

In partnership with



Addressing the challenges of GCSE English in 2015

The 'Let's Think in English' Pedagogy

Developed by King's College London



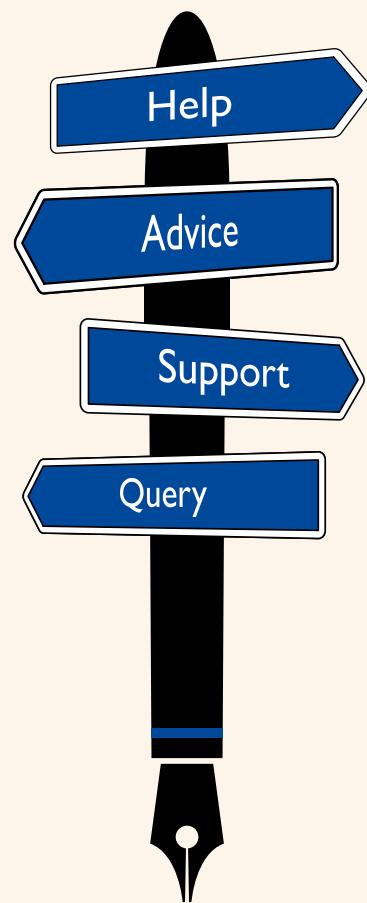
GCSE English changes in 2015

The **new GCSE criteria** coming into effect for **2015** are designed to help learners keep pace with the world's highest performing countries and to ensure they emerge with language skills that will provide a genuine foundation for the rest of their learning and working lives.

We know from the many conversations we've had with English teaching professionals that some of these changes are welcome. We also know that there is some concern about this set of new expectations and challenges for learners, including concern about:

- **100% examined** courses
- **untiered papers** and **unseen** texts
- **literary heritage** texts
- greater emphasis on **technical accuracy**.

We're dedicated to providing the support and materials you need to build students' **skills** and **confidence**, and successfully plan and implement teaching the new Edexcel GCSE specifications.





Introducing *Let's Think in English*

Let's Think in English is a teaching programme created by Laurie Smith and Michael Walsh for **King's College London** from 2009 to help students develop the **response and analysis skills** necessary for success in English. The programme has been trialled by **100+ schools** over 5 years and proven to work with students of all abilities.

Let's Think in English is based on 30 years of research originally in *Let's Think in Science* (formerly Cognitive Acceleration in Science Education) and *Let's Think in Mathematics* (formerly Cognitive Acceleration in Maths Education) developed through research at King's College London and now coordinated by the **Let's Think Forum** which also provides support in Maths and Science. This research has proven that structured development of students' cognitive skills over two years **increases their higher-order thinking ability**.

Let's Think in English consists of lessons designed to be used fortnightly, all using English texts – fiction, poetry, non-fiction, drama and film. The lessons are largely oral, based on reading, open-ended questioning and structured group discussion. They systematically **develop students' skills of inference, deduction and analysis**, increasing their **confidence**, understanding and ability to express their ideas. This can lead to **higher results** in written examinations as well as in speaking and listening.

Read on for more detail.

Over 100 schools are now using the programme, mainly in London and the South East but also in Hampshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, West Yorkshire, Bristol, Stockport and Liverpool with more joining each term.

Find out more:

www.edexcel.com/letsthink

How Let's Think in English works



Let's Think in English draws upon research carried out by Piaget and Vygotsky demonstrating that young people learn best when exploring ideas together. The lessons are based on structured challenge and include the development of understanding through **discussion** (social construction), **problem-solving** (cognitive challenge) and **structured reflection** (metacognition) which makes students more aware of their thinking processes and how they think most effectively.

The lessons stimulate the deeper reasoning patterns which underpin **better understanding of English** – understanding writers' intentions relating to technique, figurative language, symbolism, genre, purpose and narrative structure.

Visit the Let's Think in English website
for more information at letsthink.org.uk

Let's Think in English (LTE) lessons have been trialled with classes of all kinds in many schools and have been received enthusiastically by students and teachers in all of them.

They use high interest texts on which students are set problems of interpretation which they solve in groups, feeding back their ideas in a structured way and comparing the strengths of the various solutions. They are then set a more fundamental problem to resolve and compare in the same way. Finally they reflect on how they have worked out their solutions which gradually embeds their improving thinking skills.

LTE uses Assessment for Learning (AfL) techniques such as open-ended (rich) questioning, collaboration, wait-time, problem-solving and independent learning. It fulfils Ofsted's recommendations in *Moving English Forward* (2012) and Ofsted inspectors typically judge LTE lessons as outstanding or good with outstanding features.

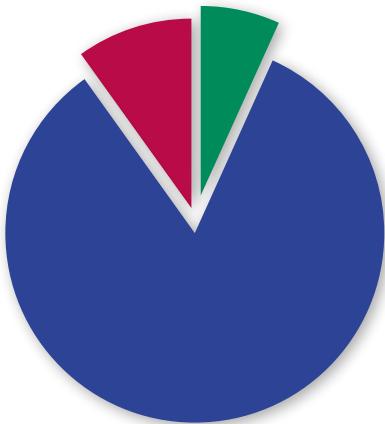
Less able, EAL and disadvantaged students

Let's Think in English lessons work particularly well with **less able, EAL and disadvantaged** students. This is partly because there is almost no writing, which is often a cause of anxiety and frustration. When these students realise it's the development of their ideas rather than their writing skills that is important, they begin to gain confidence and flourish. And, as their language range increases through discussion and sharing ideas, their writing skills gradually develop too. **Learn more at letsthink.org.uk**

Let's Think in English results

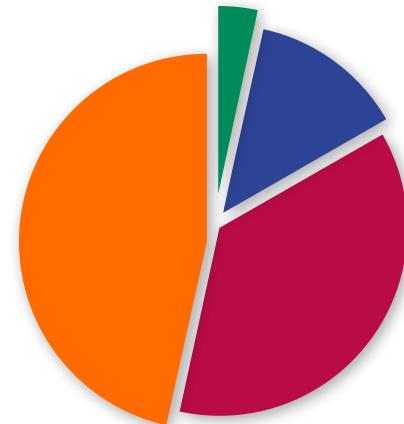
- case study summary

Below are findings from Shirley High School, Croydon (a mixed comprehensive school) who taught using the resources over the course of a year with a year 8 class of **30 students**: 16 girls and 14 boys. The class used *Let's Think in English* for one lesson per fortnight over a full year, and had the same end-of-year assessment (imaginative writing and response to a Shakespeare scene, both under controlled conditions) as the previous year's top Y8 set. They were measured using National Curriculum levels, and the results show significant improvements.



Before using *Let's Think in English*:

- **NC Level 4:** 2 students (7% of the class)
- **NC Level 5:** 25 students (83% of the class)
- **NC Level 6:** 3 students (10% of the class)



After using *Let's Think in English* (for one year):

- **NC Level 4:** 1 student (3% of the class)
- **NC Level 5:** 4 students (13% of the class)
- **NC Level 6:** 11 students (37% of the class)
- **NC Level 7:** 14 students (47% of the class)

This means that **22 students (73% of the class)** had made **more than two sublevels of progress** across the year, and **8 students (27% of the class)** made **four or more sublevels of progress** across the year.

Other Year 8 class at the end of the year (without *Let's Think in English*)

- **NC Level 5:** 19 students (63% of the class)
- **NC Level 6:** 11 students (37% of the class)

Access the full report at letsthink.org.uk

These results show quite dramatic improvement. As a result of this and other evidence, the *Let's Think in English* team has been awarded £130,000 by the London Mayor's Office to carry out a two-year trial. **You can find out more at letsthink.org.uk**, and the team will share the results of the trial as soon as they're available to show its effectiveness in schools in London.

Find out more:

www.edexcel.com/letsthink

In partnership with



Pearson and Let's Think in English

We're delighted to be working in partnership with **Kings College London** and the *Let's Think in English* team to provide a range of **free teaching and learning materials** to support the new GCSE English requirements. We're committed to facilitating and sharing best practice and evidence-based approaches in association with the *Let's Think in English* team to assist English teachers in doing what they do best: inspiring students to rise to these new challenges and reach their true potential.

For centres choosing to take our Edexcel GCSE English 2015 qualifications, we'll be providing a range of **free** materials based on the *Let's Think in English* programme, covering **5 lessons: 19th century fiction, 20th century literary non-fiction, modern direct non-fiction, Romantic poetry and Shakespeare**. This is part of a wider range of support in place which will also include free materials produced in conjunction with **Professor Debra Myhill** and the *Grammar for Writing* team at the University of Exeter.

Working with King's College London we will also provide a programme of CPD meetings across England with a suite of additional *Let's Think in English* lessons and support, including demonstration lessons and advice on effective group work and encouraging higher-order thinking.

You can download a whole lesson's worth of free material at our web page below and try the *Let's Think in English* programme for yourself.

The screenshot shows a web page for 'LET'S THINK IN ENGLISH'. At the top, there's a large image of students in a classroom. Below it, the title 'LET'S THINK IN ENGLISH' is displayed in large, gold-colored letters. On the right side, there's a detailed lesson plan for 'The Bridge'.

Lesson title: Let's Think in English Lesson 1 : The Bridge

Reasoning pattern: frames of reference

Overview: This activity uses a short narrative to explore the characters' moral responsibility for a crime. It introduces the concept of a 'folk' story, then asks the students to consider the importance of characters' motives and what else is needed to develop the story into a short narrative. It also asks them to consider how the writer creates tension and suspense as they read fiction and to work out what is needed to transform one type of narrative into another. The lesson begins to establish that, when writing fiction, the writer takes every decision in order to interest and provide enjoyment for the reader.

Key terms: fabliau, environment/injunction, motive, characterisation, setting

Materials: The Bridge narrative, on paper or screen
Who was at blame? sheets – one per student
Powerpoint

Lesson plan:

Concrete preparation:

Social construction: individually, then in groups

Lesson content:

The Bridge

A woman lived with her husband in a town beside a river. One day, her husband went away for three months. While he was away, the woman took a lover, who lived across the bridge on the other side of the river. One day, while she was with her lover, her husband came to visit her. She left her lover and tried to cross the bridge. But now there was a soldier on the bridge. He stopped her and said, 'You must pay me one mark to cross the bridge. If you try to cross the bridge, I will shoot you.'

Her lover was in a boat. The woman told the boatman who needed to cross the river. The boatman said he would take her across the river if she paid him \$500. The woman said she didn't have that much money. The soldier said the added her lover to give her the money, but he refused.

The woman tried to cross the bridge. The soldier shot her dead.

There are five people in the story.
Who do you think was most to blame for the woman's death?
Who was least to blame?

Find out more:

www.edexcel.com/letsthink



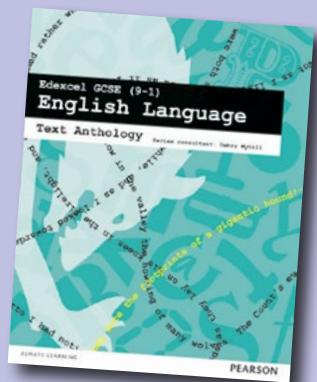
Published resources

In spring **2015**, we'll be launching a **brand new teaching and learning service** designed specifically for the new Edexcel GCSE (9-1) English Language specification. The course components incorporate both the **Grammar for Writing** and the **Let's Think in English** pedagogies, to help you improve learner outcomes for all of your students.

The resources follow on from the successful *Skills for Writing* KS3 series, designed to fully prepare learners of all ability for the challenges of the new GCSE 2015 curriculum.

The resources will comprise:

- ***ActiveLearn Digital Service**, powered by ActiveTeach, giving you full access to our interactive front-of-class teaching, planning and assessment service: a wealth of resources to support every extract in the Text Anthology.
- **Professional Development Pedagogy Training** delivered by experts to provide a deep understanding of the pedagogies and how best to embed them into your teaching.
- ***Text Anthology (printed)** - 100 fiction and non-fiction extracts carefully chosen to engage children.
- ***Revision Guide and Workbook** to support mock and final exam preparation.



*These published resources are not yet endorsed and will be subject to change

Find out more: www.pearsonschools.co.uk/edgcseenglangcg

Find out more:

www.edexcel.com/letsthink

U054b S14ENG022260C03



Person Ltd is committed
to reducing its impact on
the environment by using
responsibly sourced and
recycled paper.

