**Ellon Academy English Faculty Parent/Carer Information Course Descriptor and Outline – Higher English**

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| **Course Component** | **What is this component assessing?** | **How is it assessed?** | **How can you support your child?** |
| **Portfolio of Writing**  **(30% of final grade)**  **Not in 2021** | The purpose of this portfolio is to provide evidence of skills in writing for two different purposes: one broadly creative, and one broadly discursive. This year, your child will need to plan one broadly creative, and one broadly discursive piece but only write out one in full which will be submitted for marking. | Your child will produce the portfolio independently, but their teacher support the candidate to choose the focus, theme and genre of the pieces of writing. | They will be able to prepare a plan and notes for the portfolio, but the actual piece will be written in controlled conditions in school.  Ask your child to show you their work as they are working on it and as it develops.  Please see communication from Mrs Warne, sent in August, for more information regarding the completion of the Portfolio. |
| **Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation.**  **(30% of final grade)** | This question paper gives your child the opportunity to demonstrate some of the following skills:   * understanding of the writer’s ideas by re-casting ideas from the passage in their own words * understanding of vocabulary in context * analysis of language (word choice, figurative language, sentence structure, punctuation, text structure — opening, conclusion, linkage, etc) * evaluation of the writer’s techniques or the overall impact of the text * inferring meaning * summarising the text: candidates demonstrate their understanding of the writer’s ideas through identifying and isolating key points or main ideas. | The purpose of this question paper is to assess your child’s application of their reading skills in the challenging context of unseen material and a limited time.  Your child will be required to read and understand one unseen non-fiction text. | Encourage your child to read widely, particularly broadsheet newspapers.  This will enhance their general knowledge and develop their formal vocabulary.  Ask your child to note details of newspaper articles read using the skills descriptors to the left as a guide.  Complete past papers on the SQA website. |
| **Critical Reading (Study of Literature)** | **Scottish Text (20% of final grade)**  This section of the question paper gives your child the opportunity to demonstrate some of the following skills:   * summarising: candidates show understanding of the writer’s ideas, narrative events or characterisation through summarising/explaining using their own words analysis of language (word choice, figurative language, sentence structure, punctuation, text structure — opening, conclusion, etc) * analysis of how a writer achieves a particular effect or mood or atmosphere, etc * analysis of overall text structure * inferring meaning from what is implied by the writer * evaluation of overall impact of the text, or the writer’s techniques * understanding and analysis of the remainder of the text or other text   **Critical Essay (20% of final grade)**  Your child will apply their understanding, analysis and evaluation skills to previously studied texts by writing a critical essay in response to one question from a choice of two.  Your child will gain credit for their knowledge and understanding of the text, their skills in analysis and evaluation, and their construction of a line of thought.  The essay should be relevant to the question throughout, and should achieve minimum requirements for technical accuracy, ie paragraphing, sentence construction and punctuation should be sufficiently accurate so that meaning is clear at first reading; writing may contain errors, but these will not be significant. | The purpose of this question paper is to assess the application of candidates’ critical reading skills and their knowledge and understanding of previously-studied literary, media or language texts, including the work of at least one Scottish writer from the prescribed list. | Access resources shared on Google Classroom also those available on the BBC Bitesize website.  Encourage your child to tell you about the texts they are studying. By explaining the texts to you, they will reinforce their knowledge of them. |
| **Other Sources for Revision Materials and/support:** | **Google Classroom:** Your child’s teacher has been placing weekly updates of tasks completed in class to support learning in the case of those working from home and also for those who have been off ill. These updates can also be used as signposts to the various materials used in class to support revision.  **Drop-in Sessions:** Over the course of the session, pupils are welcome to attend drop-in sessions. They can use these sessions to seek support on a particular element of the course or to simply avail of a place to study, with help and support available should they require it.  **SQA Understanding Standards website**: This website has examples of exam scripts from candidates, along with the mark awarded and a commentary explaining how this mark was achieved.  **Past Papers:** Past papers are available on the SQA website. An invaluable part of revision is to complete past papers and to bring them in to be marked.  **Scholar:** This is a website with a wide range of materials to support study and revision. Your child will have a username and password. Should they need this replaced, please contact a teacher/librarian.  Should you and/or your child have any queries, or require any support in accessing the materials detailed above, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Warne (PT English) on [sarah.warne@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.warne@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) | | |