

“Lunaticks and Fingersmiths”: English Language Change since 1700.

Would you like to give your students the chance to look at examples of language change since 1700 using original documents?

Warwickshire County Record Office has everything from an eighteenth century recipe book to airmail letters and telegrams from the 1970s.

We have developed a new workshop called “Lunaticks and Fingersmiths” which is suitable for Sixth Form students following the syllabus for English Language B: Language Change since 1700.

This hands-on workshop explores the historical and contemporary changes in the English Language from 1700 to the present day, using a range of original texts.

The session lasts 2 hours and includes:

- A brief introduction to the Record Office and a tour of the building, including the strongrooms, where we keep all our precious documents
- The chance to study up to 10 original documents. These include public records such as an eighteenth century deed, one of the first illustrated newspapers and an extract from a burial register, together with personal records such as war letters and postcards, recipe books and telegrams.
- Transcriptions and copies of documents are provided during the session.

A copy of each document, plus transcripts and teachers’ notes, will be given to the teacher to use for follow-up study and revision back in the classroom.

The session has already been piloted successfully. Students and teachers enjoyed the range and spread of original documents:

“there was a broad spectrum of sources that allowed us to contrast language, technique and style” (student)

“it was valuable for them to be able to see and discuss the documents with a professional who has working knowledge of them” (teacher)

“The pack of materials was invaluable and your commentaries are great for the students because they can use them to help with revision for the exam” (teacher)

The session can be used either as an induction into the subject, or as revision practice throughout the school year.

The session costs **£50 per group** and is held at Warwickshire County Record Office in Warwick. If you would like to find out more, please contact **Rowan Fisher, Learning and Outreach Officer**, on 01926 738975 or rowanfisher@warwickshire.gov.uk.