

Common language and approaches used by teachers at Northstowe Secondary College

We expect all Northstowe colleagues to use our [Teaching and Learning Standards](#) to inform their planning and delivery of classroom practice. The Standards have been informed by six key pedagogical principles identified in 'Making Every Lesson Count' (Allison and Tharby, 2015). All colleagues are expected to implement these principles using a 'tight but loose' approach; teaching is firmly rooted in the evidence informed strategies underpinning the principles, yet delivered in a style that is authentic and unique to each individual teacher.

We do however have 'tight' expectations of some common language and approaches that we want *all* Northstowe teachers to incorporate into their teaching. We have outlined these below in the form of FAQs.

What term should I use to talk about Schemes of Work (SoW) or Schemes of Learning (SoL)?

At Northstowe, we refer to SoWs or SoLs as Learning Chapters (LCs). This helps to emphasise how each unit of study is part of an overall story, with people, themes, concepts and ideas that will reappear over the course of the curriculum. By framing the knowledge and skills studied in a Learning Chapter within the context of a 'story', we appeal to a fundamental, age-old human desire – listening to, and telling stories.

In addition to the simple enjoyment of learning the story, cognitive science also suggests that, "the human mind seems exquisitely tuned to understand and remember stories -so much so that psychologists sometimes refer to stories as "psychologically privileged," meaning that they are treated differently in memory than other types of material."

Please refer to the following links for further reading:

<https://teacherhead.com/2018/09/23/great-teaching-the-power-of-stories/>

<https://www.aft.org/periodical/american-educator/summer-2004/ask-cognitive-scientist>

What do you mean by a KS3 apprenticeship curriculum, and substantive & disciplinary knowledge?

At Northstowe we recognise that expertise is the culmination of years of study and practice; we use KS3 as a time to explicitly and incrementally build up the substantive knowledge and skills that students need to develop, as *apprentices* of the subject, on their journey towards disciplinary mastery at KS4 and beyond. A diagram to illustrate this approach is found [here](#).

How should I introduce students to each new Learning Chapter?

When beginning a new Learning Chapter, we take the time to:

- Help students see the links between what they've studied before, what they're going on to study, the connections with other subjects across the curriculum, and where appropriate, links with Higher Learning and careers.

- Explain what the end-point piece of 'Beautiful Work' is that they're working towards in the Learning Chapter e.g an essay, performance, investigation product etc
- Use a Big Question to help pique curiosity for what students are about to learn and provide purpose to the subsequent 'investigation' through learning. Further reading about what makes a good 'Big Question' is found [here](#).
- Inspire students with further reading and enrichment ideas linked to what they're about to study.

A template for how Learning Chapters can be introduced is found [here](#).

Should I display Learning Objectives for each lesson and should students write them down?

We want students to have a clear understanding of the purpose of each lesson and how it fits into a bigger picture of their learning. It needs to be communicated in a language that is meaningful for students and deal in the tangible small steps of their learning, as opposed to overarching assessment style objectives.

We use 'In this lesson we will.....' and '...so that....' phrases to help us explain and contextualise the purpose of students' learning in each lesson.

We don't require students to write these sentences down.

We begin lessons with high challenge for everyone and don't cap our aspirations for students' learning by using statements like 'all/ most/ some'.

A template for how learning purposes can be shared with students is found [here](#).

How should I start my lessons?

Each lesson should begin with a starter activity that students can complete quickly and independently as soon as they enter the classroom. Each teacher has access to a class set of mini whiteboards to support with starters.

Alongside subject specific starters, students should become familiar with a routine of common starters that are used regularly, and range from:

- **Quizzes based on declarative knowledge** '*I know that...*' i.e. facts and vocabulary e.g. the x8 times tables; the photosynthesis equation; the definition of newly learnt terms etc. Quizzes should promote spaced retrieval of knowledge and include some questions that refer to previous learning (e.g. last lesson, last week, last term).
- **Short tasks that require students to practise procedural knowledge** '*I know how to*' e.g. punctuate correctly; use noun phrases to expand sentences; use a formula to answer a question; do a warm up that will stretch my leg muscles etc. Tasks should promote spaced retrieval of knowledge and refer to current as well as previous learning.
- **'Because/ but/ so...' sentence starters that promote critical thinking and disciplinary knowledge.** 'Because/ But/ So' Sentence starters should encourage students to make links within and between Learning Chapters.

Examples of lesson starter slides can be found [here](#).

How should I teach students new vocabulary?

An integral part of our **lesson planning involves reviewing the textbooks or articles** that will be used in the lesson, and identifying any vocabulary that will need to be **pre-taught**. We also **identify key vocabulary** that we want students to use/ engage with during the lesson.

This vocabulary need to be explicitly taught and we have a common [template](#) for the PPT slide that is used to do this, which includes:

- A student friendly phonetic pronunciation of the word
- A brief, student friendly explanation of the word – www.vocabulary.com is good for this
- Visual image to support the meaning of the word
- Synonyms and antonyms of the word, where appropriate
- An example of the word in a sentence
- Any memory hooks that can be used to support with learning the word

When explicitly teaching a word, teachers use the **'I say/ You say'** technique which requires students to copy saying the word aloud in response to the teacher saying the word loudly and clearly.

Frequent opportunities should be taken to **re-visit explicitly taught vocab** through starter activities and lesson games, as well as the RoK (Retrieval of Knowledge) Tests that take place at the end of Learning Chapters.

We use the phrase **'upgraded vocab'** when celebrating students' word choices or encouraging them to develop their vocabulary – either in spoken or written language. This phrase describes vocabulary that is more sophisticated and/or accurate (i.e. Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocab). Further reading about Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocab is found [here](#).

As teachers create vocabulary slides for individual lessons, we also save these slides onto a **centralised PPT** within our subject area that acts as a bank of all the **Subject Vocab** that is being explicitly taught to students.

Is there a 'House Style' for designing PowerPoint Presentations used in lessons?

We don't have a specific 'House Style' for PPTs however, when designing slides, we aim to reduce the cognitive load on working memory through careful use of font size and colour, images, revealed sequence of information, and blank space ratio. Further guidance can be found [here](#).

Is there a 'no hands up' policy in the classroom?

We don't have a blanket ban on accepting answers from those with their hands up as we believe it's important that students should have the chance to put forward answers and ideas that they are proud of.

We do however use a 'Targeted Questioning' approach to selecting which student we want to answer a question, and we explain to students that we will ask questions of them whether they have their hand up or not. Given the importance of questioning as a formative assessment tool, it is vital that *all* students have questions asked of them.

Do I need to set homework and what should it consist of?

As part of the CMAT family, all schools refer to homework as PREP (Preparation-Revision-Extension-Play). At KS3 we set weekly PREP for Maths, English, Science, French and Humanities (History & Geography), with each subject activity taking approximately 15 mins to complete.

The remaining subjects may set PREP from time to time, and on a regular basis will encourage students to take part in extra-curricular activities, join clubs outside of school, and pursue hobbies and interests that will enrich their enjoyment of the subject.

All PREP must be set via 'Show My Homework' (SMH). There are 3 main types of PREP that we set:

1. **Read a subject relevant article from 'The Day'** and write a brief bullet point summary, and responses to the 'You Decide' questions. This PREP task should be set as an 'Assignment' on SMHW. Students should upload a photo of their written response or type it directly into the SMHW app. Through using SMHW assignment, it enables completion of the task to be easily monitored by the teacher.

Students can be quizzed on their comprehension of the article through a lesson starter, and contribute their thoughts on the 'You Decide' questions through a class discussion.

Northstowe has a subscription to '[The Day](#)' and all students can access the articles online. (cmoss@northstowesc.org/ N@rthstowe4)

An example of a lesson starter linked to PREP can be found [here](#).

2. **Quiz on spellings, vocabulary and/or facts** through a quiz designed on SMH, or another online programme e.g ActiveLearn. An example of a PREP quiz on SMH can be found [here](#).
3. A **specific activity set by the teacher** to support with students' learning and/or revision.

We avoid setting PREP that involves 'Hobbycraft Homework' style activities that can often consume large parts of a weekend and require high levels of adult input e.g designing a solar system using papier mache, baking a cake in the style of an Anderson shelter etc . We believe this style of activity can further disadvantage some students who may not have the resources or adult support available to them at home. We encourage teachers to suggest creative, further enrichment tasks linked to their subject, but not to set them as compulsory PREP activities.

What should students' books look like?

Students must present their work neatly, and wherever possible should not take their books home so they avoid getting lost or tatty.

Teachers must:

- **Read students' work** completed in books **after approximately every 6 hours of lessons**, and a **teacher initial and date** is written in the **margin**.
- Use the Northstowe [Marking Symbols](#) to highlight in the margin a **targeted number of errors** that they want students to correct.
- **Record their feedback** on a [Whole Class Feedback Sheet](#) as opposed to writing individual comments in each student's book. Please keep a copy of these WCF sheets.

Students should **correct errors** and **respond to all feedback** using a **green pen**.

What term should I use to describe activities where students respond to feedback?

At Northstowe we refer to **'Practice for Progress'** lessons where students respond to feedback by correcting and /or improving their work. In other schools, these type of lessons or activities can sometimes be called 'Closing the Gap'.

We refer to 'Practice for Progress' lessons to help emphasise the importance of *practice* when it comes to making progress, and to reinforce our expectation that *all* students should aim to make progress, no matter how big or small the gap is that separates them from their peers.

What term do I use to describe the piece of work that students complete at the end of a Learning Chapter or sequence of Learning Chapters?

We use the term 'Beautiful Work' to describe the end-point piece of work – be it in the form of an essay, story, performance, experiment, test, picture or product. By using the word 'beautiful' we draw attention to the pride we hope students will take in the work they produce, and the expectation we have that students will need to spend time practising, redrafting and rehearsing before they produce something 'beautiful'. Further reading on this approach can be found [here](#).

Teachers should compile examples of 'Beautiful Work' throughout the year that can be used to model expectations to students in subsequent years.

How frequently am I required to set summative assessments?

A RoK Assessment (Retrieval of Knowledge) is set at the end of each Learning Chapter (or Learning Chapter sequence) to summatively assess substantive knowledge (declarative *i.e I know that...* and procedural *i.e I know how to...*), and to help target interventions across the year group.

RoK Assessments involve a short test that is designed in-house, based on an approximate 70/30 question composition (70% recently acquired knowledge/ 30% retrieved knowledge from earlier learning) and a % score is recorded centrally on SIMs.

In certain subjects, 'Beautiful Work' such as essays or performances may also provide further evidence of students' declarative and procedural knowledge, with summative judgements made of students' progress towards independent mastery of different skills.

There is no expectation for teachers to award an overall summative mark to end pieces of 'Beautiful Work' that a Learning Chapter may culminate in. Whole class feedback on student examples of great 'Beautiful Work' should be explicitly shared and celebrated.

Extended Tasks (ETs) are designed in departments to provide a summative assessment of the substantive and disciplinary knowledge that students have accumulated over a period of time. They are completed at least twice a year and used as the basis for measures of progress and indicators of future attainment, which are reported to parents in the bi-annual Progress Reports.

APPENDIX

Northstowe's Teaching and Learning Standards

Challenge - so that students have high expectations of what they can achieve

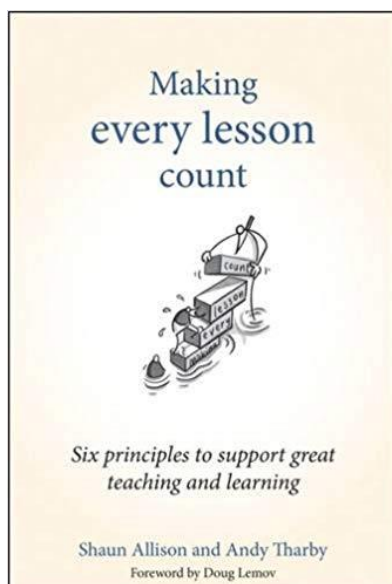
Explanation - so that students acquire new knowledge and skills

Modelling - so that students know how to apply their knowledge and develop skills, and have a tangible sense of what they are aiming for

Purposeful practice - so that students achieve fluency and transfer their learning from short to long term memory

Questioning - so that students are made to think hard with breadth, depth and accuracy

Feedback - so that students further develop their knowledge and skills

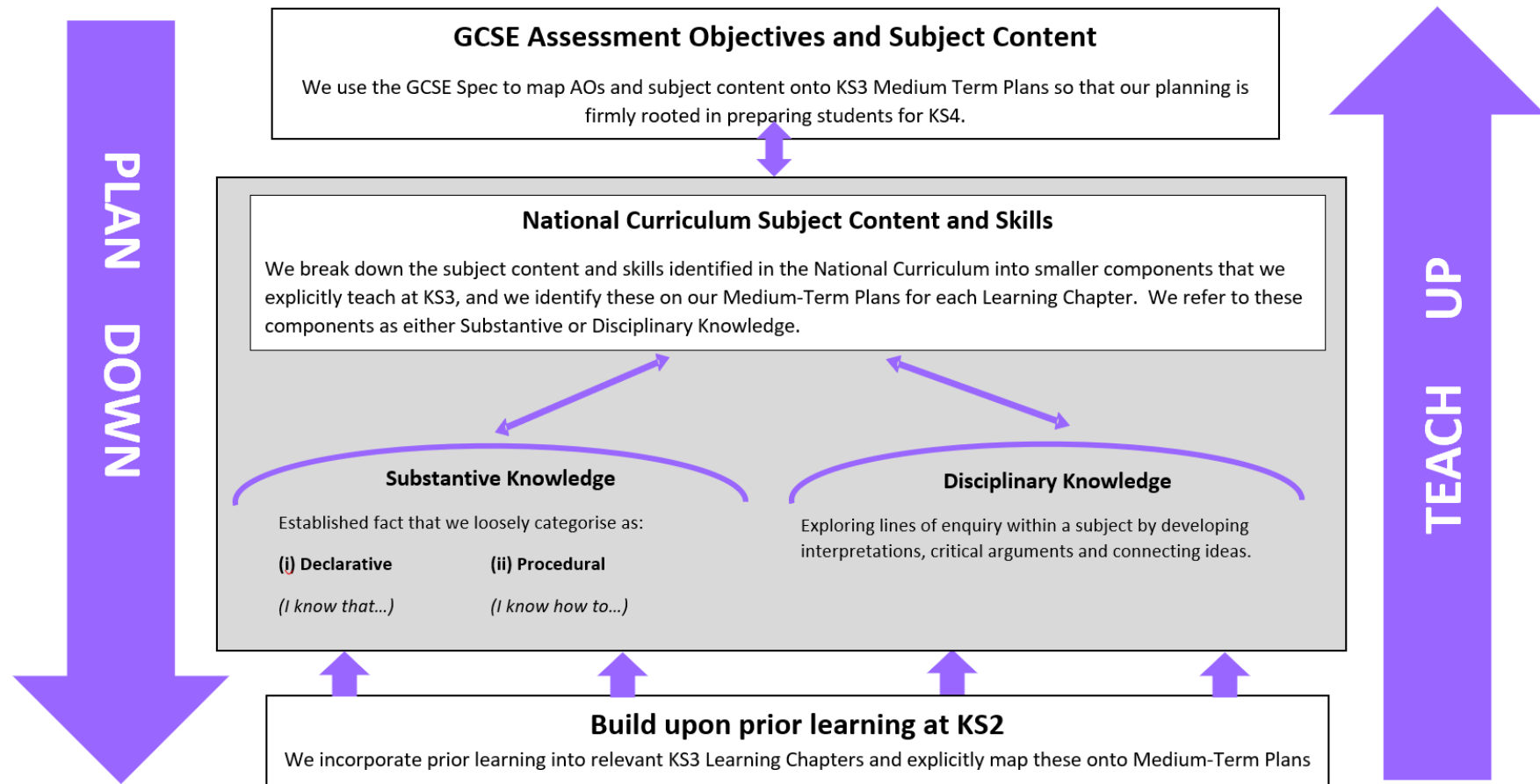


What do you mean by a KS3 Apprenticeship Curriculum, and substantive & disciplinary knowledge?

Planning an Apprenticeship Curriculum

- How do you use KS3 to build on students' prior learning at KS2, and to prepare students with the knowledge and skills they need for mastery at KS4?
- What do you expect students to know, and when do you expect them to know it?

We recognise that expertise is the culmination of years of study and practice; we use KS3 as a time to explicitly and incrementally build up the knowledge and skills that students need to develop, as *apprentices* of the subject, on their journey towards mastery at KS4 and beyond.



How should I introduce students to each new Learning Chapter?

- This half term...we're going to read **'Romeo and Juliet'**.
- Using key scenes as our starting point, we will explore how Shakespeare uses **Juliet** to consider what it feels like to be powerless.
- We will practise **analysing Shakespeare's techniques** through writing an **essay** as our end piece of **'Beautiful Work'**.



- You'll need to use your knowledge of what we've already learnt about Shakespeare and the times he was writing in.
- We're going to use the skills you've been developing in **Drama** to help us think about how actors could perform the script for maximum effect.
- The story might raise issues about mental health that you've discussed during your **PSHE lessons**, or want some support and/or a chance to chat further.

What is it like to feel powerless?

"Sometimes your mind plays tricks on you. It can tell you you're no good, that it's all hopeless. But remember this; you are loved, and important and you bring to this world things no one else can. So hold on."



Teacher Notes

This is a brief overview of the Learning Chapter. We explicitly refer to the end piece of 'Beautiful Work' that students will be working towards.

This icon is used by Northstowe teachers to represent the links in learning within and between subjects.

This is the 'Big Question' used to pique students' curiosity.

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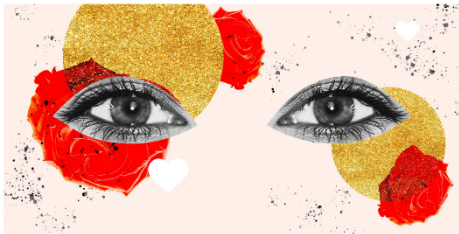
Teacher Notes

This is an example of a slide that shares suggestions for further reading and enrichment activities, prior to beginning a Learning Chapter on 'Romeo and Juliet'.

This icon is used by Northstowe teachers to introduce further reading or enrichment ideas/activities linked to the Learning Chapter.

Should I display Learning Objectives?

In this lesson we will explore 2 extracts: when Juliet and Romeo first meet (I.v), and then when they meet again on the balcony scene (II.ii)...



...so that we have lots of ideas to discuss about how Juliet is both passionate and mature, when we continue writing paragraph 3 of our essay tomorrow...

...but first we're going to learn some upgraded vocab because.....



'In this lesson we will...' provides students with a clear sense of *what* they will do in the lesson.

'...so that' helps to frame the purpose of students' learning by showing them how it contributes to a bigger picture and can be linked to future learning.
You might want to leave the '...so that' explanation blank and students to provide this.
Use different coloured font and animated entry to separate the two explanations so as not to overwhelm students.

Clear reference is made to the 'upgraded vocab' which will be explicitly taught to students.

Teacher Notes

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...so that we have lots of ideas to discuss about how Juliet is both passionate and mature, when we continue writing paragraph 3 of our essay tomorrow...

...but first we're going to learn some upgraded vocab because.....



How should I start my lessons?

Teacher Notes

This is an example of a starter slide that quizzes students on vocabulary.

The majority of words have been recently taught.

Questions 7 and 10 refer to words that were taught last half term which is why students have been given more prompt letters.

1. What does it mean 'to **pull the wool over** someone's eyes'? **To fool/ deceive them**
2. What word beginning with 's' describes a **type of unfair or false criticism** that is used with the **intention of ruining** someone's reputation? **scurrilous**
3. What word beginning with 'p' is the name for a **short introduction** to a piece of literary or artistic work? **prologue**
4. What word beginning with 'd' describes **speech** between two or more characters? **dialogue**
5. What phrase beginning with 's-t' describes someone who is very **persuasive** when **talking**? **silver-tongued**
6. What word beginning with 'c' means **rude and offensive** through talking or behaving in an **unsophisticated** manner? **crude**
7. What word beginning with 'oml...' means a sign that **something bad** is about to happen? **ominous**
8. What word beginning with 't' means something that is **fast-flowing** and likely to overwhelm you? **torrent**
9. What word beginning with 'd' means to be **completely dedicated** in your love of something? **devoted**
10. What word beginning with 'ban...' means to **expel** someone from somewhere for ever? **banish**

Teacher Notes

This is an example of a starter slide that quizzes students on factual knowledge.

The majority of questions refer to knowledge they've been taught in this Learning Chapter..

Questions 11 and 12 refer to knowledge they've been taught in previous Year 7 Learning Chapters.

1. What town beginning with 's' did Shakespeare come from? **Stratford upon Avon**
2. What did the family of **Shakespeare's Mum** do for a living? **Farming family**
3. What did **Shakespeare's Dad** make for a living? **Made leather gloves, purses and belts**
4. Shakespeare was one of **how many children**? **8**
5. What **year** was Shakespeare **born** in? **1564**
6. What was Shakespeare's **wife** called? (Hint: A..... H.....) **Anne Hathaway**
7. Was Shakespeare's **wife older** or **younger** than him? **Older**
8. How many **children** did **Shakespeare** have? **3**
9. Name a **book** that Shakespeare would have **studied** at school. **Bible/ The Odyssey/ Aesop's Fables**
10. Name one **job** Shakespeare is thought to have had after he **left school**. **gardener/ butcher/ sailor/ falconer**
11. **Where** is Geoffrey **Chaucer buried**? **Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey**
12. **Who** wrote **'The Odyssey'**? **Homer**

Teacher Notes

These are examples of starter slides that require students to practise procedural knowledge.

Add the correct punctuation to these sentences.

Your a beautiful donkey murmured Titania to Bottom.

Its more of a love square than a triangle explained Puck to his master.

Add a noun phrase or relative clause to these sentences.

Eg. **Shakespeare's parents, who are believed to have been illiterate, had 8 children in total.**

Shakespeare,, wrote 37 plays in his lifetime.

Christopher Marlowe,....., was a playwright during the Elizabethan period.

Stratford-upon-Avon,....., is in the county of Warwickshire.

Teacher Notes

These are examples of how to use 'because/ but/ so' sentence starters.

- Stretching increases flexibility **because** it warms up the muscles.
- Stretching increases flexibility, **but** many people skip this step before exercising.
- Stretching increases flexibility, **so** it is important to remember to stretch before exercise to avoid injury.

Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are similar **because**.....

Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are similar **BUT**.....

Lady Macbeth is haunted by her guilt **SO**.....

Stretching increases flexibility **because**.....

Stretching increases flexibility **BUT**.....

Stretching increases flexibility **SO**.....

How should I teach students new vocabulary?

Teacher Notes

Student friendly phonetic pronunciation

Brief definition of word

Visual memory hook to support with learning meaning

Synonym/ antonyms of word


Example of word in a sentence

unscrupulous [*un-screw-p-u-lus*]

Having or showing no moral principles; not honest or fair.

Synonyms: immoral

Antonyms: conscience



Mr Wormwood was utterly unscrupulous and would sell cars to old ladies even though he knew they were piles of worthless junk.

Use animated entrances to introduce information on the slide a step at a time.

The diagram illustrates a teaching strategy for new vocabulary. On the left, five yellow boxes list key components: 'Student friendly phonetic pronunciation', 'Brief definition of word', 'Visual memory hook to support with learning meaning', 'Synonym/ antonyms of word', and 'Example of word in a sentence'. Arrows from these boxes point to a central white box containing the word 'unscrupulous' with its phonetic transcription, a definition, synonyms ('immoral'), and antonyms ('conscience'). To the right of the text is a photograph of Mr. Wormwood, a character known for selling cars to elderly women. Below the photograph is a sentence using the word: 'Mr Wormwood was utterly unscrupulous and would sell cars to old ladies even though he knew they were piles of worthless junk.' At the bottom right, a yellow box instructs to 'Use animated entrances to introduce information on the slide a step at a time.'

Do I need to set homework, and what should it consist of?

Teacher Notes

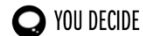
These questions quiz students on their comprehension of the news article they read in 'The Day'.

Students can complete answers on their mini whiteboards and hold up so that teachers can take a snap-shot assessment of understanding.

Students should come to lessons with notes jotted down in their PREP exercise book, in response to the 'You Decide' questions.

Lollipop sticks with student names written on can be used to randomly select which students will contribute their ideas to a class discussion.

1. What words, beginning with 'c' and 'b' are the names of the 2 street gangs of Los Angeles? **Crips and Bloods**
2. **True or False?** The first gang was initially set up as a way of protecting the African-American community from climate change.
False – it was to protect them from police harassment
3. What genre (type) of music, beginning with 'g..... r.....' was meant to have been inspired by the murder and violence that took place between the gangs? **Gangsta Rap**
4. **True or False?** The rivalry has now mainly come to an end after the death of Freddie Gray.
True – they have united in the face of the police brutality that ended up killing Freddie



1. Is Romeo and Juliet 'the greatest love story of all time'?
2. How should the US tackle its remaining gang problems?



Teacher Notes

This is an example of a PREP quiz set on 'Show My Homework' that quizzes students on their knowledge of the plays studied in class, as well as including some questions based on previous Learning Chapters.

Northstowe Secondary College Shakespeare plays - Quiz 1 Quiz set by Mrs B. Morrish for Year 7/7a/Ee1

- 1) Where is 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' set?
 - Rome, Italy
 - London, England
 - Athens, Greece
- 2) In 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', what is Hermia's best friend called?
 - Hannah
 - Helena
 - Juliet
- 3) In 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', why does Hermia argue with her father?
 - He wants her to marry a man she doesn't love
 - He wants her to continue living at home with him
 - He wants her to have children
- 4) In 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', what is the name of the King of the Fairies?
 - Ovid
 - Oberon
 - Oliver
- 5) In 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', what effect does the magic flower juice have if it's put in your eye?
 - It makes you tell the truth to the first person you see when you awake
 - It makes you fall in love with the first person you see when you awake
 - It makes you turn into an animal when you awake
- 6) In 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', what mistake does Puck make with the magic eye juice?
 - He puts it into the wrong man's eyes
 - He puts it into the wrong fairy's eyes
 - He puts it into the wrong woman's eyes
- 7) In 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', what animal does Puck turn Nick Bottom into?
 - A deer
 - A lion
 - A donkey
- 8) In 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', which character does Titania fall in love with because of the magic flower juice?
 - Bottom
 - Oberon
 - Puck
 - Demetrius
 - Lysander
 - Theseus
 - Helena
 - Hermia
 - Egeus
 - Demetrius
 - Lysander
 - Theseus
 - Helena
 - Hermia
 - Egeus

Marking Symbols

MW *Missing work*

? *Not clearly expressed*

X *Misunderstanding*

P. *Punctuation error*

✓ *Good point, well expressed*

// *New paragraph*

Sp. *Spelling error*

G. *Grammar error*