

Are you ready for the new curriculum?

Read On series consultant Natalie Packer discusses changes to the new Programme of Study for English, with guidance on what to expect – and how to prepare!



Welcome back to a new school year! And what an interesting one it will be, as it's all change for the National Curriculum. In July, the government announced details of its draft curriculum, including the new statutory Programmes of Study (PoS) which will be introduced from September 2014 for key stage 3, and September 2015 for key stage 4. The current English curriculum has now been disapplied, which means that schools have some flexibility to prepare for teaching the new one next year. Hence, this is a good time for teachers to try different ideas and resources to find out what works best to meet the needs of their students!

So what changes can we expect from the new English curriculum for KS3 and how can schools start preparing?

Firstly, the new PoS is surprisingly short. There are no longer references to 'key concepts' or 'key processes'. Instead, there is a list of subject content which is based heavily on knowledge.

Secondly, in addition to 'Reading', 'Writing' and 'Spoken English' (formerly known as 'Speaking and Listening'!), there is now an additional area: 'Grammar and Vocabulary'. Pupils will be taught knowledge of spoken and written grammar and will study the impact of grammatical features of texts.



Students will be expected to read and understand increasingly challenging and high-quality texts, with the focus on fiction remaining. This will include two Shakespeare plays in each key stage and 'seminal world literature' as well as a range of short stories, poems and plays.

Teachers looking to refresh their resources to meet these new requirements and help students continue to develop a love of reading should take a look at Collins Readers. This series of popular fiction for KS3 and KS4 includes award-winning contemporary novels, such as Derek Landy's [Skulduggery Pleasant](#), as well as timeless classics like Tolkien's [The Hobbit](#). The series can also support students in studying specific authors, as required in the new PoS; for example, Michael Morpurgo's [War Horse](#) and [Alone on a Wide Wide Sea](#) both feature. Each high-quality title even comes with a free Scheme of Work and lesson plans to support their use in the classroom.

Since there are no recommended non-fiction texts listed in the new PoS, teachers may find the non-fiction texts in Collins Read On a great starting point, particularly for lower ability pupils. The series aims to re-motivate reluctant readers through engaging topics and texts which provide the right level of challenge. Non-fiction titles include [Spies](#) by Mike Gould and [The Ice Man](#) by Alan Parkinson. In addition, Read On includes a range of gripping fiction written by well-known teen authors, including [Lone Wolf](#) by Alan Gibbons and [Liam](#) by Benjamin Zephaniah. The accompanying [Teacher Guide](#) provides assessment support and session plans that can be used for guided group reading.

If you would like to find out further details about the new English curriculum, including the Programmes of Study, take a look [here](#).

Natalie Packer is an Independent Educational Consultant who works with primary, secondary and special schools across the country. She has a particular interest in supporting schools to develop their SEN provision and leadership and to develop outstanding teaching. She has previously been a headteacher, SENCO, local authority adviser and National Strategies SEN adviser. Natalie is one of the Series Editors of the Collins Read On Series.