



Urmston Grammar Sixth Form – Transition Work

English Language Department

English Language A Level – Into Year 12 Project

In A Level English Language, you will develop advanced insight into the functioning of the language in the world all around you and you will gain a sophisticated understanding of communication itself. So to prepare, here are some activities for you to complete over the summer.

Remember to bring your responses to your first English Language lesson in September and we will share our findings and ideas about language.

Activity 1 - You and your Language

a) Look at the table below. It represents some of the most important influences that are likely to have shaped your identity and idiolect.

Decide on the order of importance of these influences, from 1 – the most important to 8 – the least important.

Source of Influence	Your Family e.g. parents correcting the way you speak, family sayings, other languages in the family	Places you have lived e.g. Regional accent or colloquialisms, local sayings/greetings	Your education – school experiences and the influence of teachers and what you have learned	Cultural Influences e.g. Books, films, music, magazines and television	Gender Do you have a preconception about language which is seen as ladylike/gentlemanly? Are there some things you would/wouldn't talk depending on the gender of a person, in conversation	Peer and friendship groups e.g. in jokes, 'banter', slang specific to your group	Social background – the nature of your social class/religious background
Rank Order							

b) Look at the items/pictures below. **In your everyday life, how would you say them/ what would you call them?** (There are examples listed below each one – tick the term that you would normally use, or add an extra term). Think about whether your choice of term is a result of any of the influences in the table above. Be prepared to discuss your language choices with the class, in your first English lesson.



Chip butty?
Chip sandwich?
Chip muffin?
Chip roll?
Chip barm
Other? -



A cup of tea
A cup of cha
A brew
A cuppa
Other?

Say Hello!

Hello
Hi
Hiya
Alright mate
Alright pal
How's it going?
Hey up?
Other?



What do you call your evening meal?

Dinner?
Supper?
Tea?
Other?





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Activity 2

One of the issues you looked at in the previous activity was the influence of gender on communication. Over the summer, **carry out a mini language investigation**, to explore how writers have appealed to the presumed gender of their audience in different contexts and purposes. **Try and collect the following items:**



1. The front cover of / or a page from a magazine
2. A label from a shower or bath product
3. An eau de toilette / deodorant / body spray advert (from a magazine or newspaper or leaflet from a shop counter, or a screenshot from a website)
4. An advert (it could be from a magazine, a newspaper, a leaflet or a website)
5. An extract from an advice column (it could be advice about health, cooking, fashion, childcare for example, from a leaflet, a newspaper, a magazine or a webpage)

Next, **prepare a five minute presentation which will be delivered to the class**. The presentation should aim to explore how these products use language to reflect gender as well as the context, audience and purpose.

You should think about the following:

- How is language used to address men and women?
- What do the adverts suggest about male and female roles?
- How are the items packaged and presented to appeal to a male or female audience? (You could comment on the font, the colour, and the images that might be used. Think about the connotations of the colours/images used and how they relate to our ideas about gender.)
- Remember to try to use specific terminology from your GCSE when discussing your items.



You can use a power point presentation if you wish. It would be a good idea to include your items in your presentation, so you can point out the language features clearly. You might want to prepare hand-outs for the rest of the class. You will give your presentation in the first lessons back.

Extension Activity

A fantastic website for A level Language students is called:

<http://linguistics-research-digest.blogspot.co.uk/>

This is an invaluable resource for students and you will find lots of fascinating articles on Language research and issues. Every student should sign up to follow Linguistics Research by email and once you have done that you should have a browse of the categories on the left side of the home page.