

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome your son/daughter to their Year 8 English studies here at Wildern. Over the course of the year, students will study a variety of literature and non-fiction texts. We aim to give the students a range of experiences within school to help underpin their understanding of these texts and the skills needed as they move through the school towards GCSEs.

### Autumn term

In this term, we will be studying a selection of Romantic poetry during the first half term which will be followed by a unit on the Romantic legacy - exploring the continuing influence of the Romantic poets. This unit will culminate in students giving an assessed speech in class on a topic they feel passionately about. This very much paves the way for GCSE where both this knowledge and these skills will be assessed as part of the unit. All resources for this unit are provided in lessons.

### Spring term

In the spring term, *The Woman in Black* is studied as a way of introducing students to the gothic genre (*The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* - another gothic novel - is studied at GCSE). To facilitate this learning, we would kindly ask you to purchase a copy of *The Woman In Black* by Susan Hill so that they can annotate chapters as we read them and refer to key passages in lessons.

Please be assured that your son/daughter's book does not have to be brand new and that students eligible for Pupil Premium will receive their copies through the school.

The text we would ask you to purchase is below:

*The Woman In Black* by Susan Hill, preferably Vintage ISBN: 978-0099288473 (taught in the Spring term)

There are many economical ways of buying texts: *World of Books* sells second hand books with free postage - <https://www.worldofbooks.com/en-gb>, as does [awesomebooks.com](https://www.awesomebooks.com). [Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk) will sell new versions of the texts, but there are also second hand books available there, just look for 'used' under the main advertised price.

### Summer term and visiting theatre company

We are fortunate to have the Box Clever Theatre Company visiting Wildern to perform 'Romeo and Juliet' to enhance our students' learning about Shakespeare's play ahead of them studying it in more depth in the summer term. This opportunity has been made available at a heavily

discounted rate, but we require a £8.50 contribution from all parents in order to finance the production. All other resources are financed by the school for this unit.

Whilst we appreciate that asking you to contribute to this may be a financial stretch, it is of huge value to have an excellent visiting theatre company come to Wildern and is much cheaper than theatre visit. For more information on the theatre company and the performance see here:

<https://www.boxclevertheatre.co.uk/romeo-juliet/>

Students in receipt of Pupil Premium will have their ticket funded by the school. If you would like your child to attend please complete the payment online via Parentpay. If you have not already activated your Parentpay account and require your login details please do not hesitate to contact the Finance Office at [finance@wildern.org](mailto:finance@wildern.org).

### Self-Study

Year 8 will be using a software package called Sparx Reader (<https://sparxreader.com>) for Self Study (homework) which we will set all students up to use at the beginning of this term. Every student's reading ability will be assessed and they will be allocated a reading level and given an appropriate book (accessible online through any digital device). They will earn points for the accuracy of their reading and completing the allocated reading time outside of lessons: 30 minutes per week. More information on Sparx Reader will follow.

The parent handbook for English contains full details of the curriculum that your son/daughter will be studying this year, as well as useful links to extra-curricular activities that may interest them and advice on how you can support them across this year.

Please do get in touch with me or your son/daughter's English teacher if you have any questions or concerns.

Yours faithfully,

Mr J. Hillier

Assistant Director of Learning for Year 7 and 8 English