

Dictionary Johnson

Dr Johnson's House workshop

Subject: English	Key Stage: 2	No. pupils: 8 - 30	Staff:Pupil ratio: 1:8	Duration: 60 minutes	
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Overview of workshop:

Aims: 1) Pupils explore how dictionaries are compiled and used 2) Pupils develop skills defining words and exploring the English language

Starting with a range of word games and activities, pupils begin to explore how words are defined and their meanings explained. After setting some criteria for 'good' definitions, and looking at how early dictionaries were written (including trying out quill pens), pupils are challenged to create their own definitions, culminating in the production of a class dictionary. The session will end with activities and discussion of the purpose of dictionaries and whether they can 'control' a language, or prevent new word or change in meanings.

Extension: In all sessions, pupils will be introduced to Johnson and his 1755 dictionary. However, it is also possible to explore how English has changed and developed since 1755 in more detail, examining obsolete words and new words and meanings. Please let us know if you are interested in this extension when booking.

National Curriculum Links: ENGLISH: Speaking and Listening through group discussion and activities (En1:1,2,3,4). Reading for information (En2:3) and Writing composition (En3:1) morphology (En3:4). OTHER SUBJECTS: Links with History can be developed through language change.	Suggested preparatory work: It is helpful if pupils have been introduced to the layout of a dictionary and have spent some time using them prior to the visit. This session is an exploration of the language rather than an introduction to basic dictionary skills.	Suggested follow-up work <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Completing a more detailed class dictionary- Developing dictionary skills with modern dictionaries and investigating how they have changed (or not) over time.- Researching why new words enter English (eg developments in technology, migration to and from other countries) and where English words come from.
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