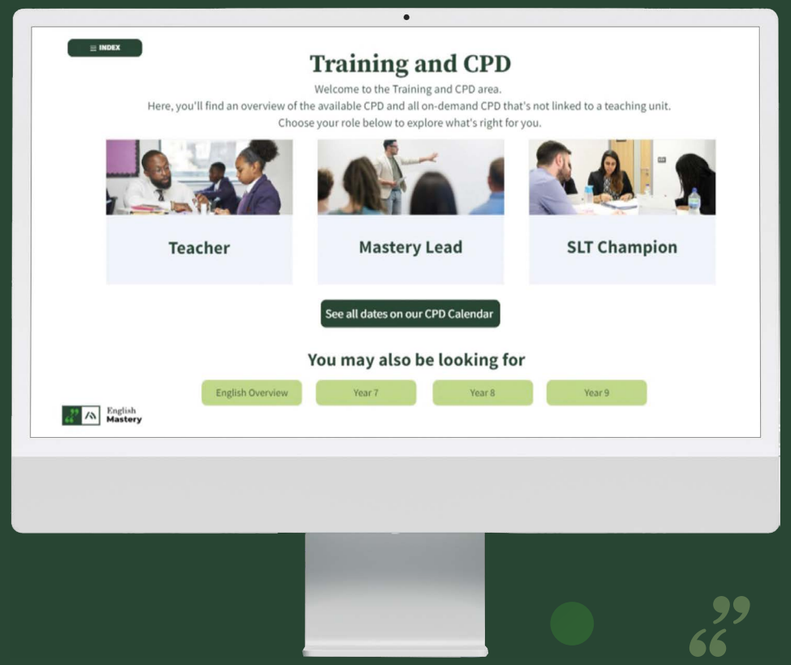
Actionable CPD
at point of need

CPD that is relevant and immediately actionable

English Mastery Secondary provides targeted continuing professional development that's **immediately actionable**, covering subject knowledge, pedagogy, curriculum design, assessment and more. It's **flexible** – accessible online just when you need it or through inspiring and practical in-person sessions that foster a **community of practice**.

Our continually evolving CPD offer includes a new suite of practical modules developed with **Shakespeare's Globe**, supporting teachers to bring drama texts to life through active, performance-based approaches.

> *Teachers who previously needed more support are excelling through the use of mastery resources and CPD."*
>
> **CAT BRETT**
> MASTERY LEAD AT LOUTH ACADEMY



Induction training

Everyone joining the programme takes part in **induction training**. New schools have **four in-person places**, and **everyone can attend online**. It's a wonderful way to get your team excited and prepared for their journey on the programme and to set them up for success. Plus, all modules are available on-demand (in our bespoke MyMastery platform) to revisit when required.

'Teaching Mastery' badging

Teachers enjoy online, termly **CPD that builds subject and pedagogical expertise**. For each completed module they gain a badge – a great way to evidence their professional development as steps towards further qualifications like NPQs.



Termly 'Preparing to Teach' webinars

Strengthening teachers' **topic-specific subject knowledge** for the upcoming term, our webinars support teachers in effective programme delivery. Breakouts focus on common challenges within similar teaching contexts and year groups. It's a chance to share good practice and collaborate with other partner schools.

Leadership certification

Your Mastery Lead receives termly online CPD and ongoing mentoring from their subject expert. They will earn the ***Ark Curriculum Plus Certificate in Programme Leadership***, providing recognition for both them and your school.



In-school visits

Your subject expert can deliver some of the above CPD sessions during one of their visits, providing more **bespoke training** to meet your school needs.

On-demand video training

Short videos in each unit offer content tutorials, knowledge recaps to refresh subject knowledge and task modelling. These bite-size **Teaching Overviews** are easily accessible for immediate implementation by your teachers.

> *[We now have] a more confident, skilled staff bringing more enthusiasm to their lessons."*
>
> TEACHER OF ENGLISH MASTERY

> *Due to teachers being better prepared, they are better equipped to help students with their education and engagement."*
>
> **NICK SMITH**
> MIDDLE LEADER
>
> **CORNERSTONE SCHOOL**

Assessment to inform teaching

English Mastery Secondary includes formative assessments within lessons, units, at the end of term and at the end of year, along with curriculum-linked standardised assessments.

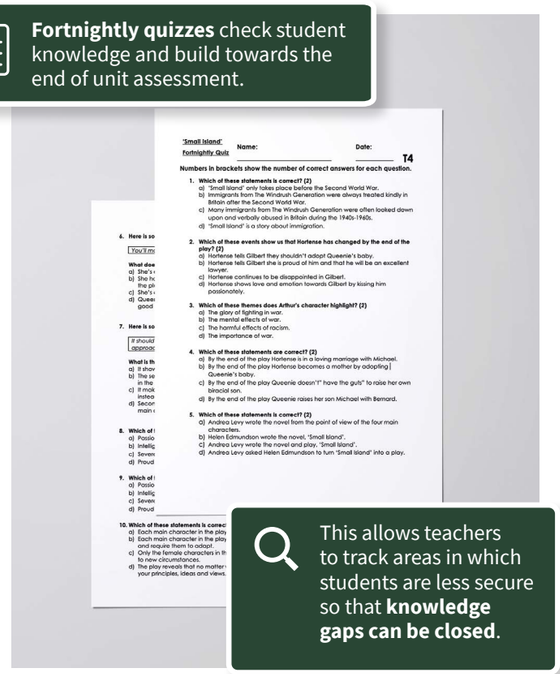
When all the different strands of our assessment model are combined, we can see assessment fulfilling its true purpose: giving teachers an accurate account of how their students are doing, as well as information about how to develop students further in subsequent lessons.

A focus on formative assessment

Our **curriculum-aligned formative assessments** help teachers understand what students have learned, identify knowledge gaps and uncover misconceptions. From in-lesson checks for understanding to end-of-unit assessments, teachers receive **clear guidance to inform targeted reteaching** and support student progress.

SMARTGRADE

With free access to **Smartgrade**, teachers can analyse termly diagnostic assessments through a powerful and intuitive assessment platform. Question-level insights instantly surface trends, strengths and gaps, **helping teachers target reteaching and drive student progress**.



WITHIN LESSONS AND UNITS

- Retrieval quizzes
- Notes on common misconceptions
- *Do Now* tasks
- Grammar tests
- Hinge point questions
- Targeted re-teach guidance
- Exit ticket multiple choice questions
- Fortnightly quizzes

END OF UNIT

- Multiple choice questions
- Writing task
- Standardisation booklets
- Formative assessment guidance
- Cohort-specific Examiners' Reports

Summative assessments

We provide a range of end-of-year assessment tools and a specialised CPD workshop to support you with summative assessment practices that are designed to inform effective interventions.

- Summative assessment
- Standardisation booklets
- Assessment guidance
- Assessing for Mastery CPD

ASSESSING FOR MASTERY CPD

By comparing and reviewing student work from a national cohort, across the English Mastery community, you will sharpen the accuracy of marking within your department, and ensure consistency in the process. In our Assessing for Mastery standardisation sessions, rich discussion around student work offers insights for your department into what students can and cannot do at each assessment point, enabling teachers to plan to close the identified gaps. Expectations are also often raised through comparison with student work from a national cohort.

Using comparative judgement

We promote the use of **exemplification and standardisation booklets** prior to using mark scheme rubrics. Performance descriptors can be problematic, giving the illusion of a common language without delivering precise or reliable information about how students are performing or progressing. While rubrics can be useful to fine tune marking, we have found that exemplification and standardisation booklets containing **real student work** give a clearer and more accurate insight into how students are doing. As humans, we are better at comparing students' work to make decisions about its relative quality than making isolated judgements based on one piece of work.



Best-practice teaching and learning resources

We provide all the resources so you can focus on your students!

Built on the four English Mastery pillars – knowledge, grammar, vocabulary and assessment – the curriculum content is **specified, explicit and clear**. Plus, in our Literary Heritage strand we have mapped and sequenced each element of the **analytical writing process** to nurture students' extended essay writing. From day one, your staff will have the support to deliver **consistent, impactful, engaging and pedagogically strong English lessons**, sequenced to support students' development and progress.

THE TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES:

- Promote oracy in flexible, practical ways, making English success accessible to everyone.
- Provide structure and support so that you own the curriculum, with quick videos and at-a-glance planning guides.
- Are created with early career teachers (ECTs), non-specialists and specialists in mind, giving the relevant level of guidance for each.
- Include practical tips to adapt your delivery to suit your students' and school's needs.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

Planning

Curriculum overview

KS2-3 Sentence Mastery Sequence

Co-planning guidance

Unit intents

Unit overviews

Teaching

Student booklets

Task sheets

Lesson slides

Reading for Pleasure booklists

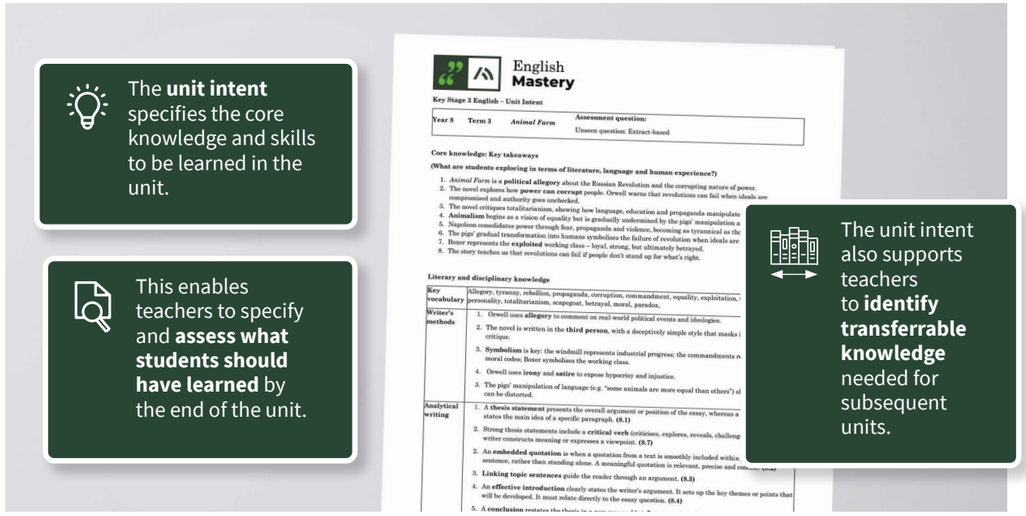
Reading journey homework booklets

Click here to access a free **Programme Preview** and see examples of these resources.



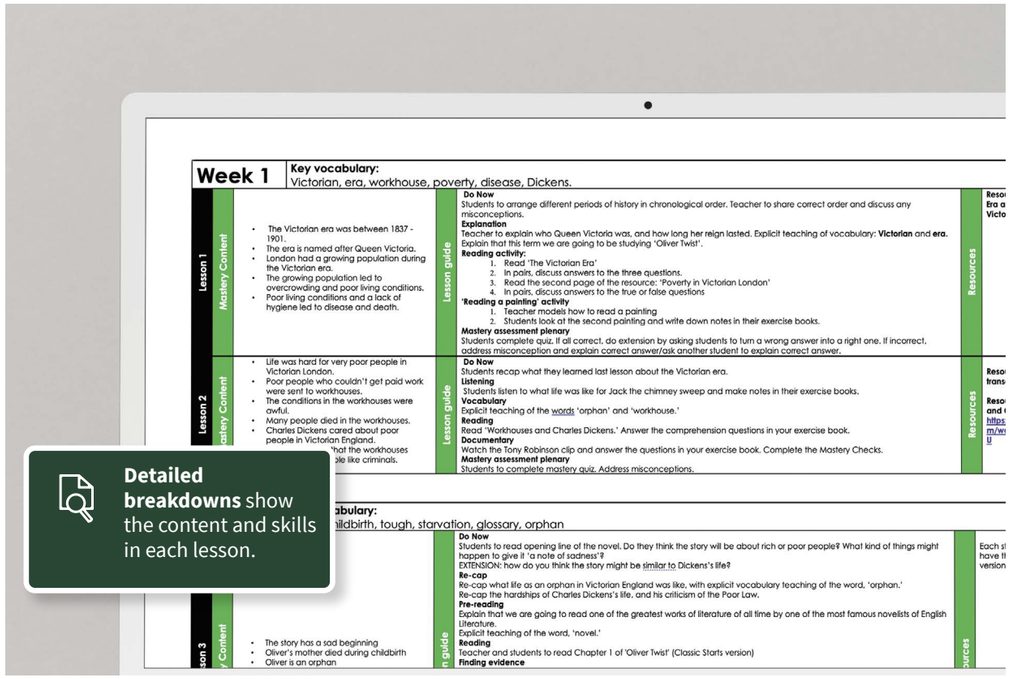
Unit intent

Our comprehensive unit intent documents specify and itemise what students are expected to know, remember and do by the end of the unit.



Unit overview

The unit overview breaks down the unit lesson by lesson, outlining the mastery knowledge and each activity, so that teachers can easily see the unit structure and progression.

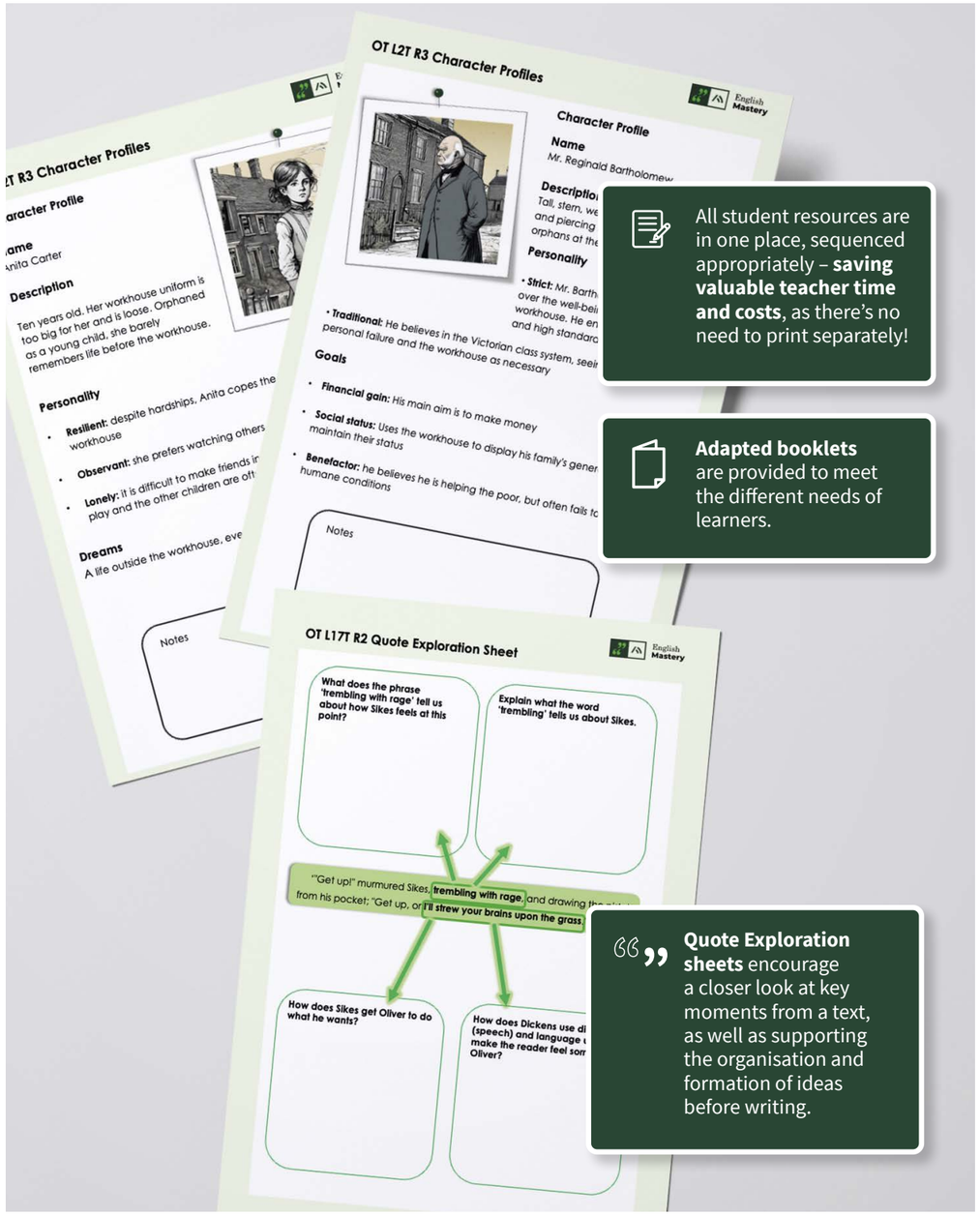


Student booklet

A **student booklet** is provided for each unit.

These are provided to support student progress with essential tasks and activities.

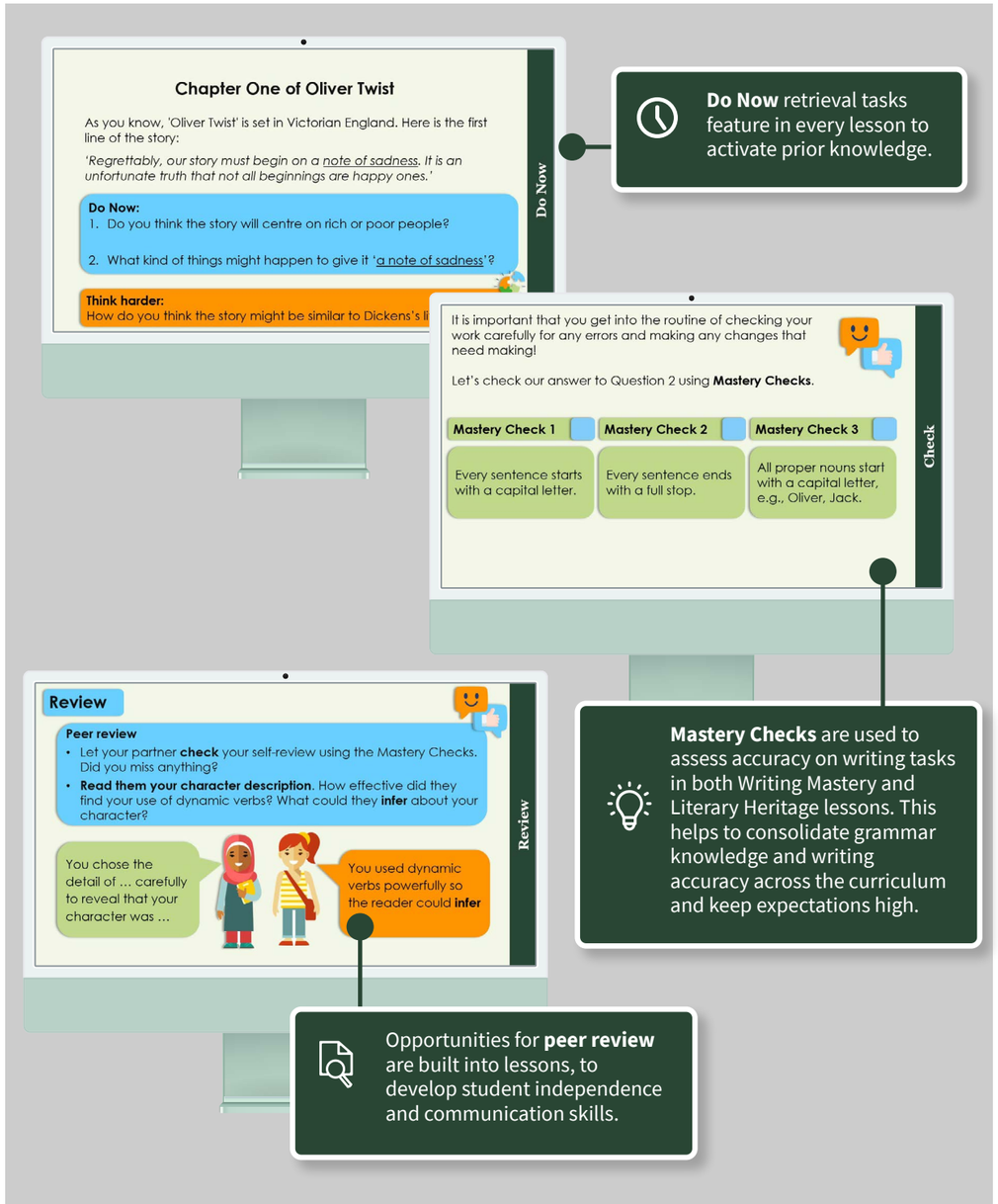
> *Students are more engaged, as they have been challenged with appropriately adapted materials that enable them to see the purpose of the learning and thus find a love for English."*
>
> **KATE STALEY** ENGLISH TEACHER
> **THE ANGMERING SCHOOL**



Lesson slides

Slide decks are provided for each lesson, across the Literary Heritage, Writing Mastery and Reading for Pleasure strands of the curriculum. The slides are fully editable to meet your students' needs. Notes and guidance are also provided to support delivery of the lesson.

> *I used to be working till 9pm every night. Using English Mastery, class preparation is so much easier."*
>
> **LUCY TOSELAND**
> EARLY CAREER TEACHER
> **DE LISLE COLLEGE**



Co-planning

Planning is most successful for teachers and departments when it is a **shared, creative, problem-solving task**.

By using the English Mastery programme, valuable co-planning time is spent **working together as a department**.

Co-planning is an active ingredient for successful implementation of the English Mastery Secondary curriculum. We recommend weekly sessions to focus on key elements of curriculum implementation in your context, and we provide resources for each Literary Heritage unit for guidance.

For each Literary Heritage unit, we have selected key lessons or themes to focus co-planning time. In co-planning sessions, the department could be completing the final assessment, using exemplification booklets to set expectations, writing models for student tasks, scripting questions, or adjusting lesson tasks or hinge points to meet student needs.



Teachers are not thinking about the WHAT but the HOW and WHY now. Through collaborative planning, we are having regular discussions about how the programme should be delivered."

JOANNE CATCHPOLE
HEAD OF ENGLISH

DE LISLE COLLEGE

English Mastery allows for focused co-planning sessions working on specific adaptation and how to teach the lessons rather than superfluous conversations about what to teach."

ANDREW SHORT
HEAD OF ENGLISH

ARK ELVIN ACADEMY



Be inspired
by like-minded schools

Building a community of practice

Partner schools join a **subject teaching network**, sharing best practice and learning from each other. Attend CPD events, including in-person induction training and live termly subject panels, to collaborate with and be inspired by your peers. Your subject expert may connect you with local or similar context schools, helping you gain insights on delivery or simply see English Mastery Secondary in action in other settings.

Annual conference

We host an exclusive annual conference to facilitate sharing and learning between our partner schools and offer access to new research and thinking.

With exciting keynote speakers and practical workshops, you leave feeling **reinvigorated, re-energised and ready to continue making a real difference** to your pupils' achievement and progress.



100%

of those who completed our conference survey agreed that they'd benefitted from attending the conference

Unique curriculum design

Curriculum components

The English Mastery Secondary curriculum is formed by four interwoven curriculum components:

Literary Heritage	The study of canonical and seminal world literature, including prose, poetry, and drama.
Writing Mastery	Explicit grammar and vocabulary instruction and regular writing practice, both linked to the Literary Heritage units and building towards end of year extended writing units, such as Creative Writing, Slam Sonnets, Rhetoric and Monologues.
Reading for Pleasure	Reading spine featuring fiction and non-fiction texts and resources, including homework, carefully selected to connect thematically and progressively to the English curriculum and designed to engage and empower students.
Spoken Language	Embedded oracy pedagogy in all lessons; discrete spoken language lessons for each unit to develop exploratory talk and spoken language summer term units, with written and spoken outcomes to develop presentational talk.

Underpinning each year is a **conceptual approach** which progressively develops English disciplinary thinking as text complexity increases through the key stage:

YEAR 7

Morality

Students explore narratives with a moral and with clear protagonists and antagonists (heroes and villains). Story structures are more traditional, like myths, legends and quests, which explore the nature of morality. They are encouraged to think about texts as the creation of an author.

YEAR 8

Duality

Students explore texts with dual characters and narratives and are invited to explore duality of meaning and interpretation. They are encouraged to think about narrative perspective and the relationship between author and narrative voice, for example unreliable narrators.

YEAR 9

Multiplicity

Students explore texts, narratives and characters with increasingly complex meanings and motivations. They are encouraged to explore multiple interpretations and meanings as they progress towards GCSE study.

Standing out from the crowd

The impact of our programmes is clear, but in case you need even more reasons to choose AC+...



Collaboratively designed and refined in classrooms

Grown in collaboration with Ark Schools, one of the highest achieving MATs in the UK, we continually learn and co-create together. Plus, we test what really works live in the classroom, to make improvements that will have the biggest positive impact.

Our programmes support disadvantaged students – Ark Schools students make nearly half a grade more progress than their peers nationally. We're here to help give all students the opportunities that an excellent education provides.

Recognised as an educational leader

We're proud to be recognised as a leader in subject improvement. We work with the Education Endowment Foundation, The Brilliant Club and the Fischer Family Foundation, whose research provides robust evidence of our impact. We collaborate with the subject associations, along with universities including Cambridge and UCL.

Accountable to you and your pupils

We are a non-profit organisation. Our full attention is on supporting our partner schools and making our already impressive programmes the best they can be. We're particularly passionate about helping disadvantaged children and we aim to level the playing field, so that every young person can succeed.

The schools that we work with are charged a financial contribution which goes right back into delivering and developing the programmes. We're not accountable to shareholders, we're accountable to you!

Aligned to Ofsted to support your quality of education

The Education Inspection Framework looks for consistency between the intent of schools' curricula and the ways schools empower their team to realise these plans. We have supported many schools to be expertly prepared for an Ofsted visit by:

- Providing a powerfully sequenced, academically ambitious curriculum for all.
- Equipping subject leads with the confidence to articulate their curriculum intent, implementation and impact.
- Delivering immediately actionable teacher CPD at point of need, supporting subject knowledge, pedagogic delivery, curriculum design and more.

Our expert team

Our team have all been teachers or in school leadership roles. They all love working with English Mastery Secondary schools because they truly believe in the power of research to inform practice and to narrow the attainment gap. We are members of the Chartered College for Teaching and the National Association for Teaching of English – meaning we engage with the latest research and the subject community directly.



Michlyn Caffrey



Kirsty Kelsey



Shanté Belgrave



Aimee Collins



Verity Kolawole-Sharp



Nicola Hutton

100%

of leaders and mastery leads say that their AC+ subject expert has **helped them embed the programme effectively**.

> *"The English Mastery team give us a lot of school support by providing us with training materials, our lead will visit us and do observations to help us tackle any target areas."*

ENGLISH MASTERY LEAD

THE CHANTRY SCHOOL

It's easy to join us

Let us know you're interested by email, phone or by booking a meeting.

We'll have a **virtual meeting or a call** with you to learn more about your school.

Agree you're joining the English Mastery programme with your senior leadership and sign a contract.

Have a **diagnostic call** to agree the plan for your school's implementation.

Attend induction training and receive full support to introduce the programme in your school.

GET IN TOUCH

Speak to a member of our team about **partnering with AC+** today.

partnerships@arkcurriculumplus.org.uk

020 3116 6363

Or book a call online at a time that suits you: calendly.com/ark-curriculum-plus

OUR OTHER SUBJECT EXCELLENCE PROGRAMMES

PRIMARY

- English **Mastery**
- Geography **Mastery**
- History **Mastery**
- Mathematics **Mastery**
- Science **Mastery**

SECONDARY

- Geography **Mastery**
- Mathematics **Mastery**
- Science **Mastery**

We look forward to partnering with you!

We work with schools like yours nationwide to deliver immediate impact and sustained subject excellence.

So if you're looking for stronger student outcomes, more confident teachers and consistently high-quality teaching and learning across your school… Relax. With Ark Curriculum Plus, you're in safe hands.

Start your journey to subject excellence today!

Click here to access our **Programme Preview** and see more detail of what you get on the programme.

Ark Curriculum Plus

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