

“ The background knowledge necessary for functional literacy and effective national communication... To be culturally literate is to possess the basic information needed to thrive in the modern world.

— *E.D. Hirsch*

Cultural Literacy

with Jo Facer

**Jones sacrificed and
knocked in a run**

“ Cultural literacy constitutes the only sure avenue of opportunity for disadvantaged children, the only reliable way of combating the social determinism that now condemns them to remain in the same social and educational position as their parents.

— *E.D. Hirsch*

Rousseau



Dewey



Session aims

- The values **implicit** and **explicit** in a curriculum
- Thinking about **what to teach** how best to communicate it
- Exploring **what students need** from schools

2007 & 2013 curricula

2007 key concepts

- Competence
- Creativity
- Cultural understanding
- Critical understanding

2007

“ Through English, pupils learn about the great traditions of English literature... They develop understanding of continuity and contrast, and gain an appreciation of the linguistic heritages that contribute to the richness of spoken and written language. Comparing texts helps pupils to explore ideas of cultural excellence and allows them to engage with new ways in which culture develops...

2013

“ ...Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.

- How are society's values espoused in the 2007 document?
- And in 2013?
- What are the strengths of this in each?
- What are the weaknesses?

2007

2007

15 pages outlining aims,
concepts and texts;
6 pages on levels

2013

5 pages outlining aims,
concepts and no texts;
18 pages of grammar.

2013 key changes

- Content focus
- More Shakespeare
- Range of novels, poetry and drama
- Reading for enjoyment

2013

“ It is intended as an aid for teachers, not as the body of knowledge that should be learnt by pupils.

KS3 at my department

- What are the strengths of this curriculum?
- Where are there areas for development?

	Winter term – Literary heritage and genre		Spring term – History and Culture		Summer term - Shakespeare	
Year 7	What the Dickens?		Literature in conflict		Introducing the bard	
Scheme	Introduction to Dickens' writing	<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Writing the wars (poetry/prose)	<i>Friedrich or The Silver Sword</i>	Introduction to Shakespeare	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>
Year 8	The Gothic		Who am I?		Shakespeare's Women	
Scheme	Introduction to Gothic literature	<i>The Woman in Black</i>	Forging an identity (poetry/prose)	<i>The Outsiders</i>	Shakespearean Women	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
Year 9	Literary Heritage – Writing London		Civil Rights		Shakespeare – A Brave New World	
Scheme	<i>The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde</i>	Literature in London	Poetry/prose of the civil rights movement	<i>Role of Thunder, Hear my Cry</i>	<i>The Tempest</i>	Selection of dystopian literature and <i>Animal Farm</i>

Methods

Drama

Group
reading

Support

Hit 'em
hard

Creative
assessment

Embed
grammar

present continuous

Today we are learning to explore imagery and tone.

infinitive

imagine what it would look like

Dulce et Decorum est

↳ Later

voice

What language is that?

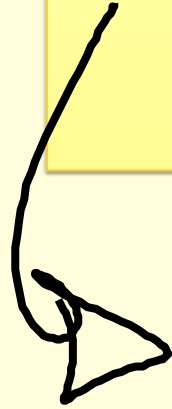
L.O.: To explore how
Dickens creates a
supernatural atmosphere in
"A Christmas Carol."

adjs
indefinite
article

present continuous

Today we are exploring how
Owen creates feelings
through personification.

Wilfred



Simple
Present

living
human feelings

KS4 at my department

- iGCSE English Language
- AQA English Literature

iGCSE

- Coursework
- Flexible
- Sensible exam paper
- Demanding vocabulary – what’s a “carapace”?

Case studies

“ In England students eligible for free school meals... are less than half as likely to gain five GCSEs including English and Mathematics... as other students, and twice as likely to leave school with no qualifications at all. Children who grow up in care are more likely to go to prison than university.

— *F. Whelan*

Tiffany



- Professional parents
- Encouraged to read
- Taken to the theatre
- 4 A-levels planned
- University bound



Sara



- Mother unemployed
- “Dangerous” estate
- History of disruptive behaviour
- Loves reading aloud
- Hair and beauty



- What does Tiffany need from the school?
- What does Sara need?
- What is the school's responsibility to these students?

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Charter Schools

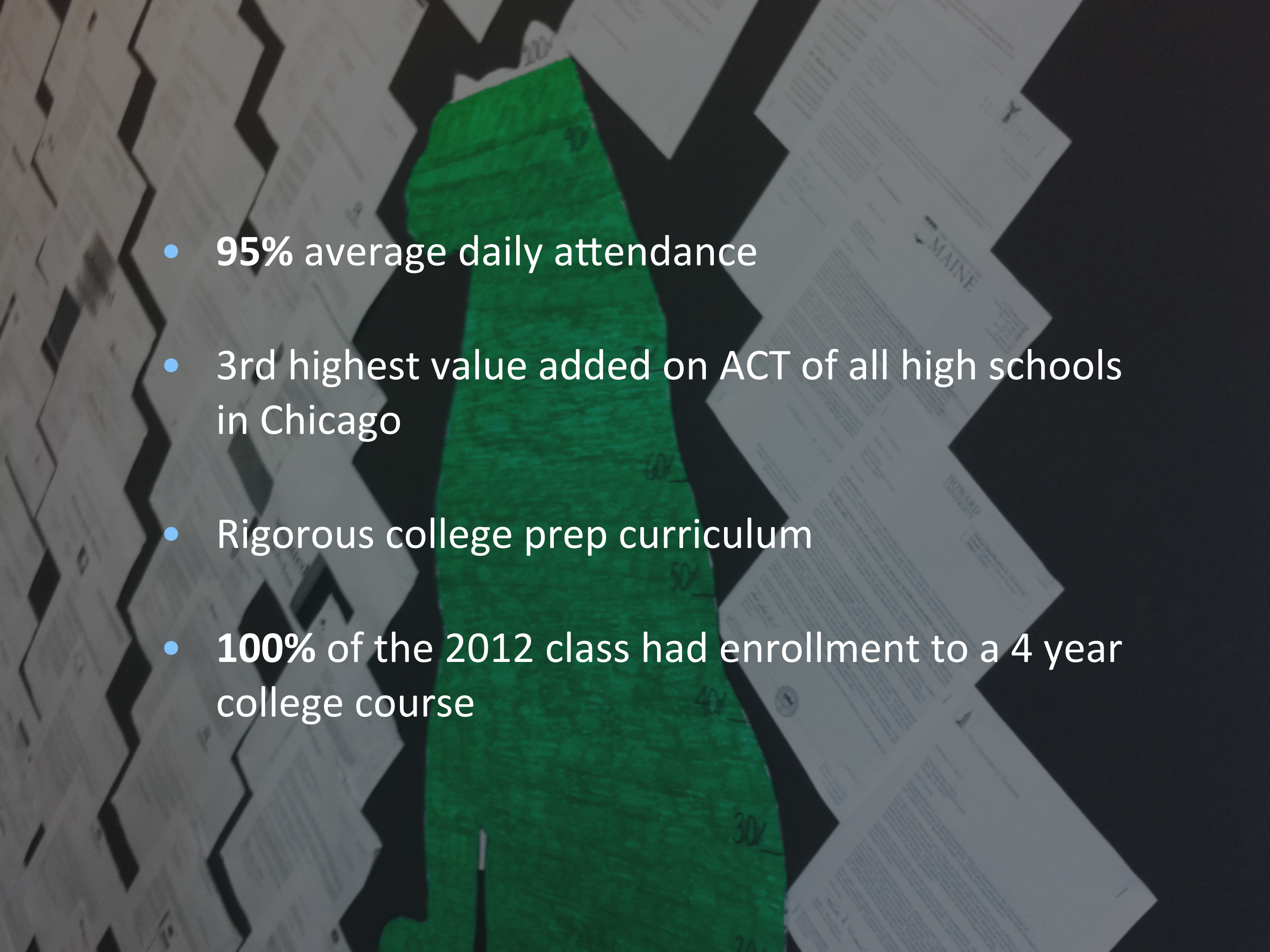
- US context: Economic and racial segregation
- With regards to cultural literacy, what challenges does this place on their system?
- Are there any advantages?



Gary Comer College Prep

South Chicago



- 
- **95%** average daily attendance
 - 3rd highest value added on ACT of all high schools in Chicago
 - Rigorous college prep curriculum
 - **100%** of the 2012 class had enrollment to a 4 year college course



WHINING

"Loving Power" At Leaders
How do we know we are leaders?
- when I am studying
- when I am helping
- when I am giving
- when I am listening
- when I am sharing
- when I am caring
- when I am loving

Somewhere in the Darkness
Question
1. What do you think about this? What do you think he really was, innocent or guilty? Would you have a job in Chicago? Why do you think so?

In order to succeed, your desire for success should be greater than your fear of failure. - Bill Cosby

Citizenship

Rev. J. M. [unclear]

READ

B.H. ALEXANDER
GIRLS

Self Control

LOVE OF LEARNING



KIPP

- “We are committed to serving the students who need us most and refuse to accept anything less than an excellent college-preparatory education for students from low-income communities”
- “climbing the mountain to and through college”
- “work hard, be nice”

“ A teacher who spends an entire year helping a student to focus in class may see little additional learning during that year, but has laid a foundation for years to come

— *F. Whelan*

- What lessons can we learn from US Charter schools?
- What should we be wary of?
- Is our situation completely different?

Closing Questions

- What do we want for our students, and how do we get there?
- How far do our values impact on what we do and how we do it?
- How far should our values impact on what we do and how we do it?

Following up:
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[@readingthebooks](#)
readingallthebooks.com