

A-Level Ancient History

Getting ready for Year 12



Welcome to the Classics Department. We promise that you are about to begin one of the most interesting, exciting, and life changing experiences of your life!

Over the next two years we will uncover some of the Ancient World's most distinguished and celebrated figures, as well as some of its nastiest and worst. We will read some of the greatest literature ever written, but we will also read some of the biggest lies (which most of society still believes to be fact!) You will learn to sift through evidence and separate fact from fiction, deftly argue your viewpoint, and grow in confidence and flair in writing the best essays. But best of all you get to experience ancient society with all the worst bits left in.

But why wait? There are lost of ways you can get to grips with the Ancient World before September. Below you find a list of recommended reading and viewing, so that you can get your teeth in to the sources as soon as we get into the classroom.



Can politics ever be clean?

Is being a hero just a matter of how many people you kill?

What does real gender equality look like?

What is good government?

Here are some questions to be thinking about...

Can money buy you influence?

What happens when you allow a 16 year old to run an empire?

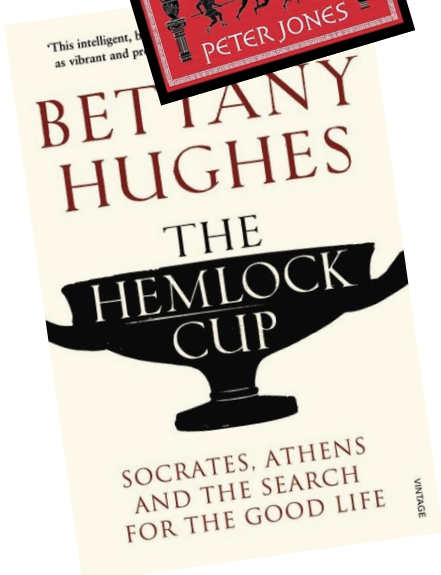
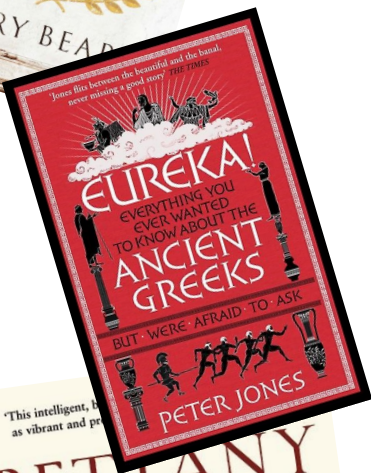
Can politics really be separated from religion?

What is real democracy?

How do you run society in the middle of a pandemic?

In preparation for Ancient Life you might fancy:

1. Visiting your voters and offering them your patronage
2. Living in the mountains with just a stick and a cloak
3. Increasing your popularity by taking part in a court case
(knowing you'll win as you've bribed all the jury)
4. Joining a cult to worship a foreign and exotic god



Unfortunately the chances of you experiencing Mediterranean culture before we start the course has been kyboshed by matters outside of our control; nevertheless there are still lots of great things you can be watching and reading in preparation for the course.

1. Familiarise yourself with the Greek and Roman World

We recommend reading the ~~Portable History~~ series by Terry Deary, or spending your summer watching the BBC TV Series. For something a little more eyebrow we recommend either ~~Greek~~ or ~~Veni Vidi Vici~~ both by Peter Jones.

2. Get to grips with chronology

It is vital for the course that you understand the timeline so you know where events and sources fit in. Historical fiction is a great way to get to grips with the politicians, people and power struggles. We recommend ~~Imperium~~ by Robert Harris which examines the world of the Roman Republic and ~~Spartan~~ by Valerio Massimo Manfredi which takes a dramatic and fascinating look at Sparta.

3. Make sure you have fun, and engage with the past

We are very lucky to have access to media which really brings the past alive: take advantage of it! We recommend the film ~~300~~ by Zack Snyder and either ~~Immortals~~ ~~Creeds~~ ~~Origins~~, or ~~Immortals~~ ~~Creeds~~ ~~Odyssey~~ on the Xbox.

4. Visit a museum

This might sound a little ridiculous given the current global lockdown on leaving your home, but there are lots of museums offering access to their exhibits online. We are trying to organise a virtual visit with our students to the ~~British~~ ~~Museum~~. There is also an excellent podcast taking you through the whole of history in ~~A History of the World in 100 Objects~~.

5. Spend some time with the scholars of the Classical World

We are currently spoiled for choice with academics who want to make the Ancient World come alive for us today, and you might as well get to know them now. We recommend ~~The Spartans~~ by Paul Cartledge, or perhaps the more jovial Spartan podcast episode from ~~Your Dead To Me~~ with BBC historian Michael Scott. Anything with Mary Beard is a must, but we heartily recommend flicking through ~~SPQR~~ which you should get for peanuts on the internet. For a slightly more academic read try ~~The Hemlock Cup~~ by another well known TV presenter Bettany Hughes.

6. Follow us on

For more ideas and to stay in touch over the summer follow us [@XavsAnchHist](#)