

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

A LEVEL

Summer Project



English Language Summer Project.

English is the language that you grew up with and you have probably become skilled at using it in many situations. If you have committed to English language at A level, then you have probably demonstrated that you are proficient at reading, writing, speaking and listening.

HOWEVER, if you think that A level English language is a simple follow on from GCSE THINK AGAIN. It is not!

English language is not a matter of writing stories and getting your grammar up to scratch. It is in effect a LANGUAGE SCIENCE. It is concerned with the analysis and evaluation of the application of language in a variety of contexts. If you got A* at GCSE there is no guarantee that you will get an A* at A level – GCSE gives you the bare basics. YOU WILL BE STUDYING CONCEPTUALISED INFORMATION at a THEORETICAL LEVEL. It is rigorous, academic and not for the coasters among you.

So... certain methods of study will be familiar to you from Science

- Collecting and examining data (experiments, collecting specimens)
- Describing, classifying and analysing using diagrams, measurements and calculations.
- Testing different ideas about how language works.

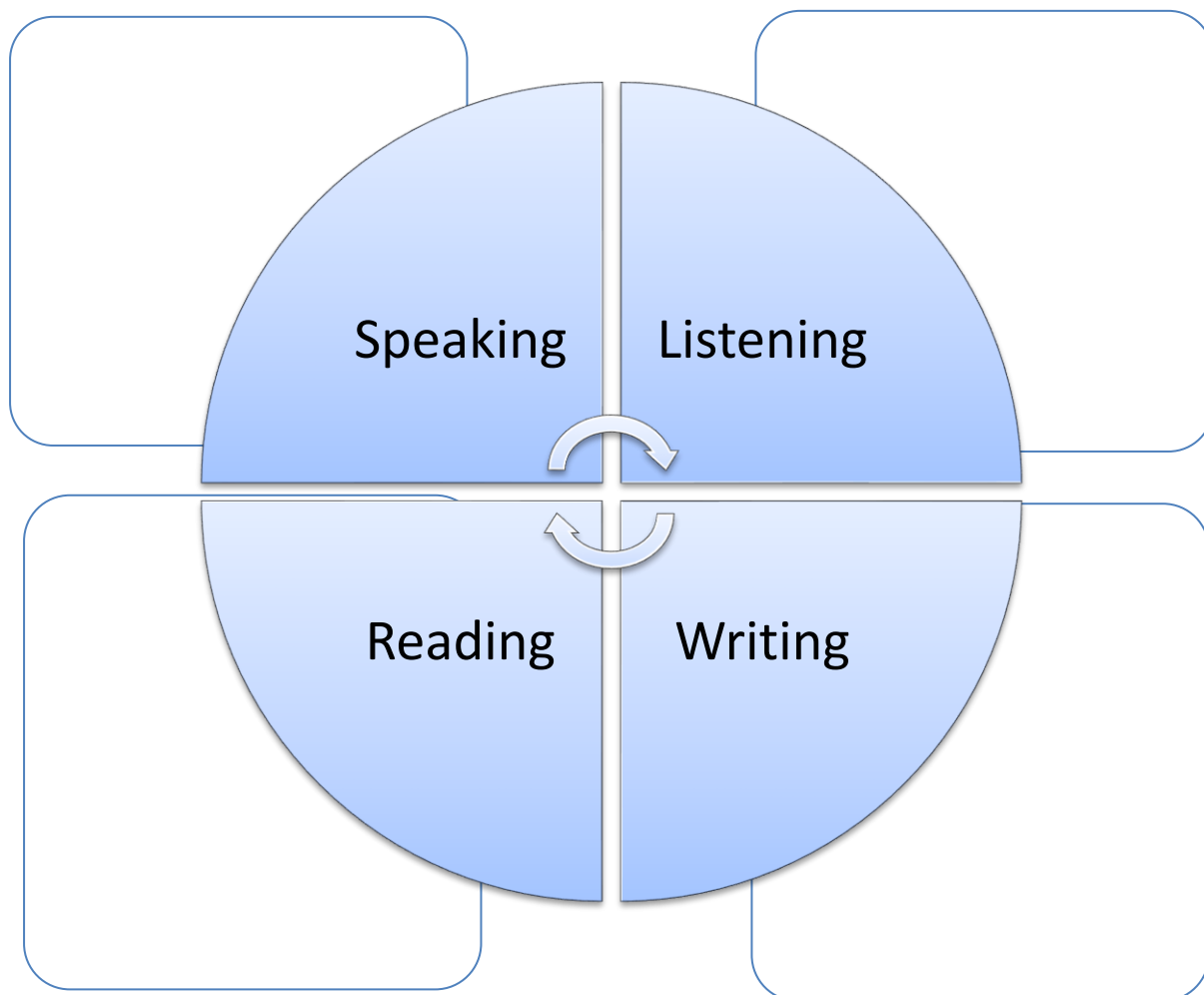
These activities are the basis of your English language study:

- Data can be found anywhere the spoken and or written word is used.
- You will learn to describe and classify language
- You will use new and sometimes esoteric, terminology
- You will explain, evaluate, analyse etc.

So to prepare you have a project folder to complete over the summer, which must be brought to your first English language Lesson in September – don't forget it or email it to me expecting me to print it off for you... I won't! You WILL be expected to talk through your work to me, a small group of students and ultimately present it to the whole class.

The project consists of **three activities: You will be expected to present your findings to the class in September.**

Activity 1: Consider the four linguistic activities of listening, speaking, reading and writing.



- a) In each quadrant, list as many examples you can of different kinds of language activity in which you participate in a typical week. Aim to include at least 6 different activities in each quadrant.
- b) Once you have listed them, classify them according to Form and Purpose -

Activity 2: Linguistic Terminology

List as many linguistic terms as you know already – if you look up new ones you will be expected to define and explain it to the class. The object is not to impress anyone with the longest list but to impress with your understanding of terms and their application.

Organise your list in **precise alphabetical order**. For example

A – apostrophe (possession and omission)

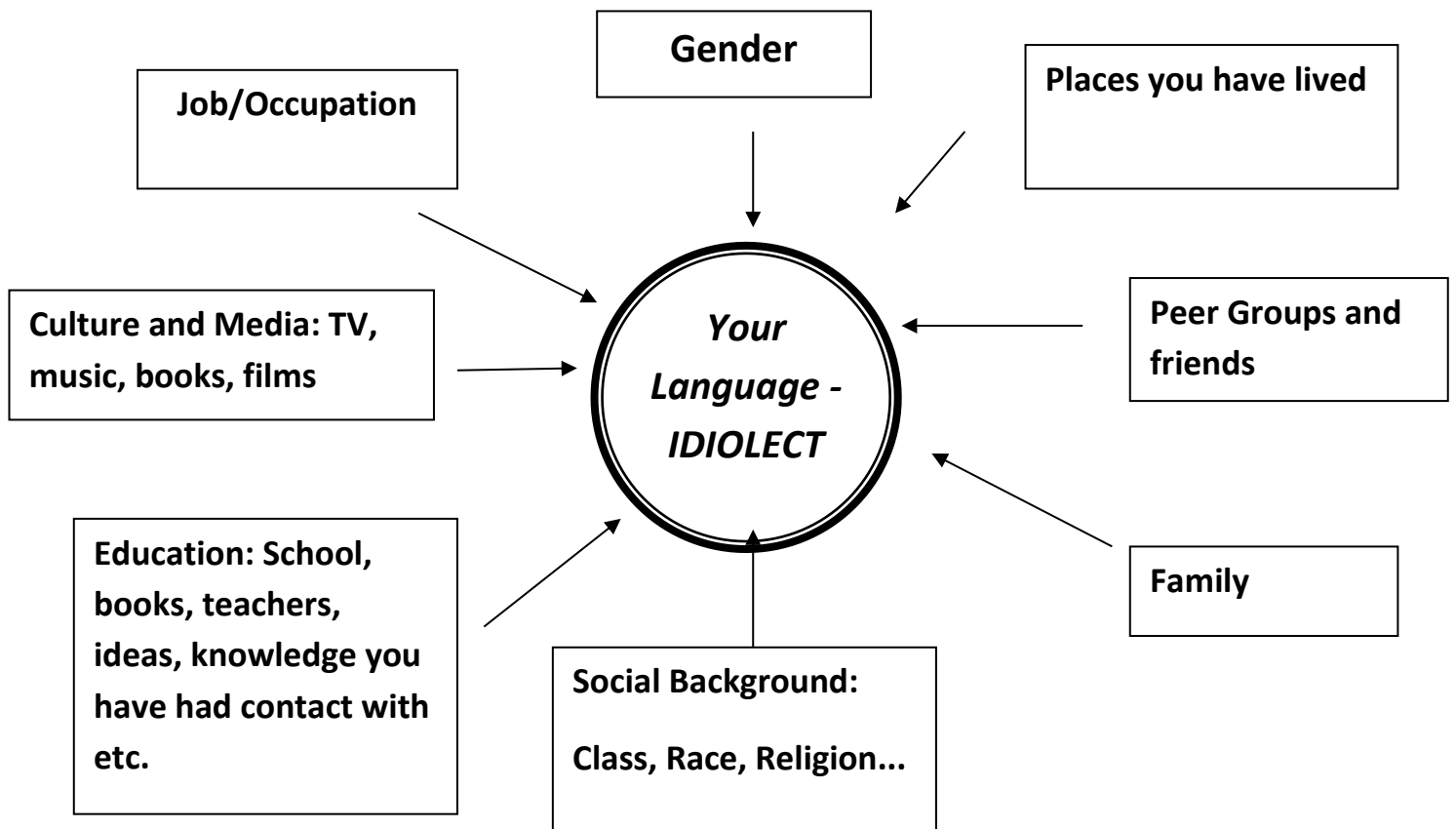
I - idiom

W – word

Activity 3: You and your Language – Idiolect (and Sociolect)

In your lessons in your non-school life, listen to different people speaking. You will rapidly become aware that we all have our own distinctive style of speech. So, what has influenced and shaped this idiolect, this linguistic fingerprint which each of us reveals the second we open our mouths or put pen to paper?

- a) Look at the diagram 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.



b) For each of the possible sources of influence try to suggest specific ways in which they have affected your personal language development.

As you consider each one think about how it might have influenced

Your accent

Your choice of words, phrases and slang

Your ideas about what is 'acceptable' or good English

You should also think about how the extent of each influence may change as you get older. Record your responses on the table

Source of Influence	Rank Order	Nature of Influence/Changing Influence
Your Family		
Places you have lived		
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		
Peer and friendship groups		
Social background – the nature of your social class and racial/religious background		
Employment – any influences from part-time jobs		