



**INTERNATIONAL  
CHRISTIAN  
SCHOOL**

# **English Language Arts Department Handbook**

**Academic Year: 2025-2026**

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## 1. Introduction

Welcome to the High School English Language Arts Department at ICS. This Subject Handbook is designed to provide an overview of the High School English Language Arts Department's policies, procedures, and curriculum. It serves as a guide for teachers, students, and parents to ensure a cohesive and effective learning environment.

## 2. Department Vision and Mission

### **Vision:**

Our vision for the English Language Arts Department at International School is to instill within all students a life-long love of reading and writing, an appreciation for the stories unique to different places and cultures, and an understanding of the power of language in a world created by God.

### **Mission:**

The English Language Arts Program enables students to approach a wide variety of fiction and nonfiction texts analytically, creatively, and critically from a Biblical perspective. By engaging with significant works of literature and increasingly complex ideas, students will develop an awareness of their own values, beliefs, and perspectives and those of others from a wider society, past and present. Students will be trained to listen, read attentively and to develop their own writing, speaking responsibly and honorably in the service of God and others.

### 3. ICS Teaching & Learning Philosophy

#### ICS Standards

ICS has a standards-based approach to education. This means we have clear and objective targets (standards) for learning in every subject, at every grade level. In the liberal arts (Math, Science and the Humanities) we emphasise the importance of knowledge, which is the basis for much of what we call 'skills'. In the creative arts (Music, Art and Drama) we emphasise the quality of both technique and interpretation. In Physical Education and Health we develop standards of physical capacity and skill.

Assessing learning of these standards is achieved by the use of proficiency rubrics, which clearly delineate a continuum from 'below standard' to 'approaching standard' to 'meeting standard' to 'exceeding standard'. Both formative and summative assessments are appropriate to the subject-specific standards. Theology is the 'Queen of the Sciences', and so the Bible has the pre-eminent place in our curriculum, training students in a Biblical worldview and understanding of the 'whole counsel of God'.

#### ICS Teaching & Learning Principles

- The Bible is our final authority in all matters of faith and conduct
- We use evidence-based practice founded on good cognitive science
- Optimal learning is knowledge-based and teacher-directed
- The teaching cycle: explicit instruction, modelling, practice, feedback
- The essence of a liberal arts education is deep reading, thinking, writing and discussion, in pursuit of goodness, truth and beauty.
- We prioritise the known benefits of physical reading and handwriting
- We prepare students to operate effectively in a dual-modal society: departmental handbooks outline where digital technology is effective in enhancing learning, and our curriculum policy details education in digital literacy
- ICS partners with parents in mitigating the harms associated with screen-based childhood and learning, including our policies on homework and device-use

#### Assessment

**Formative assessment** refers to a variety of methods teachers use to gather evidence of students' academic progress over time. Formative feedback to students aims to help students understand what to aim for and how to achieve that.

**Summative assessments** are high-stakes assessments that are used to evaluate students' proficiency against ICS Standards in a particular unit, semester, or course.

## 4. English Language Arts Department Curriculum Links

- **Curriculum Introduction**

The focus of the ICS English Language Arts curriculum is to build towards AP exams in English Literature and Composition and English Language and Composition. Our learning standards for every grade level are backward-designed from the AP standards.

Alongside these core disciplines, courses in English Language Arts III, English Language Arts IV and College Writing are offered in High School. Our purpose is to provide a high-quality English Language Arts education, building foundations for understanding the world through literary analysis, guided research, and profound literature.

- **Middle School**

Content:

MS English Language Arts 6th Grade Scope and Sequence

MS English Language Arts 7th Grade Scope and Sequence

MS English Language Arts 8th Grade Scope and Sequence

- **High School**

Content:

English Language Arts I 9th Grade Scope and Sequence

English Language Arts II 10th Grade Scope and Sequence

English Language Arts III 11th/12th Grade Scope and Sequence

English Language Arts IV 12th Grade Scope and Sequence

College Writing 11th/12th Grade Scope and Sequence

AP Seminar 11th/12th Grade Scope and Sequence

AP English Language and Composition 11th/12th Grade Scope and Sequence

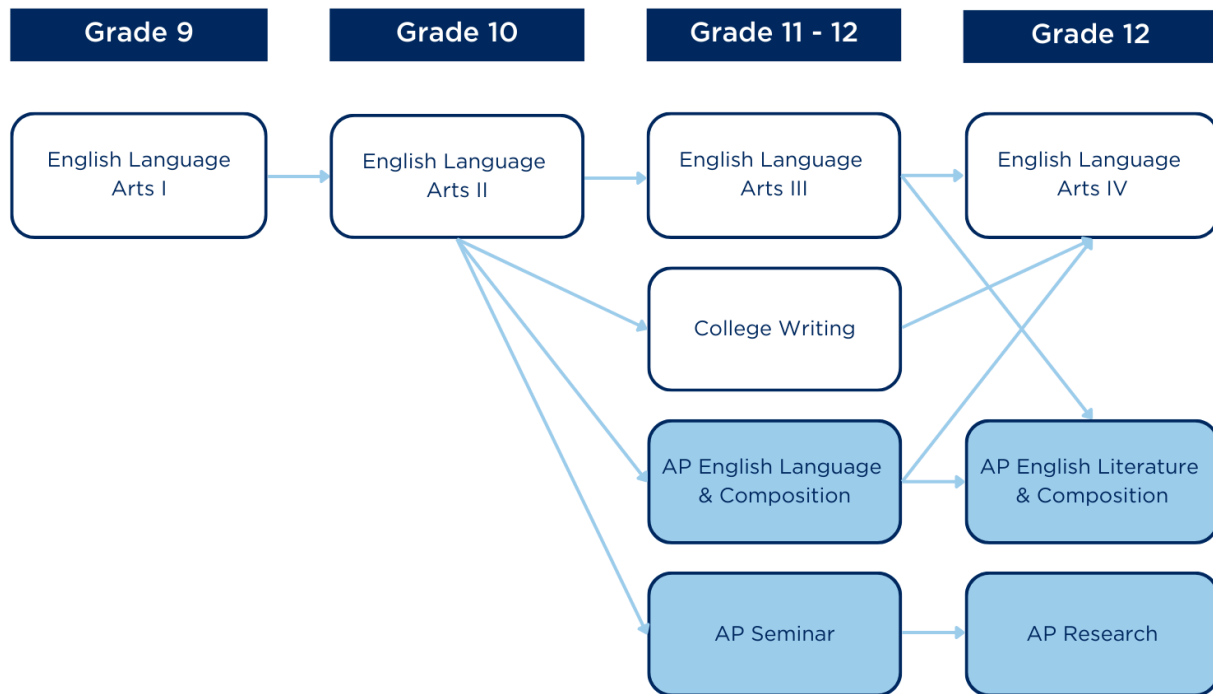
AP English Literature and Composition 12th Grade Scope and Sequence

AP Research 12th English Language Arts IV 12th Grade Scope and Sequence

- **English Language Arts Pathways Grade 6 - Grade 12**

[Secondary Course Pathways - High School Course Guide](#)

## English Language Arts Course Pathways



**1 credit of English is required every year, and 0.5 each semester for graduation**

## 5. School & Department Policies

- **General Classroom Practice**

Hard-copy course textbooks and novels are maintained in the library and classrooms.

Students maintain English notebooks which must be brought to every lesson.

Teachers are responsible for communicating Unit Rubrics at the beginning of every Unit of Study to students and parents as well as feedback on every assessment against the rubric.

- **Homework Policy**

We adhere to the [ICS Homework Policy](#)

- **Technology Policy**

We adhere to the [ICS Technology Policy](#)

- **Assessment Policy**

We adhere to the [ICS Secondary Assessment Policy](#)

- **Health and Safety**

Risk Assessments: Regular assessments to ensure a safe learning environment.

All such guidelines are maintained in the [ICS Safety and Security Policy](#)

## 6. Co-curricular Clubs, Trips and Activities

- **Clubs**

- Model United Nations
- History Bee & Bowl
- Marketing Club
- Psychology Club
- Philosophy Club
- Debate Club
- HS Chess Club
- MS GIN Club
- MS Crew

- **Trips**

- MS Week Without Walls - Hong Kong History
- MS WWW - Telunas community Service
- MS WWW - Adventure Learning & UNESCO SandWatch Program in Lingshui, Hainan
- MS WWW - Manila (Philippines) & Hanoi & Mai Chau (Vietnam)
- Grade 10- HK History Museum
- Week Without Walls - Hong Kong Worldview & History
- Week Without Walls - Care for Refugees

- **Activities**

The ICS English Language Department supports students in a number of annual competitions:

- Hong Kong Debate