

**A Level English Language
Summer Task
2024**

Year 11 into Year 12

As part of the A-Level English Language course you will have to write a 2500-3500 word language investigation based on the study and research of a topic related to language and identity. In preparation for this, your summer task is to conduct a mini investigation that explores your own linguistic identity. The task will help you to:

- ✓ develop your understanding of the concepts and methods appropriate for the analysis and study of language
- ✓ explore data and examples of language in use
- ✓ develop your skills as producers and interpreters of language
- ✓ independently investigate language in use

What do we mean by 'linguistic identity'?

Idiolect:	The unique <i>combination</i> of words, expressions and constructions that an individual habitually uses. If you have ever mimicked a teacher's habitual way of speaking to a class, you have noticed features of his/her idiolect.
Sociolect:	The kind of language we draw on to display our membership of specific social groups e.g. age, gender, social class, ethnicity, occupation, interests.
Dialect:	The accent, lexis and grammar of a specific geographical area.

Watch this lecture to help your understanding:

[MASSOLIT - Spoken Language and Identity: What is Language Variation? | Video lecture by Dr Rob Drummond, Manchester Metropolitan University](#)

Hypothesis:

Before gathering your data, what do you think your language might reveal about your identity? Do you think your language will be different between the written and spoken mode? Do you think your language will be more or less formal in different situations and with

different people? Why might this be? Do you use any slang words or words that only yourself and a select few understand? Do you speak more than one language?

Write a short paragraph explaining your thoughts under this heading.

Gathering data:

You will need to collect a range of data – spoken, written and multi-modal that best reflects your different linguistic identities. These may include screen shots of social media posts, text messages, e-mails, hand written notes, cards, letters or short transcripts of spoken interactions. Such interactions might include telephone conversations, chats with friends and family members or anyone else you come into contact with on a regular basis for instance a teacher or a boss or colleague. You should have a **minimum of four pieces of data** to analyse.

Write a short paragraph explaining what data you collected and how you got it under this heading.

Interrogation of the data:

Once you have collected the data, you need to analyse it. The best way to do this is to **annotate your texts**. Can you identify any examples of idiolect, sociolect or dialect? Are there any patterns to the language you use? Do you adapt your language in different scenarios? Does your language switch between formal/informal? Use the language levels to help focus your analysis.

The language levels are:

- **phonetics, phonology, prosodics:** how speech sounds and effects are articulated and analysed
- **lexis and semantics:** the vocabulary of English, including historical, geographical, social and individual varieties of English
- **grammar including morphology:** the structural patterns and shapes of English at sentence, clause, phrase and word level
- **pragmatics:** the contextual aspects of language use
- **discourse:** extended stretches of communication occurring in different genres, modes and contexts.

Collect and annotate your texts under this heading.

Drawing conclusions:

The conclusion is quite literally a summing up of your findings. Was your hypothesis correct or not? Were there any surprises? Can you think of any explanations for your linguistic behaviours?

Write a short paragraph under this heading summarising your findings.