

Pre Post 16 Induction Task.

A-Level English Language.

In preparation for starting your A-Level English Language in September here are some tasks to keep your mind active and busy. A big part of the course is the creative writing and we would like you to have a go at some fiction and non fiction tasks and compile a small portfolio of work to bring along to your first lesson. I have also included some pod casts on fascinating aspects of language like where the phrase piggybacking comes from!

Task 1: Non Fiction: Write a non fiction piece (review, blog, magazine article, autobiography) on something you have done or used to alleviate the boredom of 'lockdown', this could be, social media, photography, computer games, podcasts, films, computer games, blogs. It could even be a hitherto, unacknowledged passion in cooking, wildlife, film making, drawing or growing vegetables!

Task 2: Fiction: Write an opening to a genre based novel/novella – e.g science fiction, romance, historical, young adult, fantasy, horror. Do some reading to help inform your choice. Now is a great time to catch up on all those books you have been reading to read.

Listen to programmes about words and language

Word of Mouth – presented by Michael Rosen on Radio 4 is great. The programme on lying is great and acts as an introduction to forensic linguistics.

Lying Word of Mouth

Michael Rosen and Dr Laura Wright talk to Professor Dawn Archer about her work in evaluating deception: is it possible to tell when someone might be lying and what are the clues?

1. The Vocal Fries

A newer podcast, *The Vocal Fries* has two female hosts talking about language—and it takes its name from a speaking condition many unfairly accuse female podcast hosts of having. With this tongue-in-cheek spirit, many *Vocal Fries* episodes cover issues of gender in language as well as other very contemporary topics like trans language and regional dialects on the US-Mexico border.
Start with this episode: “Uppity Women” (July 15, 2017)

2. The Allusionist

The Allusionist is hosted by Helen Zaltzman, a hilarious British podcasting goddess whose voice is the embodiment of a warm, fuzzy, patterned cardigan. This is the perfect introduction to all other language podcasts: Zaltzman selects a focused topic in each 20-ish minute episode and traces the word's history and traditions using humor and an excellent storytelling arc.
Start with this episode: “Word of the Day” (May 1, 2016)

3. Lexicon Valley

Often times, an actor on your favorite series is replaced and it's never the same. (Cough, Becky on *Roseanne*, cough.) On *Lexicon Valley*, Slate's long-running linguistics podcast, they experienced that same actor shift (in this case, host shift). The show has been quite different but equally great in its two incarnations: In earlier episodes, beginning in 2012, the show was hosted by the curmudgeonly and often-bickering John Garfield and Mike Vulolo, who often focused on endearingly old-timey issues (old NYC expressions, hobos, Woody Guthrie). Since 2016, the show has been hosted by popular linguistics professor John McWhorter, who takes on slightly more controversial issues—from racialized ways of speaking to challenging Strunk & White's legacy.
Start with these episodes:

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- With John H. McWhorter: “[Why Do People in Old Movies Talk Like That](#)” (October 18, 2016)
- With Bob Garfield and Mike Vuolo: “[So You Just Got Eighty-Sixed From a Bar. Why That Number?](#)” (December 14, 2015)

3. 6 Minute Grammar

What is it with grammar podcasts and minimalist *utilitarianism*? Much like *Grammar Girl*, this podcast presents super-quick episodes focused on specific grammar topics, like tenses and contrast devices. The charming British hosts switch off between episodes, so if you’re not into just *one* person correcting your grammar, give *6 Minute Grammar* a try.

4. A Way With Words

A Way With Words has been a weekly radio show since 1998, and it’s got language cred in spades. Speaking of “in spades”: much of this podcast is focused on slang, sayings, and common expression origins. It also features language news, quizzes, and the sort of banter between its cohosts that 20 years of broadcasting together provides.

Start with this episode: “[Bun in the Oven](#)” (February 5, 2018)

5. Animalogy

You’ve got to admire *Animalogy*’s sole dedication to animal-related words. Host Colleen Patrick-Goudreau shows the true meaning of words you *think* have to do with animals (*piggyback*) and words you had no idea were of critter origin (*berserk*). Check the website’s fine print, and you’ll find that her podcast may be a promotion for her vegan lifestyle brand—but hey, free advertising is a price we’re willing to pay for more linguistic knowledge.

Start with this episode: “[Ingrained: A Crush of Color](#)” (March 18, 2017)