

A-Level Classical Civilisation

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 seek out the answers to some of life's biggest mysteries using the wisdom and knowledge of some of the Classical World's most brilliant minds.

Much of what we will look at will also link in really well to your other subjects especially Theology and Drama, Sociology and Psychology, History and Politics, and of course English.

Always interesting, often dramatic, and sometimes controversial, the ideas and works of the Classical World will interest and stay with you long after you leave college. But why wait? Below we spend some time recommending ways to get some background knowledge so that you can get your teeth into some of the deeper questions the course allows you to explore.



What is love?

Are your 'Instagram' followers really that important?

Is revenge ever justified?

What is good government?

Here are some questions to be thinking about...

Should you blame your parents for your mistakes?

How do you stay COOL in a crisis?

Can we blame the gods for all the evil in the world?

Do the ends justify the means?

Why is dancing good for the soul?

In preparation for A-Level you might fancy:

1. Dressing up as a wild animal and go dancing in the woods.
2. Partying with the brightest philosopher of the age.
3. Looking for a boyfriend in the swankiest places in town.
4. Attend a theatrical performance with your friends.



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 ~~Horrible Histories~~ series by Terry Deary, or spending your summer watching the BBC TV Series. For something a little more eyebrow we recommend ~~The Ancient Greeks~~ *Ten ways they shaped the Modern World* by Edith Hall.

2. Get to grips with Greek and Roman mythology

It is vital for the course that you know the main gods and are able to identify them, especially Zeus, Hera, Athene, Aphrodite, Hephaestus, and Hermes. It would also be useful to know the myths surrounded the Trojan War as well as the story of Heracles

We recommend ~~Mythos~~ and ~~Deceit~~ by Stephen Fry, as well as Jim Henson's ~~The Storyteller~~ *Greek Myth*, which we have found on Amazon Prime.

3. Familiarise yourself with the background to the prescribed texts

The prescribed texts are initially quite challenging so we would suggest waiting to begin these with us in class. For background reading our current students recommend reading *The Song of Achilles* or *Clara* by Madeline Miller and watching the film *Troy* directed by Wolfgang Peters.

4. Spend time on other planets, different dimensions and in your imagination

Most of the best series on Netflix have their origins firmly planted in the Classical World. Engross yourself in classic sci-fi and fantasy to help you compare what you study in class with what you already have in your head. We recommend ~~Batman's Year One~~ by Frank Miller, and ~~Wonder~~ *Greek Odyssey* on Xbox .

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

We are currently spoiled for choice with academics who want to make Classics come alive today. There are two queens of the classical world who you might as well get to know now. We recommend *The Children of Jocasta* by Natalie Hynes, or perhaps the more jovial podcast *Natalie Hynes Stands Up for Classics*. For a slightly more academic read try *The Hemlock Cup* by the well known TV presenter Bettany Hughes.

6. Follow us on

For more ideas and to stay in touch over the summer follow us @XavsClassics

