



# Blue Coat Church of England Academy

**Year: 9**

**Subject: English**

## Overview

Unit 1: Oppression  
Unit 2: Identity and Freedom  
Unit 3: Division  
Unit 4: Relationships

### Unit 1: Oppression

In this thought-provoking unit, students will explore the theme of oppression through the study of dystopian fiction, engaging with a range of extracts from both classic and contemporary examples of the genre. They will begin by identifying the core conventions of dystopian literature—such as totalitarian control, loss of individuality, surveillance, and resistance—and consider how these elements reflect wider societal anxieties. Through guided reading, pupils will learn to identify key themes, track their development across a text, and explore how a writer's structural choices enhance meaning and impact. They will also examine authorial intent, deepening their understanding of how context shapes interpretation, and will begin to explore more complex literary devices such as symbolism and allegory, particularly through characterisation. Pupils will be encouraged to extend their analytical responses by developing layered interpretations that go beyond surface-level understanding. In writing, students will apply what they've learned by crafting their own dystopian pieces, focusing on atmosphere and characterisation through deliberate and adventurous vocabulary choices. They will experiment with varied sentence structures to create tension and control pace, while also learning to embed symbolism and create recurring patterns to unify their narratives. By the end of the unit, pupils will have produced a piece of original creative writing that demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the dystopian genre and its ability to comment on systems of power and control.

### Unit 2: Identity and Freedom

In this unit, students will explore the theme of identity and freedom through the study of poetry, engaging with a range of writers and different poetic styles which address these significant themes. They will begin by identifying key poetic conventions and consider how poems are able to convey

messages differently when compared with other text types. Through guided reading, pupils will learn to identify key themes, tracking how the writer presents these across the poem, and explore how a writer's structural choices enhance meaning and impact. They will also examine authorial intent, deepening their understanding of how context shapes interpretation, and will begin to explore more complex poetic devices such as symbolism and caesura. Pupils will be encouraged to extend their analytical responses by developing layered interpretations that go beyond surface-level understanding. In writing, students will apply what they've learned by crafting their own thesis statements, focusing on appropriate use of academic language and carefully crafted complex sentences. By the end of the unit, pupils will have produced a piece of original academic writing that demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of theme and how different writers develop our understanding of these significant ideas through various poetic methods.

#### Unit 3: Division

#### Unit 4: Relationships

The year ends with an exploration of the theme of Relationships through an in-depth study of William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Over the course of the unit, pupils will engage with the complex language and structure of Shakespearean drama. They will learn how to track big ideas—such as corruption, manipulation, and ambition—across key scenes in order to identify and analyse the central themes of the play. Pupils will explore how Shakespeare crafts meaning through metaphor, symbolism, and irony, and will learn to explain the common ground in metaphorical comparisons. Through a close examination of soliloquies, monologues, and dialogue, students will develop a deep understanding of indirect characterisation and how the reactions of others can shape a character's portrayal. The study will include exploration of dramatic conventions such as the five-part structure, acts and scenes, and the use of stage directions, all of which contribute to character development and thematic progression. Pupils will also learn about the features of the tragic genre, including the roles of the tragic hero and anti-hero, and will consider how Shakespeare engages with ideas about fate vs free will or the impact of gender-based expectations. In writing, pupils will refine their ability to craft effective introductions and develop persuasive, personal viewpoints on the big ideas in the text, expressed through clear thesis statements and topic sentences. The unit culminates in a critical written response in which pupils explore the nature of villainy in Richard III and its connection to Shakespeare's presentation of power.