

LiNCHigher GCSE Screenings 2024: Evaluation

By Eleanor Sanders



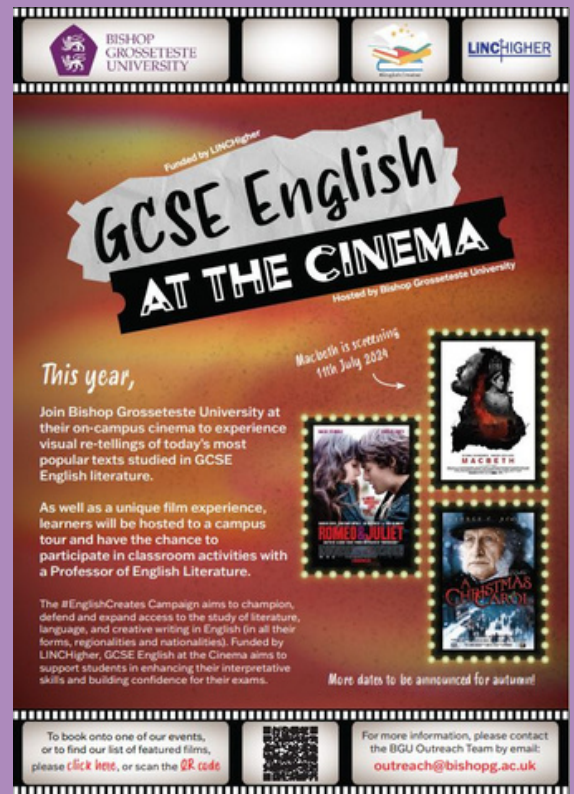
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Introduction

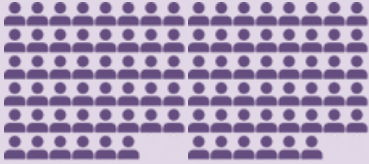
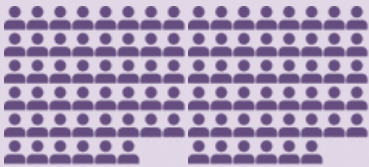
In 2024, Bishop Grosseteste University received £4,989 of funding from the LiNCHigher organisation to bring GCSE English learners from local schools onto the campus for a session including:

- **A campus tour**
- **Screening of a film** in the BGU on-campus cinema 'The Venue', of the GCSE English text they are studying (Macbeth, A Christmas Carol or Romeo and Juliet)
- **Participation in pre- and post-film English sessions** with a Professor of English Literature from the university

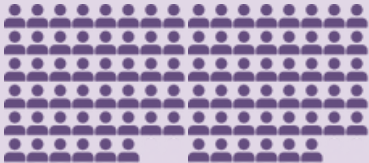


Poster advertising the GCSE screenings

4 Year 10 groups



4 Year 11 groups



371
total
students

Visits took place from **June to November 2024**. Seven local schools were involved, with one school bringing two different groups of students separately, meaning a total of eight separate visits. Four of these were Year 10 groups and four were Year 11 groups - **371 GCSE students were enabled to take part** in total. Travel contributions of £250 were offered to schools through the funding, minimising any costs to schools.

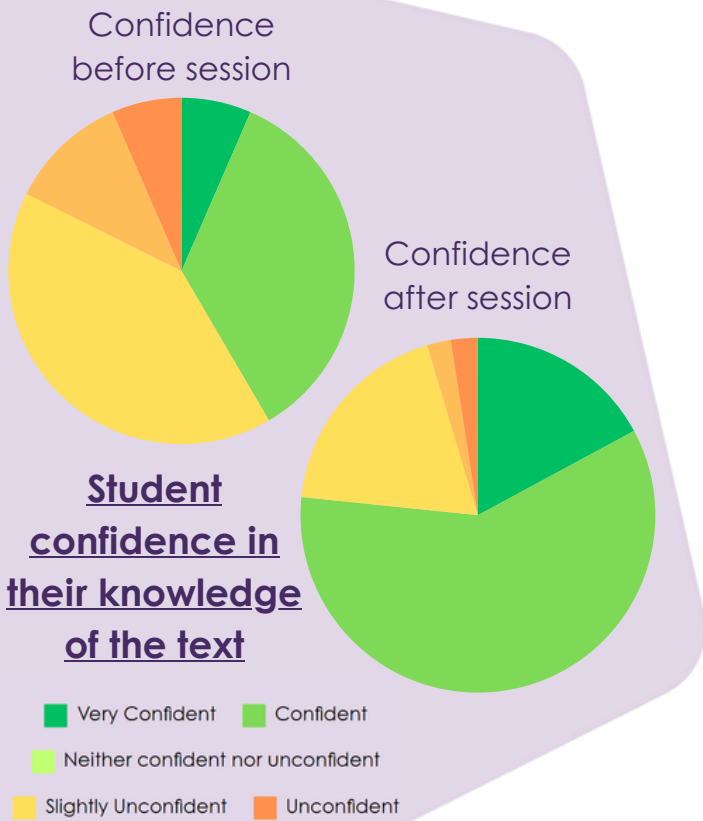
Visiting students were asked to complete a short feedback form with questions about their experience and a space for comments. This was completed by all students, with 123 students giving written feedback in the comment space. Feedback was also provided from several teachers after the sessions.

Timetable:

10:00-10:15 Arrival and Welcome
10:15-10:45 Pre-film English session
10:45-11:15 Campus tours
11:15-12:30 Film
12:30-1:00 Interval for lunch
1:00-1:45 Film
1:45-2:15 Post-film English session, evaluation

Confidence around GCSE text

Overall, students said that the sessions increased their confidence in their knowledge of the GCSE text. On average, **student confidence increased by 12% through the sessions**, with **53% of students saying that they felt more confident** after watching the film and participating in the activities. 23% of the students who gave written feedback said that the sessions enabled them to learn more about the text, mentioning that they could understand the play better, visualise the script, and understand deep meanings. **84% of the students were enabled to watch the full film for the first time at the session.**



After the visit, **the number of students describing themselves as 'confident' or 'very confident' about the text rose from 42% to 77%**. The number of students feeling 'unconfident' dropped from 24 to just 9 by the end of the sessions.

“All students have said that the opportunity has helped them to have a better understanding of the play prior to studying it. The introductory session and summary sessions (as well as the workbook) were valuable to this understanding and the sessions were adapted really well despite our students not having studied the play”

Quote from a teacher

Feedback from teachers also supported this, with **teachers praising the sessions and saying that they helped students' confidence in English**. The questioning parts of the sessions were viewed as particularly beneficial in this area, engaging students well and increasing their confidence.

Engagement with BGU and Higher Education

The visits also enabled students to increase their knowledge of Bishop Grosseteste University, as well as higher education in general. **85% of the students attending were enabled to visit the university for the first time**, with 96% saying that they were able to find out more about BGU specifically during the session. Of those giving written feedback, 25% learnt more about higher education on the visit, with some saying that **coming to the university campus had helped them in making decisions around higher education and careers**.



Film Screening

“
Helped me
know what uni I
want to go to
after sixth form”
”

Quotes from students

“
Broadened my
view on post-16
options”
”

16% also said in the written feedback section that they had liked learning more about BGU, with many commenting that they had found the campus tour very useful and wanted it to be longer. **Several students also said that they now saw BGU as an option for higher education**, or had come to the visit already having BGU as an option and were able to learn more about the university.

Paid Work for Students

The eight LiNCHigher screenings created paid work for Bishop Grosseteste University students through campus tour guiding and projectionist work. One of these students received training in operating the cinema projector in order to work as a projectionist for the events.

English Team Involvement and Feedback

Members of the BGU English department delivered two sessions for each visit - a pre-film session and a post-film session. These sessions emphasised interpretative skills by comparing the original works to the more recent film adaptations, looking at historical, cultural and literary context surrounding the works. Students were offered booklets written by the English team, with information about the plays and spaces to answer written questions, and packs of materials were also given to teachers. This meant that attendees could engage fully with the sessions without having to worry about taking notes.



"The use of The Venue to work with schools was enlightened and such a powerful, cultural means to disseminate academic scholarship, share our passion for English studies and work with schools locally and in the county. I think this project has given us a great model to work with and be more creative and committed to our social purpose"

"Working collaboratively and creatively across departments was a great learning experience for us too, and one that I hope will offer the English department more opportunities to work with Gemma, Sarah and LiNCHigher, but also a model for others"



Quotes from Prof. Claudia Capancioni,
Professor of English Literature and
Programme Leader for English



Slides used in the sessions

| A play of social justice | A tragedy of character | A drama of fortune |
|---|--|--|
| This interpretation reads the play as a criticism of a society that does not allow for individuality beyond that identified through family/tribe. | This view sees the play's tragedy as a result of fundamental flaws (hamartia) in the central characters. | This reading interprets the play's events as pre-determined results of fate and fortune. The lovers are 'star-crossed' before the play begins. |

WHICH OF THESE INTERPRETATIONS DO YOU AGREE WITH? HOW CAN YOU EVIDENCE THIS FROM THE PLAY?

Through the project, the English team were able to engage directly with English teachers in schools, which is usually difficult. This has **enabled the team to learn more about the GCSE English syllabus and how they can support GCSE English teaching and learning** further in the future. Feedback from the team stated that they believe that the visiting students benefitted significantly from the **new material given around interpretation of Shakespeare's plays**, as well as being able to **experience the university campus and a new teaching style from academics**. The feedback also stated that the team's experience with the project was highly positive overall.

Following on from the success of the GCSE Screenings initiative, the English team are looking to develop the current event further for future screenings. **They are also seeking to host an 'A-Level English at the Cinema' event** in the future.

GCSE English At The Cinema Team

LiNCHigher

Funded the events

Gemma Gazi (BGU Widening Participation Officer)

Liaised with schools, organised logistics, hosted the events

Sarah Moseley (BGU Head of Social Purpose)

Wrote funding bid, dealt with film licensing, managed finances

Prof. Claudia Capancioni (BGU Professor of English Literature and Programme Leader for English)

Created English resources for students and co-delivered pre- and post-film sessions

Dr. Amy Albudri (BGU English Lecturer)

Assisted in creation of resources and co-delivered sessions

Dr. Jon Begley (BGU English Lecturer)

Co-delivered sessions

Dr. Lucinda Newns (BGU English Lecturer)

Co-delivered sessions



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