

# Advanced English: Class, Humour & Eccentricity - British Society and Popular Culture

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Academic year 2023-2024 - **Language Department** - Spring semester.

This course is meant for students of the advanced C1 and C2 levels. Theme-based language classes aim at developing written and oral skills through the study of a specific topic.

## Course Objectives

This is a 12-week course exploring British society and popular culture, intended to improve student understanding and use of English.

The course has two main objectives:

- Discussing crucial social, political & historical issues in Britain.
- Facilitating the critical analysis of selected works in various media (cinema, TV, music).

## Course Description

Britain has a distinct culture shaped by both tradition and modernity. That culture has been represented in various popular media: music, cinema and more recently television series. This class will cover a number of issues running through British society since the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: key historical eras (the Thatcher years, the Troubles in Northern Ireland), but also the political system, social issues, humour and – perhaps most importantly – class differences.

Together we will study how these issues are reflected in the British cultural output. We will discuss films like **Billy Elliot** by Stephen Daldry and **Gosford Park** by Robert Altman; television series such as **Peaky Blinders** and **Derry Girls**; and songs by **the Beatles**, **David Bowie**, **Kate Bush** & **Arctic Monkeys**.

Classes will be devoted to student-led discussions of the material and the issues discussed. We will also have weekly student presentations, quizzes on British culture and writing exercises in class.

## Organization

Activities will cover the four language skills:

- Speaking.
- Writing.

- Listening.
- Reading.

In-class discussion of course content will emphasise **speaking** (including student presentations), but also **reading** (articles, interviews, poems), **writing** (both critical and creative) and **listening** (including songs and extracts from series & films).