

A-LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE

IN THIS TASTER WE WILL...

- Give an overview of the course
- Introduce you to some topics we cover on the course and some of the activities we do in class
- Answer any questions you may have

WHAT WE DON'T DO AT A-LEVEL

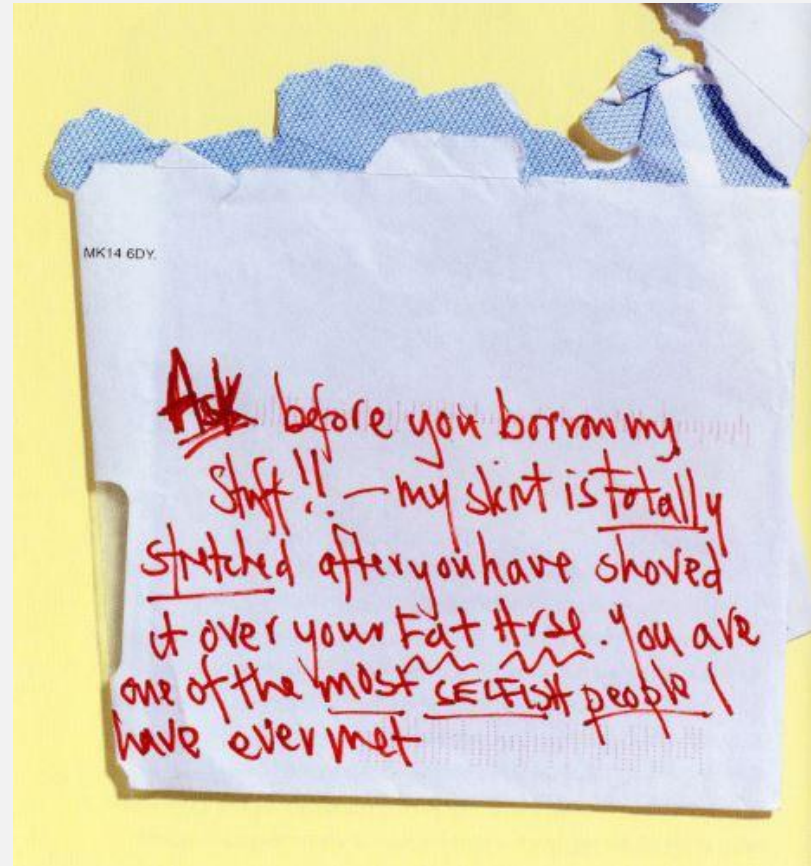
- Any study of literature
- Speaking and listening assessments
- 'Correct' English
- Anything else you do at GCSE!

A-LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE: 2 EXAMS (80%) AND 2 COURSEWORK PIECES (20%)

- Coursework 1: a language investigation into a topic of your choice
- Coursework 2: a piece of creative writing with a commentary
- Exams:
 - language analysis
 - language variation
 - language change
 - language acquisition

LANGUAGE ANALYSIS

- Any piece of communication can be a text for analysis.
- Look at this note:
- Who?
- To whom?
- Relationship?
- Purpose?
- Context?
- Speech or writing?



LANGUAGE VARIATION

A case study by Gary Ives carried out at a secondary school in West Yorkshire found that 100 per cent of students at a secondary school answered yes to the question 'Do you think that people speak differently depending on their age?'.

What type of language do you associate with particular age groups? Consider accent, dialect, slang, levels of formality, taboo language and anything else you think might differ.

13-19	
30 - 40	
65+	

Some people probably think you speak like this ...

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VV0BB0CxIFk>



And write like this ...

Wt r u on abwt: Explosion in child 'text speak' leaves 90% of parents and teachers needing help with translation

- Parents frequently have to ask their children to translate text messages
- Education experts have warned against schools tolerating 'text speak'
- Michael Gove will introduce tests on more formal English grammar

By [ANDREW LEVY FOR THE DAILY MAIL](#)

PUBLISHED: 17:59, 14 March 2013 | **UPDATED:** 18:00, 14 March 2013



 **217**
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Those people are probably wrong – but there are some language features that teenagers tend to have in common:

For example, linguist Anna Strensom found the following features in teenage language:

- Irregular turn-taking
- Overlaps
- Indistinct articulation
- Word shortenings
- Teasing and name calling
- Verbal duelling
- Slang
- Taboo language
- Rising intonation
- Multiple negation
- Language mixing – using language from other cultures

People often disapprove of how teenagers speak

The teens who can barely talk - they only have an 800 word vocabulary

By [LUKE SALKELD FOR THE DAILY MAIL](#)

UPDATED: 09:56, 11 January 2010

Teenagers have been warned they are becoming unemployable because they use a vocabulary of just 800 words.

The limited linguistic range also consists of many made up words and 'teenspeak' which has developed through modern communication methods such as text messaging and social networking sites.

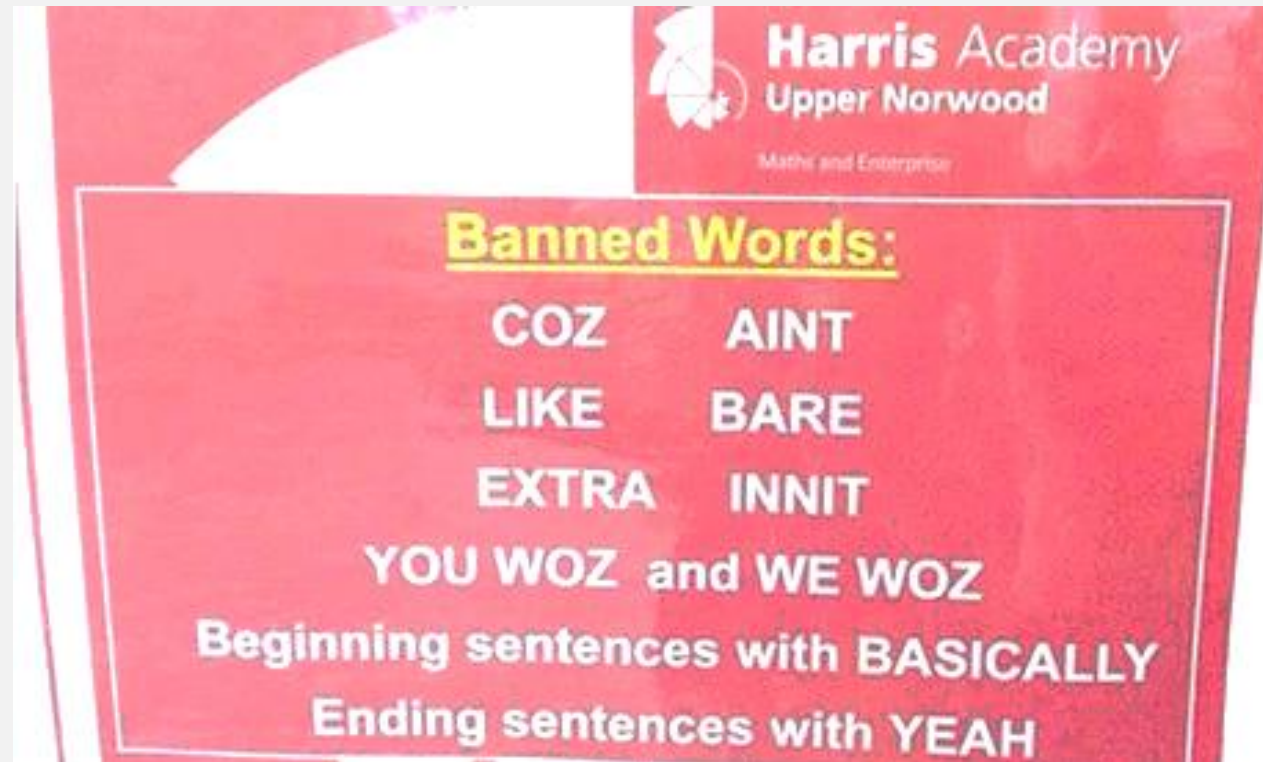
Today Jean Gross, who advises the Government on children's speech, said urgent action was required to prevent children failing to find jobs because they are unable to communicate.

Another example

The English language is an incredibly rich inheritance. Yet it is being squandered by so many young people of all races and backgrounds. Across London and other cities it is increasingly fashionable for them to speak in an inarticulate slang full of vacuous words such as "innit" and wilful distortions like "arks" for "ask" or tedious double negatives.

(<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/ghetto-grammar-robs-the-young-of-a-proper-voice-6433284.html>)

Some schools have gone so far as to
ban some language features



- **School bans students from saying 'like' to improve speaking skills**
- 18 Jun 2019 Last updated at 06:21
- **A school in Bradford, England, has banned their students from saying the word 'like' during conversations.**
- Students will now no longer be allowed to say the word - often seen as a 'filler' word in a sentence - as a way to improve kids' speaking skills.
- Single-word answers such as 'good', 'nice' and 'sad' have also been banned, with teachers asking for longer replies to questions.
- Christabel Shepherd, Copthorne School's executive head teacher, said: "When children are giving you an answer and they say 'is it, like, when you're, like...' they haven't actually made a sentence at all. They use the word all the time and we are trying to get rid of it."
- This idea has been praised by the Education minister, Nick Gibb.
- Mr Gibb believes that teachers need to help children learn more words and stop using 'filler' words.

Arguments for a slang ban ...

- In a statement, the school said: "In addition to giving students the teaching they need to thrive academically, we want them to develop the soft skills they will need to compete for jobs and university places."
- "This particular initiative is just one of the many ways in which we are building the vocabulary of our students and giving them the skills they need to express themselves confidently and appropriately for a variety of audiences."
- If children are caught using the banned language they won't be punished but they will be corrected and asked to think about what they have said.

and against ...

- **'It's wrong'**
- Terry Victor, editor of the New Partridge Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English said: "It's wrong."
- "You cannot censor a young person's language, they're not talking about words that are offensive, they're talking about some of the words that politicians use."
- "[The word] 'ain't' was around in the 19th Century, people like Dickens used it... and how many politicians have you heard say "basically" to begin a sentence?"

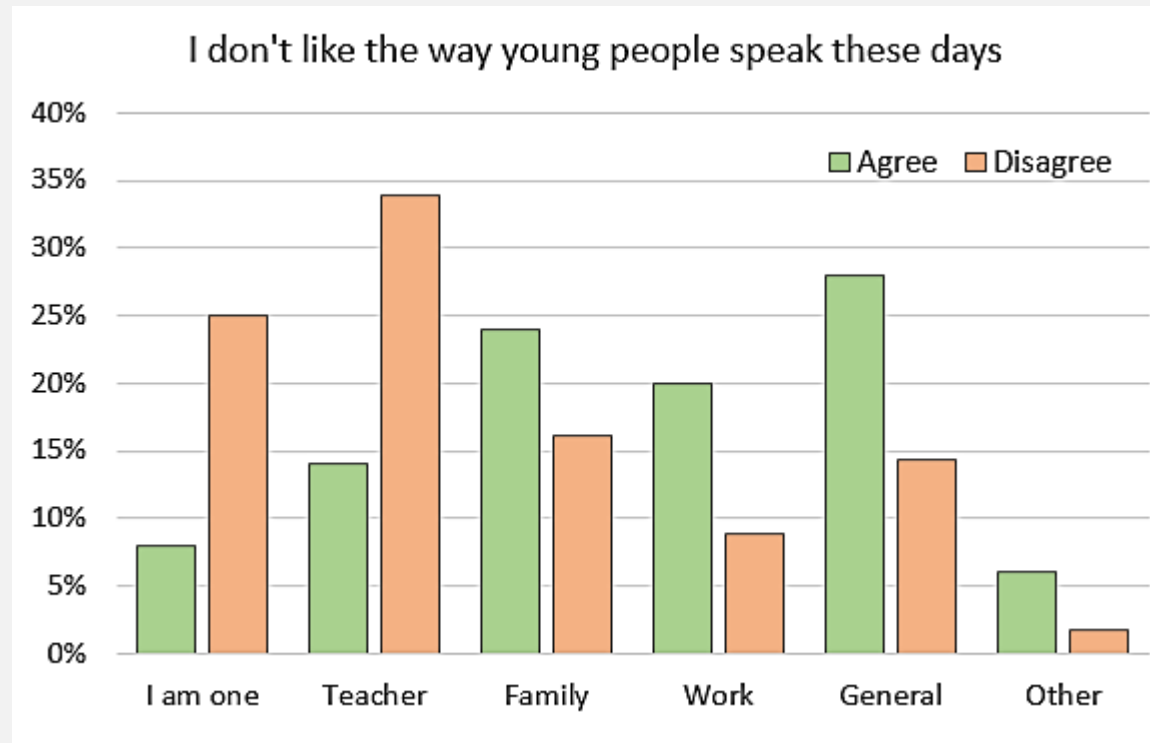
What do you think?

Arguments for a slang ban

Arguments against a slang ban

Why do you think adults disapprove of how teenagers speak and write?

- There might be a clue here: linguist Rob Drummond has researched attitudes to teenage language and found this:



For more about the English Language A-level

- Read this blog post about studying English Language at A-level
<https://tinyurl.com/yb97smdp>
- **kate.w@wsfc.ac.uk**