Year 8 Curriculum Overview 2022-23

Subject	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
	Voices of a Generation: Gothic Fiction (reading)	Voices of a Generation: Gothic Texts (writing)	Voices of a Generation: Romeo and Juliet (SL)	Voices of a Generation: Romeo and Juliet (reading)	Voices of a Generation: Places (reading)	Voices of a Generation: Travel (writing)
English	This unit develops previous analytical work with a focus on evaluating craft. Students will be able to argue for or against a statement, using specific details and evidence to support ideas. This is a challenging skill and requires students to synthesize previous work on crafting arguments and analysing key methods. Exploring the conventions of gothic texts will allow a greater understanding of key themes in GCSE literature texts ACC and Macbeth. Students will enrich their understanding of literature by reading and exploring great examples of gothic texts, composed by	This writing unit will build on previous work only this time students will craft their own gothic text. There should be a focus on establishing atmosphere and description of place through creating imagery through methods such as symbolism. Using an image stimulus, students will learn how to deconstruct and zoom in on key details to inform writing. Here, students have the opportunity to become great gothic writers. Core knowledge include the exploration of hooks and atmosphere.	This unit develops the year 7 unit exploring William Shakespeare- the voice of Renaissance literature, however this time focusing on the study of a whole play. This will support students when they later study 'Macbeth' at GCSE. Through active approaches students will explore the writer's craft and the relevance of key themes. There will be continued work on how to access and deconstruct language. Students will make links between ideas in the play and the relevance today, thus recognising the importance of Shakespeare's plays.	This unit develops the year 7 unit exploring William Shakespeare- the voice of Renaissance literature, however this time focusing on the study of a whole play. This will support students when they later study 'Macbeth' at GCSE. Through active approaches students will explore the writer's craft and the relevance of key themes. There will be continued work on how to access and deconstruct language. Students will make links between ideas in the play and the relevance of Shakespeare's plays. Students will also have the	This unit develops the exploration of place through key reading skills. Students will explore a range of fiction and non-fiction, comparing, which is a challenging skill, the presentation of ideas, and methods. Continuing with our 'Voices of a Generation' vision, this unit gives students an opportunity to explore the history of Southampton and how people have written about our home town. This immersive unit allows students to identify viewpoints, perspectives and methods. Core knowledge includes the exploration of viewpoints and perspectives.	This unit teaches students how to craft engaging articles – a key form needed at GCSE. Students will develop their understanding of place but exploring stories of survival as a stimulus for their own articles about death defying feats. There will be a focus on writing in the correct form and using language in a hyperbolic way to engage readers. Students will become journalists who develop their own voice as writers, focusing on how different tones can be created through language and structural choices. Core knowledge includes conventions of non- fiction writing. Core skills include

	writers who helped shaped the genre. Core knowledge includes the exploration of the genre and the importance of critiquing texts. Core skills include evaluating craft and content.	Core skills includes upgrading vocabulary and varying sentence forms and openings.	Students will also have the opportunity to develop their Spoken Language skills by taking part in class debates – all designed to empower them as public speakers. Core knowledge includes the presentation of themes and characters. Core skills include articulating ideas, exploring methods and impact on audiences.	opportunity to develop their Spoken Language skills by taking part in class debates – all designed to empower them as public speakers. Core knowledge includes the presentation of themes and characters. Core skills include articulating ideas, exploring methods and impact on audiences.	Core skills include comparing ideas and methods.	writing for specific audiences and paragraphing.
Maths	Number - 4 operations with positive and negative numbers, multiples, factors, primes, HCF, LCM, prime factor decomposition, squares, roots and cubes Rounding/index laws - rounding to varying degrees of accuracy, powers of 10, laws of indices for positive powers and power of zero	Expressions and equations - simplifying expressions, substitution, function machines, solving more complex 1 and 2 step equations, equations with unknowns on both sides, form and solve equations, expanding and factorising expressions, expanding double brackets and factorising quadratics.	Graphs - coordinates in all 4 quadrants, midpoints, gradient, straight line graphs, y = mx + c, parallel and perpendicular lines, horizontal/vertical line graphs, quadratic graphs, reciprocal graphs and exponential graphs Lines/Angles - constructing triangles, recap angle rules from Y7, angles in parallel	Fractions - recap fractions from Y7, FDP conversion, write a number as a fraction of another, 4 operations with mixed number fractions Percentages (1) - percentage of amounts, percentage increase/decrease, percentage change Probability - recap basic probability from Y7, relative frequency, sample space diagrams,	Percentages (2) - percentage multipliers, simple/compound interest, reverse percentage Construction/Loci - perpendicular bisector, perpendicular from a point on the line and from a point to the line, angle bisector, loci, bearings and scale drawings Vectors - graphical vectors, column	Real life graphs - conversion graphs, distance-time graphs, line graphs, time-series graphs and speed-time graphs Decimals - rounding, 4 operations, ordering both positive and negative decimals using inequality symbols. Ratio - recap ratio from Y7 and problem solving ratios including FDP

- rec Y7, 1 circ circ circ shap surfe	cap area from naming parts of cles, area and cumference of cles, recap 3D apes from Y7 and face area of a inder	Transformations - translations using vector notation, reflections, rotations, enlargements, describing transformations, enlargements with fractional and negative scale factors, volume and area scale factor.	lines, interior and exterior angles of a polygon, finding angles by forming and solving equations.	Venn diagrams and probability trees.	vectors, 4 operation with column vectors Compound measures - SDT, DMV and PFA	Pythagoras - discover Pythagoras Theorem, calculate the hypotenuse, calculate the short side, apply Pythagoras to worded problems
Science Add Add Cha will at th rela food web can biod The the inte orga Science at w the one the and this food web can biod The the inte orga at w the one the and this food web can biod The the one the and the the and the and the and the and the and the and the and the and the and the and the and the and the and the and the the and the and the and the and and the and and the and the and the and the and and and and and and and and	aptations - In this apter, students begin by looking the feeding ationships within od chains and bs, and how this in result in accumulation. by will then study erdependence of ganisms by looking what happens to population of e organism when e population of other is changed; is studied within od web diagrams, d graphically bugh predator- ey interactions. dents will then k in detail at the aptations of a mber of organisms	Electricity and Magnetism Part 1 - This chapter introduces students to electric fields, current, and magnetism. Students will look at how to build simple circuits and take measurements of current and potential difference. Students will study electromagnets and plan how to investigate the shape of magnetic fields. Throughout the chapter, students will develop their mathematical skills as they learn how to change the subject in an equation. Electricity and Magnetism Part 2 - In	Cells Part 2 - In this chapter, students will learn how the development of microscopes has helped us to understand cells and how specialised plant cells – phloem and xylem – are adapted to transport materials around a plant. They will investigate how the body responds to the increased demands for energy during exercise and the factors that affect the rate of diffusion. Finally, they will find out about prokaryotic cells and the process of active transport. Cell Systems - In this chapter, students will revisit the hierarchical nature of the levels of	Fertilisation and Implantation - In this chapter, students will compare sexual reproduction in plants and animals. They will look at pregnancy prevention using contraception before interpreting menstrual cycle diagrams. They will investigate factors that affect seed dispersal and the steps that should be taken to collect valid data. Finally, they will discover how different alleles affect which characteristic is most likely to be displayed in an organism's offspring and how some organisms reproduce asexually. The Earth - In this chapter students	Motion and Pressure - This chapter introduces students to speed, pressure, and turning forces. Students will look at how motion can be described using distance-time graphs. They will be introduced to pressure in gases, in liquids, and on solids. Students will also study situations in which a force has a turning effect. Students will have the opportunity to develop their mathematical skills by using equations to calculate speed and pressure. Forces and Motion Part 2 - This chapter applies concepts students have learnt at KS3, such as balanced and	Particle Model and state changes Part 2 - This chapter covers the particle model and state changes that students will have encountered before. The chapter begins with the particle model and then moves onto substances, states of matter, energy changes during state changes, and finally limitations of the model. This chapter also covers sublimation – often forgotten about state change, as well as foams and aerosols. This topic will not only be important for GCSE chemistry, but GCSE physics as well, when students go on to study temperature, density, state

C S C C C C C C C C C C C C C C C C C C	be successful competitors and urvive in harsh and changing environments. nheritance - In this chapter, students will look at the variation in characteristics in organisms within a pecies and determine whether hese are a result of nherited variation, environmental variation, or both. 'hey will categorise characteristics as howing discontinuous or continuous variation and will plot this on appropriate graphs. Students will then tudy how characteristics are nherited through chromosomes, genes and DNA. The inal section in the chapter looks at evolution through he process of natural selection, why some organisms pecome extinct, and the role gene panks can play in rying to prevent extinction.	this chapter, students revisit ideas from Year 8 with more detail. Applications of phenomena, such as static electricity, link abstract concepts to observable phenomena. Students will cover new uses of series and parallel circuits and explore why some materials are magnetic and others aren't. Heavy use is made of models throughout. The chapter then introduces some big new ideas: inducing p.d. and the generator. Students will know that you can induce a magnetic field around a wire by passing current through it, but not that you can induce a p.d. across a wire or a current through a loop by moving it past a magnet.	organisation within an organism. They will look at the role of enzymes in the digestive system and how they can be used commercially in washing detergents. They will discover the main features of exchange surfaces and their function in multicellular organisms, focusing on the alveoli in the lungs, villi in the intestines, and the structure of a leaf. Finally, they will study transport systems in both animals and plants by looking at the circulatory system and the transpiration stream.	learn about the composition of the Earth and its atmosphere. They are reintroduced to three different types of rocks, sedimentary, igneous, and metamorphic rocks, and describe how they are made, their properties and uses, and how their properties make them suitable for their uses. The rock cycle and the carbon cycle are explored, allowing students to consider how materials are recycled naturally. Students also study the greenhouse effect, global heating, and climate change, and explore how to look after and protect the Earth by preventing climate change and preserving our natural resources by recycling. Space - This chapter introduces students to some of the celestial objects that they can see in the night sky as well as other objects in the Universe. They gain an understanding of	unbalanced forces, to more challenging situations, such as a skydiver. In KS3, students have begun to quantify motion and physical properties, such as the stiffness of a spring, and have calculated speed and weight. This chapter extends quantification to resultant force and acceleration. Distance-time graphs are reviewed and speed-time graphs are introduced. Instantaneous speeds and accelerations are calculated from tangents.	changes, and gas pressure. Separation Techniques - In this chapter students learn about pure substances and mixtures, how to determine if a substance is pure, and the differences between the terms solute, solvent, solution, and solubility. They compare mixtures and compounds and learn about different ways to separate the substances in a mixture and when each is appropriate, including filtration, evaporation, distillation, and chromatography. Students develop their skills of representing and analysing data by plotting solubility data and using this to describe how solubility changes with temperature.

Variation and		how the planets in	
Natural selection - In		our Solar System	
this chapter,		formed. Students will	
students will discover		learn why seasonal	
why many		changes occur in	
characteristics are		the UK and other	
affected by both		regions on Earth.	
the environment		Students will learn	
and inheritance		about the apparent motion of celestial	
before looking at		objects and apply	
the different types of		this knowledge to	
adaptations animals		explain the phases	
have that increase		of the Moon and	
their chances of		eclipses.	
survival and			
reproduction. They			
will investigate			
organism distribution			
along a transect			
and study how			
antibiotic-resistant			
bacteria evolve as a			
result of natural			
selection. Finally,			
they will look at the			
techniques scientists			
are using to			
maintain			
biodiversity, along			
with the abiotic and			
biotic factors that			
affect an organism			
living in an			
ecosystem.			

History	Empire : A Force for Good? What was the British Empire? How was the Empire Ruled? Slavery	Empire: A Force for Good? Ending of slavery India	Empire: A Force for Good? Australia What did the Empire do for Britain and the Empire itself?	Was Britain Great? The Industrial Revolution How did Britain change? Who were the businessmen of the Industrial Revolution? Children of the Industrial Revolution	Was Britain Great? The Industrial Revolution Factory Reformers Life in a workhouse Why were the people revolting? Women and the Vote	Black Americans of the USA USA Civil War and the Ending of Slavery Era of Reconstruction Progress by 1930 Impact of WW2 The Murder of Emmett Till Little Rock Martin Luther King Malcom X Progress by the End of the 20 th Century
Geography	Investigating India In this unit, students will undertake an in depth study of the Indian city of Mumbai, considering the challenges Mumbai faces and how urbanisation is managed.	Kenya Building on Year 7 work on tourism and ideas of development touched on in the first unit of Year 8, students investigate the more challenging concept of post- colonial Africa and the future for Kenya.	Food and Farming Global patterns of development Globalisation - opportunity to study a global issue of food and food production.	Locating Industry Linking to the previous unit through key concepts this unit also links to the Year 8 History unit, looking at Industrial Revolution factory conditions. Students again consider the impact of their actions, this time through globalisation of the clothing industry.	Rivers and flooding Students explore the development of the physical river system, linking back to the processes studied in Year 7. They look at the topical issue of flooding, linking it to climate change. Students use their enquiry skills to conduct fieldwork in a river environment.	

RE	Islam Muslim beliefs and teachings – Tawhid, jihad, sacred, 5 Pillars, ummah Expressions of belief and worship – festivals, pilgrimage		Sikhism Sikh beliefs and teachings – worship, sacred text Expressions of belief and worship - festivals		Stewardship Creation stories Animal rights Environmental issues	
Art Graphics (on rotation each term)						
Art (on rotation each term)	illustration. Investigate - Work of E	gn and use of colour. ic and print design and fugene Seguy, M C Esch g techniques, how to cre	ner and Zentangle	Applying the visual ele Printing and Clay work Processes and technic Developing ideas and References: British Mus ceramicists - Grayson	< ques - I Planning seum for historical refere	ences, Modern
Computer Science	Understanding Computers Students will know What different computer hardware is. How computers process information (binary). Students will research some future developments in Computing.	Python Turtle Students will understand key programming concepts such as variables, sequencing, selection and iteration	Website design Students will understar websites and different Students will then plan website and then dev feedback	website features.	Databases Students will learn the benefits of databases, how to search them and then create their own for a given purpose.	Image editing Students will learn how to edit images using a variety of skills such as layers, deform and colour balance Students will create a variety of images such as a DVD cover

Dance	Horror Students will perform teacher-taught and own choreographed movement which reflects the 'horror' genre stimuluses 'Thriller' by Michael Jackson and 'Ghost Dances' by Christopher Bruce	Stimulus (Winter theme) To understand how different stimuli can be used to choreograph Dance To understand motif development through exploration of action, space, dynamics and relationships To be able to explore with different stimuli (picture,poem, object, music) to choreograph own movement To perform choreographed dance which has a clear link to chosen stimuli	Anti-bullying using 'Swansong' by Christopher Bruce Students will explore how the professional work 'Swansong' links to the theme of bullying and learn how to use a professional dance work as a stimulus to gain and explore movement ideas.	Bollywood & Bhangra Students will learn about genres of Bollywood & Bhangra, their origins in classical Indian dance and be able to recognise the key stylistic characteristics	Chance Technique To understand the principles behind chance choreography. To understand the concept of sequence and structure within choreography. To analyse the work of Merce Cunningham and the chance technique To improve their technical skills and extend the range of movements they are able to perform. To create dance sequences based on chance methods.	Contact Duets To introduce the first stages of contact work-support, non weight bearing & counterweight. To understand the importance of trust within support work To have a basic knowledge and understanding of how characterisation can be used within dance and be able to demonstrate this with confidence To develop a range of interpersonal skills, trust and rapport between pupils within the group To develop physical strength and techniques required to bear weight, explore movement through touch whilst maintaining responsibility for the safety of others.
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Physical TheatreNaturalisticLearn and practise the Physical Theatre techniques used in 'Poor Theatre' improving use of space and physicality in drama.Students will develop the skills to useStudents will develop the skills to useStudents will develop the skills to useMime Concrete . The Body PropWime touseDramaMime . The Body PropJump Role . Neutral Masks	ScriptsStudents will about the the main features of a textStudents will about the the musical t dramatic exploration. This will include organising an presenting la group scene understandir space, chard body langue	I learn hemes in throughIn this unit, students will learn about the conventions of Greek Theatre. They will explore a scripted extract from arge es with ing of racter, age andStudents will work from a choice of stimuli to create and scripted extract from 'Oedipus the King' by Sophocles through improvisation and mime, Learn Chorus Skills and explore the concept of reported tragedies. In an ancient and modern contextStudents will work from a choice of stimuli to create and script an ensemble performance that includes• Chorus Work • Naturalistic Scenes • The use of Physical Theatre to present a concept
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	Super Hero Character			Mini Mirror			
	-	cts can be depicted fro	om different angles in	2D/3D Drawing			
	Engineering drawings			Using different types of material			
Design & Technology (on rotation each term)				Using different types of drawing to show detailed features of how a product is assembled			
Food Technology (on rotation each term)	range of International	l dishes including Calzo	ne, Bangers and Mass a	Ind Risotto. They will als	quipment used in a kitch so learn about macronut ng a range of equipmer	trients, the importance	
	My town and Paris	Food, drink and celebrations	Sports and healthy living	Holidays	Films and TV programmes	End of year Revision General Revision of	
	What my town is like Places in town	Meals of the day	Sports & opinions	Holiday preferences (present tense)	Films	KS3 topics and grammar structures:	
	Saying what you can	Food and drink	Keeping fit and	Destinations	TV programmes	- describing	
	do in the local area Weather	preferences Past family	lifestyle Saying if an activity is	Account of a past holiday	Film critique Opinions to describe	characters - physical descriptions and	
French	Description of the	celebration/ meal	healthy or not	Accommodation	emotional impact of	characters traits	
nenen	pros and cons of where you live and	What you wear for a	Naming parts of the	Holiday transport Holiday activities	cinematic experience	- describing how people get on with	
	comparing with other	party / celebration	body and if something hurts	Future holidays	Arranging to go out to see a film/play	each other	
	countries /		Linking what you did			- describing a film /	
	geographical features		with potential health			summary of the plot / opinions	
	Where you would like		issues				
	to live with reasons						

	Folk Music of the	The Music of Africa	Chords in Pop	Classical Expression	12 Bar Blues	Band Camp 2
Music	British Isles Pupils will explore folk music from the British Isles, identifying key instruments associated with each folk tradition/ country and how they sound (Penny Whistle, Bagpipes, Harp, Mandolin, etc). Pupils will explore the context in which this music is written and performed and how its role in day to day life differs between countries. Pupils will learn how to play the penny whistle, developing performance skills in relation to wind instruments. They will explore the importance of breath-control in communicating dynamics and changes in pitch, as well as appropriate finger positioning and posture. Pupils will use an Irish folk tune called 'Rattlin' Bog' as a focus for rehearsal and performance. This is the first time pupils will be introduced the skills needed for	In this unit pupils will explore the music of Africa, the context in which it is performed and the role it plays in day-to-day life. Pupils will also identify a range of African instruments and genre-specific musical devices through a variety of listening tasks and performance activities. In this unit pupils will further develop skills relating to both tuned and untuned percussion. In particular they will focus on the tuned Balafon and on the un-tuned Djembe. Pupils will learn how to use a variety of playing techniques on the Djembe, allowing them to alter tone and produce the range of sounds required to give a convincing performance. Pupils will continue to develop their arranging skills and will learn how to conduct an ensemble using 'musical gestures' and 'audible	In this unit, pupils will learn to identify the notes of a chord from informal chord symbols and guitar frames. They will learn how to sound out major & minor triads, seventh chords and 'slash- chords', and will apply this knowledge to rehearsal and performance settings. Pupils will further develop their piano & keyboard skills, focussing on the development of limb-independence and coordination. Pupils will also further develop their listening skills and aural perception through a variety of listening tasks.	Pupils will explore the romantic period and its impact on composers' use of dynamic contrast and articulation to create 'mood'. They will be introduced to a variety of performance directions and will learn their English translation before interpreting their meaning on the piano. Pupils will also explore key composers and seminal pieces associated with this period of music. Pupils will continue to develop their keyboard/ piano skills, building upon independence and coordination developed in the last unit. The focus for this half term will be playing a melody and an accompaniment together, with greater rhythmic challenge in each part.	In this unit pupils will examine the development of blues music; from its African origins through to its influence on American Rock n' Roll. Through a variety of performance, improvisation and listening tasks pupils will explore the musical devices, instrumentation and influential musicians associated with the style. Pupils will further develop their improvisation skills in a variety of performance settings, with melodic improvisation being a key focus of the unit. They will continue to refine their performance skills on a variety of instruments including keys, guitar, bass guitar and drum kit. Pupils will continue to develop their aural perception through the study of the 12 bar blues chord pattern.	Pupils will consolidate the musical concepts first introduced in both the Band Camp 1 and Chords in Pop units. They will further develop their understanding of informal western notation to learn a pop or rock song of their choice, with the aim of performing to a small audience at the end of the unit. As well as further developing a variety of instrument- specific performance techniques, pupils will develop the skills needed for effective rehearsal. They will be required to set realistic rehearsal objectives and to carefully structure their rehearsals to ensure these are met. At the end of each rehearsal, pupils will review and evaluate their success and identify areas for further development. They will then use these evaluations to set rehearsal objectives in the following

	melodic composition.	signals'. Rhythmic improvisation.				lesson. The objects they set will relate to sense of style, ensemble skills, performance skills and technical ability.
PE	Topic overview: Selecting and applying skills Head: To be able to identify a range of problems and explain their impact. Heart: Giving support and encouragement to help enhance someone else's performance. Hands: selecting and applying a range of skills in a range of competitive and recreational activities.	Topic overview: Rules and regulations Head: understanding how rules and regulations can affect the development of an activity. Heart: developing their sportsmanship within an activity, showing respect for the rules and others. Hands: demonstrating following the rules and regulations of the game, playing fairly and	Topic overview: Training methods Head: Understanding what basic training methods are and how they link a range of sports. Heart: to be consistently hard working and resilient in accepting new challenges Hands: Demonstrate different types of training methods. Examples of some of the sports and activities:	Topic overview: Leading and officiating Head: To understand how to officiate different activities. Heart: Take on different roles within leading an activity such as organising the team/ equipment. Hands: Officiate others in a sporting activity by using hand signals/ scoring a game. Examples of some of the sports and	Topic overview: Long term effects of exercise on the body Head: Linking exercise intensity to sporting activities. Heart: Understanding that sports require different training zones. Hands: Demonstrate a change in exercise intensity Examples of some of the sports and activities:	Topic overview: Analyse strengths and weaknesses in performance Head: reflecting on strengths and weaknesses. Heart: Showing resilience and effort to achieve PB. Hands: Refining technique and competing Examples of some of the sports and activities: • individual and team games

	Examples of some of the sports and activities: • individual and team games (netball, badminton and gymnastics). • health related activities	responding to the umpires/ referees. Examples of some of the sports and activities: individual and team games (cricket, rugby and handball). health related activities	 individual and team games (trampolining, football and alternative games). health related activities 	activities: • individual and team games (basketball, table tennis and alternative games).	 individual and team games (short tennis, ultimate frisbee and rounders). health related activities 	(athletics, trampolining and tennis). • health related activities
PSHE	Healthy Me Students will explore healthy living, and how they can take care of themselves - particularly their mental health. Students will analyse what contributes to poor mental health, and develop an understanding of strategies to tackle this	Exploring Employment Students will begin to look at future employment opportunities, and develop an understanding of the employment process. They will analyse skills needed for different employment avenues, and apply this to mock interviews	Developing Relationships Students will look at how relationships can develop as they grow older, and how they can be aware of the dangers of peer pressure, conflict, and consent. Students will identify strategies to maintain positive and healthy relationships	Understanding Finance Students will explore financial institutes such as banks, tax, and insurance. Students will understand how to they can open a bank in the future, how and why they would pay tax and insurance, and how to be financially savvy	Media and Influences Students will explore the internet and social media, and understand how they interact in this environment. Students will understand the grey areas of the internet, and how they should conduct themselves online.	Safety in the community Students will look at lawfulness and legality in the general public. They will explore crime and law, in particular with discrimination, prejudice, and extremism Students will explore what impacts these have on our local and greater communities.

Myself and others	Food, drink and celebrations	Sports and healthy living	Holidays	Films and TV programmes	End of year Revision General Revision of
Spanish Descriptions of self and others Talking about friendships Family relations; Superheroes Talking about inspirational people	Meals of the day Food and drink preferences Past family celebration/ meal What you wear for a party / celebration	Sports & opinions Keeping fit and lifestyle Saying if an activity is healthy or not Naming parts of the body and if something hurts Linking what you did with potential health issues	Holiday preferences (present tense) Destinations Account of a past holiday Accommodation Holiday transport Holiday activities Future holidays	Films TV programmes Film critique Opinions to describe emotional impact of cinematic experience Arranging to go out to see a film/play	KS3 topics and grammar structures: - describing characters - physical descriptions and characters traits - describing how