



Summer Assignments 2026



Dear Students

We understand that there will be a mixture of excitement and trepidation for many of you as you contemplate the more advanced A Level curriculum in the subjects you have chosen. To facilitate engagement with the A Level subject courses, each department has prepared some summer assignments for you to undertake.

Please have a look through this booklet to find the subjects you have applied to study with us and do as many as you can of the suggested assignments. These are not mandatory, but we believe they will give you a little insight into what you'll be studying and hopefully whet your academic appetite!

We look forward to seeing you in the Sixth Form on Tuesday, 2 September, and wish you a lovely, restful summer break in the interim.

Olivia Camillo
Director of Sixth Form



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Art

The course will get underway properly in September. There are no set pre-course practical assignments to complete. We encourage you to keep up some independent drawing practice over the Summer, such as regular sketchbook drawing. We also encourage you to visit some galleries and exhibitions.



Materials

We encourage all students to build up their own stock of art materials to use at home. Having a range of drawing media, a set of paints, and your own brushes are really good investments.

If you have any questions, feel free to email Mr Penny: gpenny@csg.school.

Biology

To prepare yourself for A Level Biology, we would like you to undertake the following task to ensure you are confident with GCSE maths skills that are required in A Level Biology.

Please complete the [Maths in Biology](#) workbook, which can be found in the Biology section of the course descriptions on the sixth form website. You will need to bring the completed booklet to your first biology lesson.

We also recommend that you keep up to date with current developments in Biology. This could be done by reading science pages of one or more daily newspapers (e.g. *The Independent* or *The Guardian*).

Finally, to further stoke your interest, we recommend the following books:

- [The Epigenetics Revolution](#) and [Hacking the Code of Life](#) by Nessa Carey
- [I Think You'll Find It's a Bit More Complicated Than That](#) by Ben Goldacre
- [The immortal life of Henrietta Lacks](#) by Rebecca Skloot
- [Here Comes the Sun](#) and [Y: The Descent of Men](#) by Steve Jones
- [Elephants on Acid](#) by Alex Bose
- [The Gene](#) by Siddhartha Mukherjee
- [Why We Sleep](#) by Matthew Walker

If you have any questions, feel free to email Ms Alvarado: malvarado@csg.school.



Chemistry

To ensure you make a good start to A Level Chemistry, it's vital that your understanding of the following areas of the GCSE is as strong as possible:

- Formulae
- Balancing equations
- Quantitative chemistry
- Structure and bonding

There will be a test on these topics early in the new term. To help you prepare, you can download a [Transition from GCSE to A Level](#) workbook from OUP

Good, relevant, popular science books to read are:

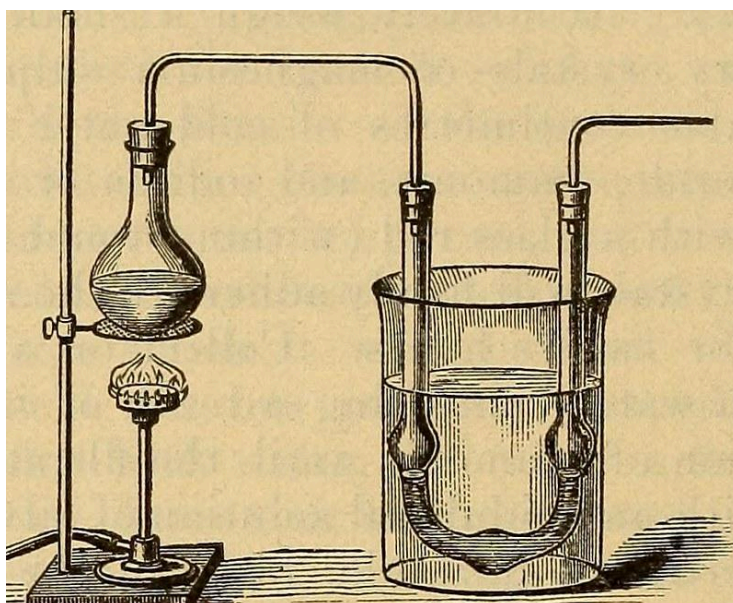
- [Periodic Tales: The Curious Lives of the Elements](#) by Hugh Aldersey-Williams
- [The Disappearing Spoon...and other true tales from the Periodic Table](#) by Sam Kean
- [Caesar's Last Breath: The Epic Story of The Air Around Us](#) by Sam Kean
- [Mauve: How One Man Invented a Colour that Changed the World](#) by Simon Garfield
- [Napoleon's Buttons: How 17 Molecules Changed History](#) by Penny Le Couteur and Jay Burreson

Accessible titles in OUP's *Very Short Introductions* series are:

- [Molecules](#) by Philip Ball
- [Reactions](#) by Peter Atkins
- [The Elements](#) by Philip Ball

We look forward to meeting you in September!

If you have any questions, feel free to email Mr Flynn: sflynn@csg.school.



Classical Civilisation

Welcome to Classical Civilisation A Level and congratulations on choosing an excellent subject to study! A Level Classical Civilisation offers something for everyone, including history, politics, philosophy, literature and art history. You'll also sharpen up plenty of transferable skills, such as textual and visual analysis, using evidence, structuring and writing an extended argument, and debating articulately.

You will be studying these three topics from the OCR Specification:

- The World of the Hero: Greek Epic: Homer's *Odyssey*; Roman Epic: Virgil's *Aeneid*.
- Culture and the Arts: Greek Theatre
- Beliefs and Ideas: Love and Relationships

To prepare to begin the course, you should purchase these materials and work on the following tasks.

N.B: Please contact us before the Summer holidays if you would benefit from financial support in purchasing these books, especially if you have been in receipt of Free School Meals.

The World of the Hero: Greek Epic: Homer's *Odyssey*

- **ESSENTIAL:** [The Odyssey](#) by Homer (Penguin, translated by E.V. Rieu, edited by D.C.H. Rieu) - this will be the set text that we read in class.
 - Buy it, read the introduction and make notes.
 - Then read from start to finish.
 - Go and watch Christopher Nolan's *Odyssey* at cinemas.
 - Reflect on your reading and the film by writing no more than 2 sides of A4 in answer to these questions:
 - **Why do you think that people have continued to enjoy and study The Odyssey for more than two thousand years?**
 - **How far do you think that Nolan was faithful to Homer's text? Does it matter?**
 - **What made you choose Classical Civilisation A Level and what are you most looking forward to?**
- **OPTIONAL:** [The Odyssey](#) - translated by Emily Wilson - a new translation - a good starting point for discovering the feel of the text, with an **excellent introduction**. If you have time, read this version too and compare how the two translators have expressed the story differently.

Culture and the Arts: Greek Theatre

- **ESSENTIAL:** Watch/listen to the information in the links below and make notes as you go
 - [BBC In Our Time: Greek Tragedy](#)
 - [BBC In Our Time: Greek Comedy](#)
 - ["An Introduction to Greek Theatre" \(National Theatre\)](#)
 - [Virtual tour of Theatre of Dionysus in Athens](#)
 - Add to your writing above by answering the following question: **what do you think will be most interesting about studying Greek Theatre and why?**
- **You will need these texts when we begin the course:**
 - [The Three Theban Plays](#) by Sophocles (Penguin, translated by Robert Fagles)
 - [Euripides: Bacchae](#) (Cambridge Translations from Greek Drama)
 - [Aristophanes: Frogs](#) (Cambridge Translations from Greek Drama)
- **OPTIONAL:** Read the introductions and read the set plays: *Oedipus the King*, *Bacchae* and *Frogs*.

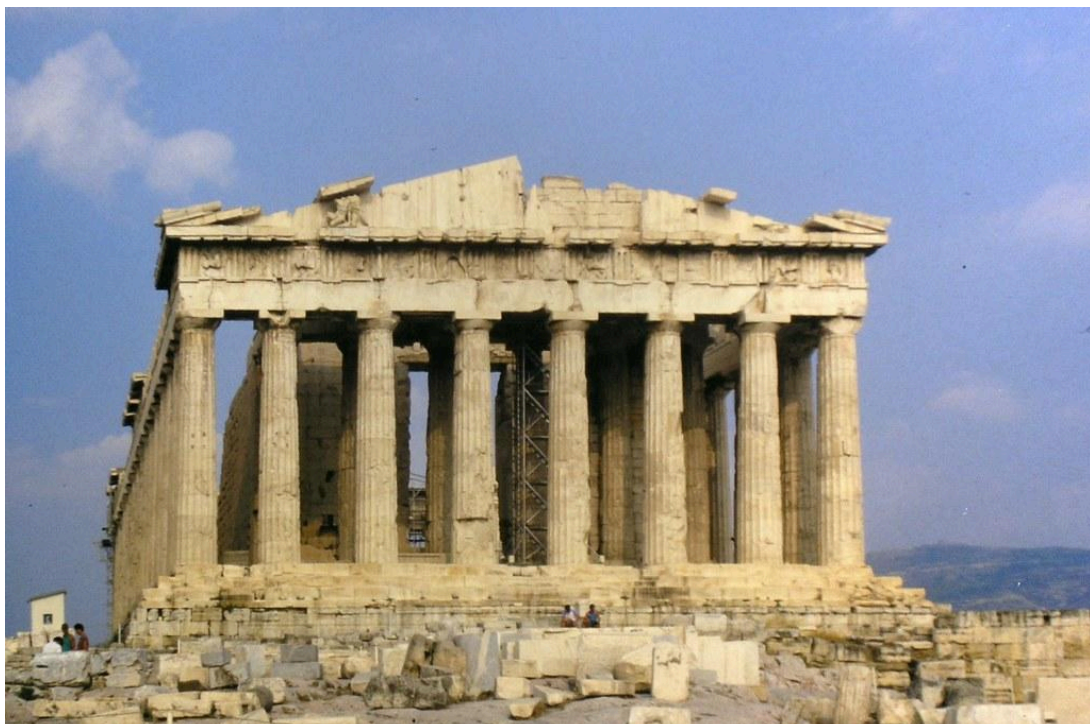
1. Dip into this mini-reading list of modern responses to your Year 12 texts, to consider how these ancient stories continue to be relevant today:

- Epic:
 - i. The Song of Achilles - Madeleine Miller: a retelling of Homer's Iliad (a story of the Trojan War)
 - ii. Circe - Madeleine Miller: a whistlestop tour of Greek mythology from Circe's perspective - moving, chilling, powerful.
 - iii. The Penelopiad - Margaret Atwood: Penelope's scathing take on Odysseus' story.
 - iv. An Odyssey - Daniel Mendelsohn: the memoir of a Classics professor, exploring his relationship with his father as they embark on the study of the Odyssey together. Clever and powerful.
- Greek Tragedy:
 - i. Home Fire - Kamila Shamsie: a modern retelling of Antigone, shifted to a modern British context (you could try reading Sophocles' Antigone along with it).
 - ii. The Children of Jocasta - Natalie Haynes: a fresh perspective on an ancient story, reimagining how the Oedipus and Antigone stories would look if the female characters took centre stage.

4. To fuel your wider knowledge about and interest in the Classical World:

- Subscribe to [Natalie Haynes Stands Up For The Classics](#) - or purchase the last seasons on Audible - excellent podcasts about the most interesting historical and literary characters in Classics.
- Subscribe to the BBC Radio 4 In Our Time podcast and listen to a few of the Classical episodes which catch your eye:
 - i. [Greek episodes](#)
 - ii. [Roman episodes](#)
- Try dipping into videos related to the course from [MoAnInc](#) or [Maria Haley \(millennialclassicist\)](#) on YouTube

Enjoy! If you have any questions, feel free to email Ms Maguire: hmaguire@csg.school.



Drama and Theatre Studies

The Drama and Theatre Studies A Level course involves a very exciting blend of written and practical units. Some practical units will involve you devising your own work in groups; others will involve preparing scripted work. Across the two years of study, you will explore a range of theatre practitioners, and you will use their methodologies to shape your practical work, alongside the learning that you take from trips to the theatre or exploration of pre-recorded live theatre. You will study two plays for the final exam. Texts studied for exams will be explored practically in class.

Here is how you can prepare for Drama and Theatre Studies:

- Make a visit to the theatre. Write a one paragraph review of the production/s you see, focusing on what elements engaged you. Try to think beyond performers. What about the set / costume / lighting / sound design?

The course requires you to develop a sense of theatre across the ages, so please read as many as you can of the following plays:

- [*Oedipus the King*](#) by Sophocles
- [*A Doll's House*](#) by H. Ibsen
- [*The Caucasian Chalk Circle*](#) by B. Brecht
- [*Three Sisters*](#) by A. Chekhov
- [*Amadeus*](#) by P. Shaffer
- [*Posh*](#) by L. Wade

Produce an A4 page of notes on any of the following practitioners:

- Katie Mitchell
- Max Stafford-Clark
- Antonin Artaud
- Bertolt Brecht

If you have any questions, feel free to email Ms Earnshaw-Punnett: searnshaw@csg.school.



Economics

Think about the following topics so that you can contribute to a discussion about each topic in our first lesson in September. The first subject will be discussed in our first macro lesson and the second topic in the first micro lesson. You need to consider all aspects (pro/con advantage/disadvantage) of each argument:

- Examine the measures that the UK government can put in place to improve the UK economy's productivity growth.
- Examine the impact of AI on the labour market. Will AI replace human labour?

A book I very much enjoyed reading and I would recommend, is [*Economics: The User's Guide*](#) by Ha Joon Chang.

Enjoy the read and your research, and we look forward to seeing you in September.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Mr Firouzbakhsh, hfirouzbakhsh@csg.school, and/or Mr Hill, ohill@csg.school.



English Literature

Great English students have a passion for reading and they think about what they read. They are also prepared to persevere with more challenging texts and to experiment with authors and genres.

To prepare for a unit on narrative as well as to gain experience of some important classic and contemporary novelists, please ensure you read the following novels:

- [*The Great Gatsby*](#) by F. Scott Fitzgerald
- [*Nineteen Eighty Four*](#) by George Orwell
- [*The Bloody Chamber*](#) by Angela Carter
- [*The Bell Jar*](#) by Sylvia Plath

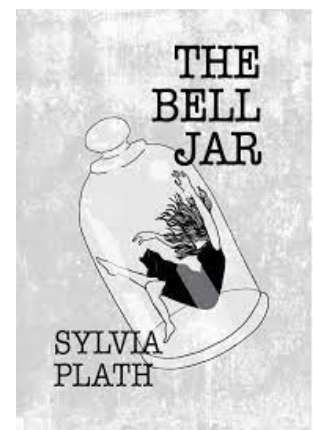
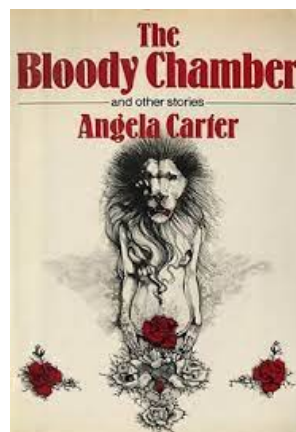
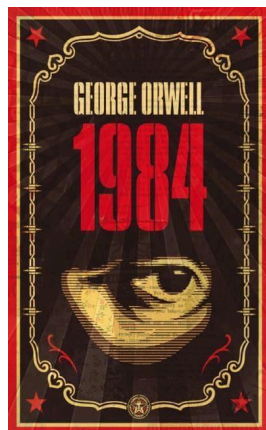
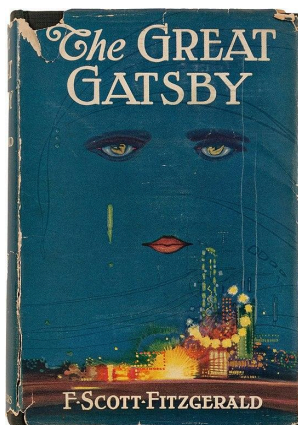
While reading, think about how the story is told in terms of narrative voice, structure and viewpoint.

Besides these texts, read and experience as much literature as you can.

- Find out about contemporary poets and read them.
- Extend your GCSE reading: try more Dickens, Austen.
- Experience some theatre: there are so many opportunities for live theatre in London.

We look forward to hearing about what you have been reading when we meet you in September.

If you have any questions, feel free to email Ms Scott: kscott@csg.school.



French

In French, we are currently following the Edexcel exam board.

What we cover (film/book subject to change):

- Four themes (see below)
- A film in Year 12 (*Les 400 coups* 1959 by François Truffaut)
- A novel in Year 13 (*Un sac de billes* by Joseph Joffo)

What to do to prepare for A Level French:

- Go over your GCSE grammar, especially tenses and verb endings: present, perfect, imperfect, near future, simple future, conditional regular and irregular verbs. You will be given a grammar test at the start of the course so that we can assess your grammatical understanding.
- Read in French - magazines (*Elle, Grazia, Phosphore, Le Point*), newspapers (*Le Monde, Libération, 20 minutes*), websites (try yahoo.fr)
- Watch French movies (French new wave, *Intouchables* (2011), *La haine* (1995))
- Listen to French/francophone music (check French charts, Spotify, music festivals) and Podcasts ([Learn French by Podcast](#) is a good current affairs one)
- Keep up to date with French current affairs

Thème 1: **Les changements dans la société française**

Set in the context of France only. This theme covers social issues and trends.

- Changes in family structures
- Education
- World of work

Thème 2: **La culture politique et artistique dans les pays francophones**

Set in the context of francophone countries and communities. This theme covers political and artistic culture.

- Music
- Media
- Festivals and traditions

Thème 3: **L'immigration et la société multiculturelle française**

Set in the context of France only. This theme covers social issues and trends.

- Positive impact of immigration
- Challenges of immigration and integration
- The far-right

Thème 4: **L'Occupation et la Résistance**

Set in the context of France only. This theme covers political culture.

- Occupied France
- The Vichy regime
- The Resistance

If you have any questions, feel free to email Ms Benzina: hbenzina@csg.school.

Geography

There are three examinations in Geography plus a 3000 word piece of coursework:

Paper 1: **Physical Geography**

- Tectonic Processes & Hazards
- Landscape Systems, Process & Change
- The Water Cycle & Water Insecurity
- The Carbon Cycle & Energy Security

Paper 2: **Human Geography**

- Globalisation
- Diverse Places
- Superpowers
- Migration, Identity, and Sovereignty

Paper 3: **Synoptic Investigation**

The synoptic investigation will be based on a geographical issue about a named case location rooted in two or more of the compulsory content areas from papers 1 or 2.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork is a compulsory component of the geography course. It has a number of functions but, in particular, supports learning of the Physical Geography Paper. We have a residential field trip to East Sussex (cost approximately £100) and additional fieldwork in the Borough of Camden.

Summer task

We'd like you to do three things:

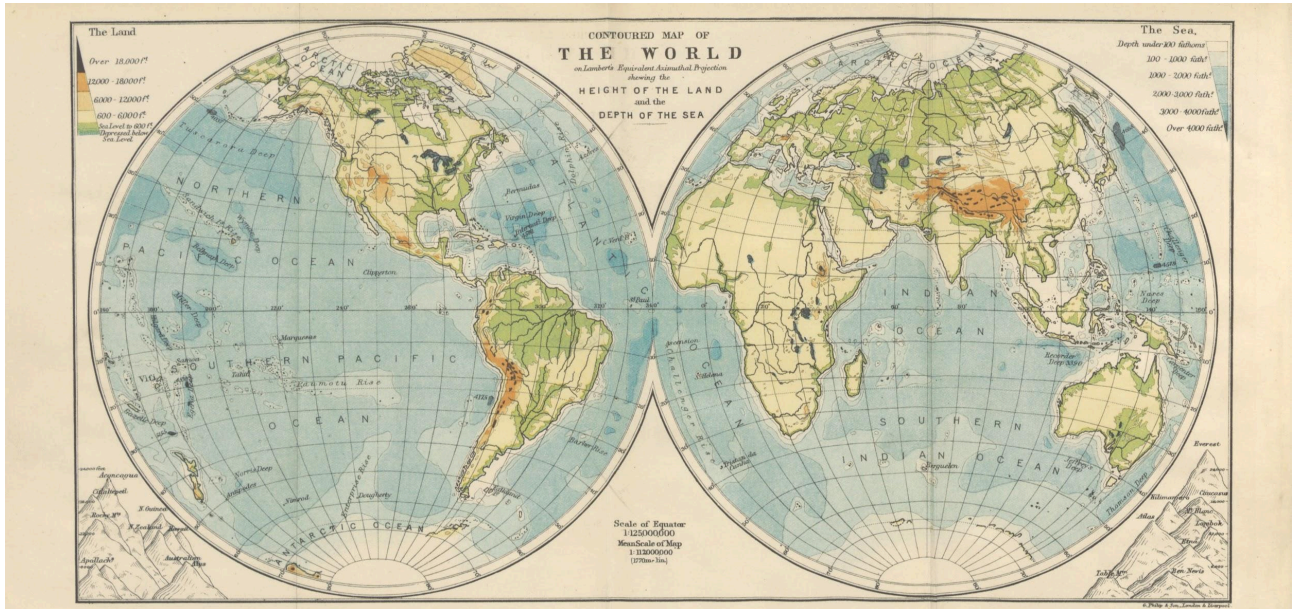
1. Make sure you can confidently find the following places on a world map:

USA	Nigeria	Nepal	Greece	Israel
Canada	Mali	China	Greenland	India
Mexico	Egypt	Japan	Bulgaria	Bangladesh
Brazil	Burkina-Faso	Philippines	Ukraine	Kiribati
Bolivia	Rwanda	Singapore	South Africa	Antarctica
UK	Kenya	South Korea	Kuwait	Atlantic Ocean
Germany	Mozambique	North Korea	Syria	Pacific Ocean
France	Saudi Arabia	Indonesia	New Zealand	Indian Ocean
Spain	Tropic of Cancer	Australia	Italy	Iraq
Russia	Tropic of Capricorn	Iran	Sri Lanka	Maldives

2. Get hold of a copy of a book called *Prisoners of Geography* or *The Power of Geography*, by Tim Marshall. Read the chapters on Russia, The Middle East, Africa, and The Arctic.

3. Using the free [Seneca website](#), we would like you to revise the **Tectonics** and **Coastal** topics of the GCSE AQA course and look for the content on: Natural hazards, Tectonic hazards and UK coastal landscapes. You need to be able to score at least 90% on these.

If you have any questions, feel free to email Ms Boardman: kboardman@csg.school.



Government and Politics

In Government and Politics we study the Edexcel exam board.

There are three exams and four topics that we cover throughout the two years, with exams at the end of Y13:

- UK Politics (Y12)
- UK Government (Y12)
- US Politics (Y13)
- Political Ideologies (Y13)

Topic One: UK Politics

- Democracy and Participation
- Political Parties
- Electoral Systems
- Voting behaviour and the media

Topic Two: UK Government

- The Constitution
- Parliament
- The Prime Minister and the Cabinet
- The relationship between branches of government

Topic Three: Comparative Politics USA

- The Constitution
- Congress
- The Presidency
- The Supreme Court
- Democracy and participation

Topic Four: Ideologies

- Conservatism
- Liberalism
- Nationalism
- Socialism



Summer tasks:

- Being a successful student means being up to date with current affairs. You should get into the habit of finding your way round a newspaper – preferably a broadsheet (e.g. *The Times*, *The Independent*, *The Guardian* and current affairs magazines such as *Prospect*, *The Economist*, *New Statesman*, *The Spectator*).
- You should identify and read: editorials/comment, news – domestic and international, letters and cartoons.
- Watch political programmes on television (e.g. Channel 4, *Newsnight* and *Question Time*).
- Listen to political podcasts (e.g. [Guardian Politics Weekly](#) and [New Statesman](#) are available on Spotify).
- A genuine interest in how Politics works is key in accessing the Politics course!

If you have any questions, feel free to email Ms Ellis: lellis@csg.school.

Greek (Classical)

Welcome to Classical Greek AS Level (OCR) and congratulations on choosing an excellent subject to study! The subject will develop your understanding of the world of the Greeks through developing your understanding of the language and providing you with direct access to some of the most powerful literature in history.

We'd like you to make sure you complete the following tasks before September:

1. We will be using John Taylor's [Greek Beyond GCSE](#) as our language reference text. **Buy a copy** of the 2017 edition of the text - there are new and secondhand versions available online.
2. Over the summer, keep up your **GCSE Greek vocabulary** using Memrise or Quizlet, and if there are any elements of grammar that you are stuck on from GCSE, have a go at reading the relevant part of John Taylor.
3. Use either the GCSE or the Beyond GCSE John Taylor textbook to revise the following linguistic features, which you have met at GCSE: **you will be tested on them during the first week of lessons:**

- Nouns: all standard types of all 5 declensions
- Verbs:
 - present, future, imperfect and aorist tenses (all persons, singular and plural), in the active, middle and passive voices
 - second person imperatives, present and aorist (singular and plural)
 - present, future and aorist participles (all genders and cases, singular and plural)
 - infinitives, in the active, middle and passive voices
- Nouns
 - The article
 - all cases, singular and plural, of the nouns of the following types: χώρα, θάλασσα, φωνή, πολίτης, νεανίας, ἵππος, ἔργον, φύλαξ, βασιλεύς, πόλις, σῶμα, τεῖχος

4. In September, your set texts will be:
 - Verse: [Homer's Iliad](#), selections from Book 16 (free version online [here](#))
 - Prose: [Herodotus' Histories](#), selections from Book 1 (free version online [here](#))

Arguably, all later Western literature responds in some way to these texts! These authors are both fundamentally significant to the western literary and historical worlds, with Homer's Iliad at the earliest core of the Western literary tradition, and Herodotus known as 'father of history'. They provide an insightful view into Greek life and customs from the Archaic and Classical periods, and are fascinating reads.

- **Research** each of these authors and their works using the internet or the introductions to the books linked above.

N.B: please contact us before the Summer holidays if you need support in purchasing these books, especially if you have been in receipt of Free School Meals.

To fuel your wider knowledge about and interest in the Classical World:

- Subscribe to [Natalie Haynes Stands Up For The Classics](#) - or purchase the last seasons on Audible - excellent podcasts about the most interesting historical and literary characters in Classics.
- Subscribe to the BBC Radio 4 In Our Time podcast and listen to a few of the Classical episodes which catch your eye:
 - [Greek episodes](#)
 - [Roman episodes](#)

Enjoy! If you have any questions, feel free to email Mr Beecroft: rbeecroft@csg.school.



History

In September, you will be studying Edexcel's paper 'Revolutions in early modern and modern Europe'.

- Paper 1 - Britain, 1625-1701: conflict, revolution and settlement
- Paper 2 - France in Revolution 1774-99

Britain, 1625-1701: conflict, revolution and settlement

In this breadth study, we learn about the failure of monarchical government and republican rule in Britain in the 17th century, set within the context of broader social, economic and religious change.

During the summer period, carry out some initial reading on this topic, as it may initially seem very complex.

- [Stuart Britain: A Very Short Introduction](#) by John Morrill is a very concise and readable place to start.
- A good overview book is M. Kishlansky's [The Penguin History of Britain: A Monarchy Transformed, Britain 1630-1714](#), which is good for building up your contextual knowledge of the period.
- You can also listen to the [Revolutions](#) podcast series on this period.

The French Revolution

This is a study in depth of the causes and course of the French Revolution, 1774–1799. A tumultuous period of change for the French people as they evolved from subjects to citizens in a maelstrom of revolutionary activity, war and constitutional experiment, and one that would inspire revolutionary movements around the world. Students will gain an in-depth understanding of the causes and onset of revolutionary activity in France, and the subsequent political, social and economic changes.

- [The French Revolution: A Very Short Introduction](#) by Cowie and Doyle - is a good start.
- [Liberty or Death: The French Revolution](#) by P. McPhee provides an arresting narrative account of the period.
- Mark Steel, the comedian, has written an amusing but thought provoking book called [Vive La Revolution](#).
- [A Place of Greater Safety](#), is a historical-fiction novel of the French Revolution from the double Man Booker prize-winner, Hilary Mantel.
- A more complicated but famous book is [Citizens: A Chronicle of The French Revolution](#) by S. Schama.

Besides the texts and the topics for study above, read and experience as much history as you can.

Podcasts series such as the 'History Extra' series from the BBC, 'The Rest is History' or the more comedic, 'Your dead to me' podcast series, are a great way to broaden your historical knowledge and understanding of history.

If you have any questions, feel free to email Ms Wroe: ewroe@csg.school.

History of Art

This course develops students' understanding of relationships in art and architecture between: society and art; art historical terms, concepts and issues; cultural, social and political factors; developments in materials, techniques and processes. The subject content is divided into three areas:

- **Visual analysis:** Painting, sculpture and architecture
- **Themes:** Nature in art and architecture; Identities in art and architecture
- **Periods:** Invention and illusion: the Renaissance in Italy (1420–1520); Pop life: British and American Contemporary art and architecture (1960–2015)

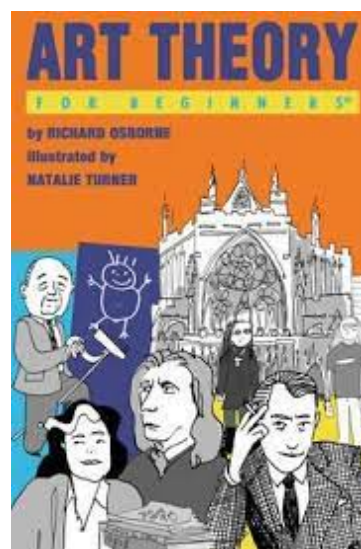
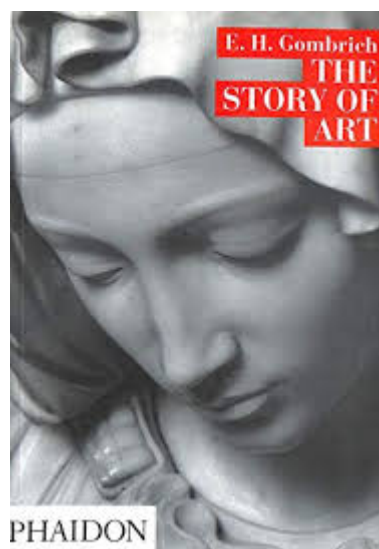
Research Tasks

- Visit at least one major art exhibition and one public collection in person. During the visit choose a piece of work and make a sketch of the work's main elements, describe how it makes you feel and why. If possible, print an image of the work to hand in with your text in the first week of term.
- Watch an episode of either [Civilisations](#) (2018), [Great Artists](#) (2001), [Shock of the New](#) (1980), [Ways of Seeing](#) (1972), [Civilisation](#) (1969). Write a response/summary of the episode of 200 words minimum.

Read to familiarise yourself with the broad sweep of art history, any of the following:

- [The Story of Art](#) by E.H. Gombrich
- [Art Theory for Beginners](#) by R. Osborne
- [Art History: The Basics](#) by D. Newall
- [An Introduction to Art](#) by C. Harrison
- [A World History of Art](#) by H. Honour & J. Fleming
- [An Outline of European Architecture](#) by N. Pevsner
- [The Shock of the New](#) by R. Hughes

If you have any questions, feel free to email Mr Aronsohn: daronsohn@csg.school.



Latin

Welcome to Latin A Level and congratulations on choosing an excellent subject to study! Latin introduces you to the world of the Romans through developing your understanding of the Latin language and providing you with access to some of the most powerful literature in history. From rhetorical legal speeches which change the course of history, to historical writing itself; from the grandest epic verse to tongue-in-cheek love poems, there's something here for everyone.

Literature

Next year your set texts from the OCR prescription will be:

- Verse Literature: [Virgil's Aeneid: Book 4](#)
 - Full English text of the Aeneid [here](#); OR use the free online version available [here](#)
- Prose Literature: [Cicero's pro Roscio Amerino](#)
- Verse Unseen author: Ovid
- Prose Unseen author: Livy

These authors cover a wide range of genre and style in Latin literature, and provide a brilliant and varied insight into Roman life in the 1st Centuries BCE and CE.

1. **Buy** the linked books above (for Virgil and Cicero) and **read the introductions. Make notes, or create a mind map** for each text which covers the key information about the author, the context and the story.
2. **Research** all four set authors and their works further online. If you would like to get ahead and read more in translation, Ovid is an excellent place to start: translations are available online. The Amores are great for [witty love poems](#), and the [Metamorphoses](#) if you prefer mythology.

Language

1. **Buy** the following books - cheaper secondhand as well as new copies are available online or at the Hellenic Book Service

N.B: please contact us before the Summer holidays if you would benefit from financial support in purchasing these books, especially if you have been in receipt of Free School Meals - we have some spares!

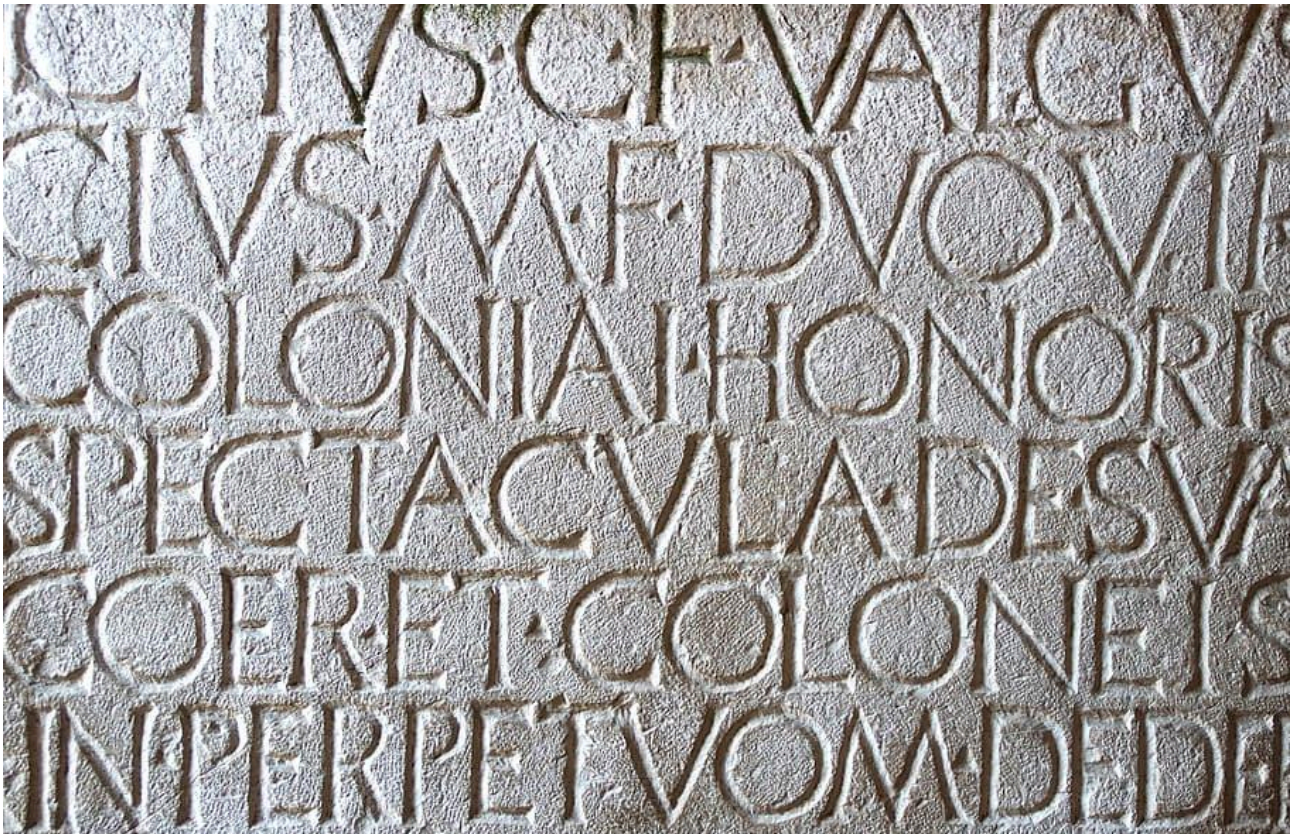
- John Taylor's [Latin Beyond GCSE](#): you will use this as a reference book to work on your language throughout the course.
 - [Prose Unseens for A Level Latin](#) by Mathew Owen
 - [Ovid Unseens](#) by Mathew Owen
2. Over the summer, keep up your **GCSE Latin vocabulary** using Memrise or Quizlet, and if there are any elements of grammar that you are stuck on from GCSE, have a go at reading the relevant parts of John Taylor.
 3. Use either the John Taylor textbook or your Latin exercise books and worksheets from GCSE to revise the following linguistic features: **you will be tested on them during the first week of lessons:**

- Nouns: all standard types of all 5 declensions
- Verbs:
 - present, future, imperfect, perfect and pluperfect active
 - present, imperfect and perfect passive (3rd person singular and plural)
 - imperfect and pluperfect subjunctive active
- Participles: present and perfect
- Uses of the Subjunctive

4. To fuel your wider knowledge about and interest in the Classical World:

- Subscribe to [Natalie Haynes Stands Up For The Classics](#) - or purchase the last seasons on Audible - excellent podcasts about the most interesting historical and literary characters in Classics.
- Subscribe to the BBC Radio 4 In Our Time podcast and listen to a few of the Classical episodes which catch your eye:
 - i. [Greek episodes](#)
 - ii. [Roman episodes](#)

Enjoy! We're looking forward to seeing you in September. If you have any questions, feel free to get in touch with Ms Maguire: hmaguire@csg.school.



Mathematics and Further Maths

A Level Mathematics assumes a familiarity with techniques learnt at GCSE. To progress through this course, it is vital to ensure that you are fully confident in the following techniques:

- manipulation & arithmetic of fractions
- laws of indices
- elementary algebra, including multiplying out brackets
- factorising & rearranging formulae, including quadratics
- solving simultaneous & equations
- the equation of a straight line
- Pythagoras' theorem & trigonometry

Any GCSE Higher Tier textbook would provide examples and practice questions or obtain a copy of [Head Start to A-Level Maths \(with Online Edition\)](#) from CGP, the Kindle version is currently free and can be read on most devices.

Those students considering Mathematics or a related discipline at university should begin to read around the subject. There are a number of interesting and accessible books such as [Fermat's Last Theorem](#) by S. Singh and [The Man Who Loved Only Numbers](#) by P. Hoffman. Something more challenging is Marcus du Sautoy's [The Music of the Primes](#) but it does offer a picture of the world of professional mathematics.

ALL STUDENTS MUST COMPLETE THE 'ARE YOU READY FOR A LEVEL MATHS?' TEST & bring this to your first maths lesson.

ARE YOU READY FOR A LEVEL MATHS?

This test covers the key skills from GCSE that you'll need in A Level maths.

Do this test in exam conditions without looking at the answers, **write your answers on paper**, then mark it using a different coloured pen, using the answers on the following page. Write out corrections to any questions you got wrong & make sure you now understand how to do them.

Next, we **strongly recommend** that you spend some time revising any topics where you lost marks using [Corbett Maths](#) or similar. All the topic names are highlighted with the answers, and if you click on the link it will take you to a relevant exercise to practise that topic (you will need to access the electronic version to use the links). You could then have another go at the test to check that you can now do any questions you lost marks on.

Time: 1 hour. Calculator allowed.

1) Evaluate the following:

a) $\left(\frac{1}{27}\right)^{-\frac{1}{3}}$ b) $\left(\frac{64}{25}\right)^{\frac{3}{2}}$

2) Write these in the form of $ax^n + bx^m$:

a) $\frac{\sqrt{16x^2} - \sqrt[3]{27x^2}}{\sqrt{x}}$ b) $\frac{5x^3 + \sqrt[4]{81x^2}}{3x}$

3) Solve the following equation for x :

$$2x^{-\frac{3}{2}} = 54$$

4) Write the following as a simplified, single fraction

a) $\frac{4}{x-2} - \frac{2x}{x+1}$ b) $\frac{x}{x^2-1} + \frac{3}{x+1}$

5) By rationalising the denominator, write the below in the form $c + a\sqrt{b}$:

$$\frac{2}{\sqrt{3}+1}$$

6) Expand the following brackets and collect like-terms:

$$(2x + 3)(3x - 1)(x + 2)$$

7) Fully factorise the following:

a) $(36 - 4x^2)$ b) $3x^3 + 27x^2 + 60x$

8) Consider the quadratic $x^2 - 4x - 12 = 0$:

a) Write the value of the discriminant. What does this tell you about the number of solutions you should expect?

b) Solve the equation, finding values of x using:

i) Completing the square ii) Factorisation iii) The quadratic formula

9) Consider the points $A(9, -1)$ and $B(-2, -3)$

a) Write down the gradient m of the line passing through these two points

b) Hence, find the equation of the line passing through A and B in the form $ax + by + c = 0$ where a , b , and c are integers

10) Find the mean, mode, median and upper and lower quartiles of:

4, 7, 1, 0, 13, 15, 90, 12, 7

11) Find the mean of the following:

Length of oak leaves (mm)	Frequency (f)
20 – 22	4
23 – 26	20
27 – 30	23
31 – 50	5

Information for Year 12 Maths students from the Maths Department

In the second week of term you will take an Induction Test.

The topics to be tested are:

- Fractions – addition, subtraction, multiplication & division
- Rules of indices
- Surds – simplifying & rationalising the denominator
- Simultaneous equations – 2 linear & 1 linear/1 quadratic
- Factorising quadratics
- Solving quadratic equations by factorising, formula or completing the square.
- Transforming graphs – graph sketching

It is important that you have a good grasp of these topics before starting the Maths course in September.

INFORMATION ON CALCULATORS

Your GCSE calculator will not be sufficient for A Level. You have a choice of calculator and our students are equally successful with either.

CASIO FX-991CW (RRP £35.99). This is not a graphical calculator but is very easy to use. We highly recommend this calculator. This one can be purchased through the school in September for a discounted price.

CASIO FX-CG100 (£139.99). This is a graphical calculator, useful if you are going to be studying Further Maths and/or considering a degree involving Maths, Physics or Engineering. This one cannot be purchased through the school.

Answers - remember you need to access the electronic version to follow the links for further practice

[Negative indices](#) and [fractional indices](#)

1) a) 3 b) $\frac{512}{125}$

[Algebraic expressions](#) and [solutions](#)

2) a) $4x^{\frac{1}{2}} - 3x^{\frac{1}{6}}$ b) $\frac{5}{3}x^2 + x^{-\frac{1}{2}}$

[Equations with indices](#)

3) $x = \frac{1}{9}$

[Algebraic fractions](#)

4) a) $\frac{-2x^2+8x+4}{(x+1)(x-2)}$ b) $\frac{4x-3}{(x+1)(x-1)}$

[Rationalising the denominator](#)

5) $-1 + \sqrt{3}$

[Expanding brackets](#)

6) $6x^3 + 19x^2 + 11x - 6$

[Difference of two squares](#) and [harder factorising](#) - Worksheet E Q4 (this document also includes practice on a range of the topics covered here - but also some topics that you can ignore) - [solutions](#)

7) a) $(6 - 2x)(6 + 2x)$ b) $3x(x + 5)(x + 4)$

[Discriminant](#) - Worksheet G Q6 - [solutions](#), [completing the square](#), [factorising quadratics](#), [quadratic formula](#)

8) a) $b^2 - 4ac = 64$, 2 distinct real solutions b) all 3 versions should give $x = 6$, $x = -2$

[Equation of a line](#)

9) a) $m = \frac{2}{11}$ b) $2x - 11y - 29 = 0$

[Mode, median, mean](#) and [quartiles from a list](#) (exercise 1)

10) mode = 7, mean = 16.6, $Q_1 = 2.5$, $Q_2 = 7$, $Q_3 = 14$

[Mean from grouped frequency table](#)

11) $\bar{x} = 27.5$

If you have any questions, feel free to email Ms Ballantyne-Brown: pballantyne@csg.school.

Music

The best preparation for your A Level Music course is to listen to as much music as you can: live, on the radio, television and internet. Try in particular to listen to some pieces, styles, composers, bands, etc. that are new to you.

During the first half term, you will all be expected to play a solo in your A Level lesson to the rest of the class. **Please ensure that you have a piece prepared for the instrument/voice that you are thinking of performing for your A Level performance exam.** It would be preferable if you chose a piece that you are very comfortable performing rather than worrying about what level or grade it should be. We just want to hear you perform!

You will be continuing to develop your understanding of musical language through coursework and examined components. In order to prepare for this element of the course, we recommend purchasing the ABRSM Grade 5 theory workbook [Music Theory in Practice](#) to ensure you get an idea of the level required. There are also useful exercises to practise your skills at [musictheory.net/exercises](https://www.musictheory.net/exercises). Those of you who have not already completed Grade 5 theory may find this aspect of the A Level challenging, and it would be a good idea to work on this before September.

As OCR is no longer offering A Level music, we are changing to Edexcel. The courses are very similar with 30% Performance (8 minute recorded solo or ensemble recital) 30% Composition (one free and one from a set of briefs given by the exam board totalling no less than 6 minutes) The 40% exam covers six areas of study across the A Level course over the two years. These are:

- Vocal Music
- Instrumental Music
- Music for Film
- Popular Music and Jazz
- Fusions
- New Directions

The set works included in these AOS are:

- Vocal Music (J. S. Bach, Cantata, Ein feste Burg ● Vaughan Williams, On Wenlock Edge)
- Instrumental Music (Clara Wieck-Schumann, Piano Trio in G minor, Op. 17: movement 1 ● Berlioz, Symphonie Fantastique)
- Music for Film (Danny Elfman, Batman Returns ● Bernard Herrmann, Psycho)
- Popular Music and Jazz (Kate Bush, Hounds of Love ● Beatles, Revolver ● Courtney Pine, Back in the Day)
- Fusions (Debussy, Estampes ● Anoushka Shankar, Breathing Under Water)
- New Directions (Kaija Saariaho, Petals for Violoncello and Live Electronics ● Stravinsky, The Rite of Spring)

Try and familiarise yourself with these pieces and make a playlist of them.

After you have heard the music, make sure you find out more about these artists, their lives and their contribution to the development of music. Podcasts are very useful, especially the BBC's [Discovering Music](#) site. Each episode analyses a particular piece of classical music, and there are hundreds of past

programmes archived. Well worth listening to as well is BBC Radio 3's [Composer of the Week](#) and [Jazz Library](#) which are available free from any podcast provider.
Enjoy listening!

If you have any questions, feel free to email Ms Segal: esegal@csg.school.



Philosophy

The key questions of philosophy - what do we know to be true? What is the most just way of organising society? How should we try to be good? - remain as pressing as ever. Many contemporary philosophers and thinkers have a presence on YouTube and on social media. You can even access their lectures and public appearances. Look up and watch some videos by the following people: Slavoj Zizek, Jordan Peterson, Judith Butler, Cornell West. You are free to agree or disagree with their ideas!



Some of the best YouTube channels that deal with Philosophy and philosophical ideas include:

[The School of Life](#): has a syllabus of videos on the great philosophers. Each video is about ten minutes long. Try to complete this syllabus before September.

[Philosophy Tube](#): Abigail Thorn is a master in exploring philosophy in a highly original way. Check her out.

[Alex O'Conner/Cosmic Sceptic](#): This young graduate of Theology from Oxford has hit the big time with his show Within Reason - he debates God's existence, veganism, and a whole range of other issues. It's brilliant.

For those of you who have never studied or even encountered philosophy before, a good way of getting an overview of the history of ideas would be to read [Sophie's World](#) by J. Gaardner, which gives a good overview of some of the key thinkers in the history of philosophy. Other, similar books would include:

- [Think](#) by S. Blackburn
- [Philosophy for Beginners](#) by R. Osbourne
- [The Philosophy Gym](#) by S. Law
- [A History of Western Philosophy](#) by Bertrand Russell
- [The Elegance of a Hedgehog](#) by M. Barbery

To prepare yourself for your second year philosophy course, it would be good to read:

- [Philosophy of Mind: The Basics](#) by Amy Kind
- [Philosophy of Mind: A Beginner's Guide](#) by I. Ravenscroft
- [Meditations](#) by R. Descartes
- [The Republic](#) by Plato (Penguin version)
- [Being Good: A short introduction to Ethics](#) by S. Blackburn
- [The Nicomachean Ethics](#) by Aristotle

If you have any questions, feel free to email Mr O'Connell: moconnell@csg.school.

Photography

To commence A Level studies, I expect you to read at least **one** of the books on the essential reading list as a foundation to the subject. Visit The Photographers Gallery and familiarise yourself with this wonderful resource [♥ The Photographers' Gallery](#) . Free to u18s.

<https://thephotographersgallery.org.uk/whats-on/japanese-women-photographers-1950s-now>

All students of Photography will have to purchase their own materials (i.e. darkroom photographic paper/film and inkjet paper) as well as a contribution to ink costs when using the digital suite (ink costs are per term and are currently set at £30). It will be necessary to have a 35mm SLR camera (second-hand is ideal and can be bought for a **minimum** of £40).

An overseas trip also takes place in collaboration with the Art Department, and the destination has yet to be agreed. In the past, we have visited Barcelona, Berlin, New York, and in March 2026, we visited Paris. I look forward to meeting you in September.

Essential Reading:

- [The Photograph as Contemporary Art](#) by Charlotte Cotton
- [The Ongoing Moment](#) by Geoff Dyer
- [Understanding a Photograph](#) by John Berger

Look at the following websites:

- [Magnum Photos](#)
- [AINT-BAD](#)
- [LensCulture](#)
- [British Journal of Photography](#)

If you have any questions, feel free to email Ms Miller: dmiller@csg.school.



Physics

To prepare yourself for A Level Physics, you need to practise your maths skills.

Your assignment is to complete the [Introductory Maths Unit for Year 12 Physics](#), which needs to be downloaded and printed out from the Physics section of the course descriptions on the sixth form website.

You must show your working out.

You must bring the completed booklet to your first physics lesson.

We also recommend you read a couple of the following books. You will be asked to write a review about one of these over the first half term.

- [Philosophy of Science: Very Short Introduction](#) by S. Okasha
- [The Fabric of Reality: Towards a Theory of Everything](#) by D. Deutsch
- [Science: A History](#) by J. Gribbin
- [Quantum Theory Cannot Hurt You](#) or [We Need to Talk About Kelvin](#) by M. Chown
- [Fear Of Physics: A Guide For The Perplexed](#) by L. M. Krauss
- [Six Easy Pieces](#) by R. Feynman
- [In Search of Schrödinger's Cat](#) by J. Gribbin

If you have any questions, feel free to email Mr Symes: hsymes@csg.school.



Psychology

To better understand the range of Psychology, read [The British Psychological Society's Research Digest Blog](#). It is updated regularly and summarises the latest psychological research.

Task

Choose two pieces of research from different days of the holidays. For each, write out the aim, method, results and conclusion (some guidance is included below). The aim, method, results and conclusion may not be stated explicitly, and you will need to infer some of this information. In addition, write one or two sentences explaining why this research piece interests you. Bring this work to your first lesson.

- AIM - What did the researcher want to find out? What question did they want to answer?
- METHOD - What did they do to find out their answer? What things did they change? What did they measure?
- RESULTS - What results did they collect and record?
- CONCLUSION - From their results, what is the answer to the question they asked themselves?

Maths Skills for Psychology

Core Maths Skills is a key component of psychology. As a result, we ask all students to complete the [GCSE to A Level progression: Mathematical skills student booklet](#) designed to support students transitioning from GCSE to an A Level Psychology course. You must print it out, complete it, and then bring it to our first lesson.

Recommended Reads

A Mind of Its Own: How Your Brain Distorts and Deceives by Cordelia Fine

Dotted with popular explanations of social psychology research and fascinating real-life examples, *A Mind of Its Own* tours the less salubrious side of human psychology. Psychologist Cordelia Fine shows that the human brain is, in fact, stubborn, emotional and deceitful, and teaches you everything you always wanted to know about the brain - and plenty you probably didn't.

Unthinkable: An Extraordinary Journey Through the World's Strangest Brains by Helen Thomson

In *Unthinkable*, Helen Thomson tells the stories of nine extraordinary people. From the man who thinks he's a tiger to the doctor who feels the pain of others just by looking at them, their experiences illustrate how the brain can shape our lives in unexpected and, in some cases, brilliant and alarming ways.

Thinking, Fast and Slow - by Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky

Written by Nobel Prize winner Daniel Kahneman and mathematical psychologist Amos Tversky, this is an incredibly insightful book which challenges the classical assumption that people always act rationally. It's a book that helps us understand both the decisions we make ourselves, as well as the decisions made by those around us. Not only does reading this help you make better decisions, but it gives an excellent insight into how Psychology can affect economics.

If you have any questions, please email Mrs Hacker shacker@csg.school.

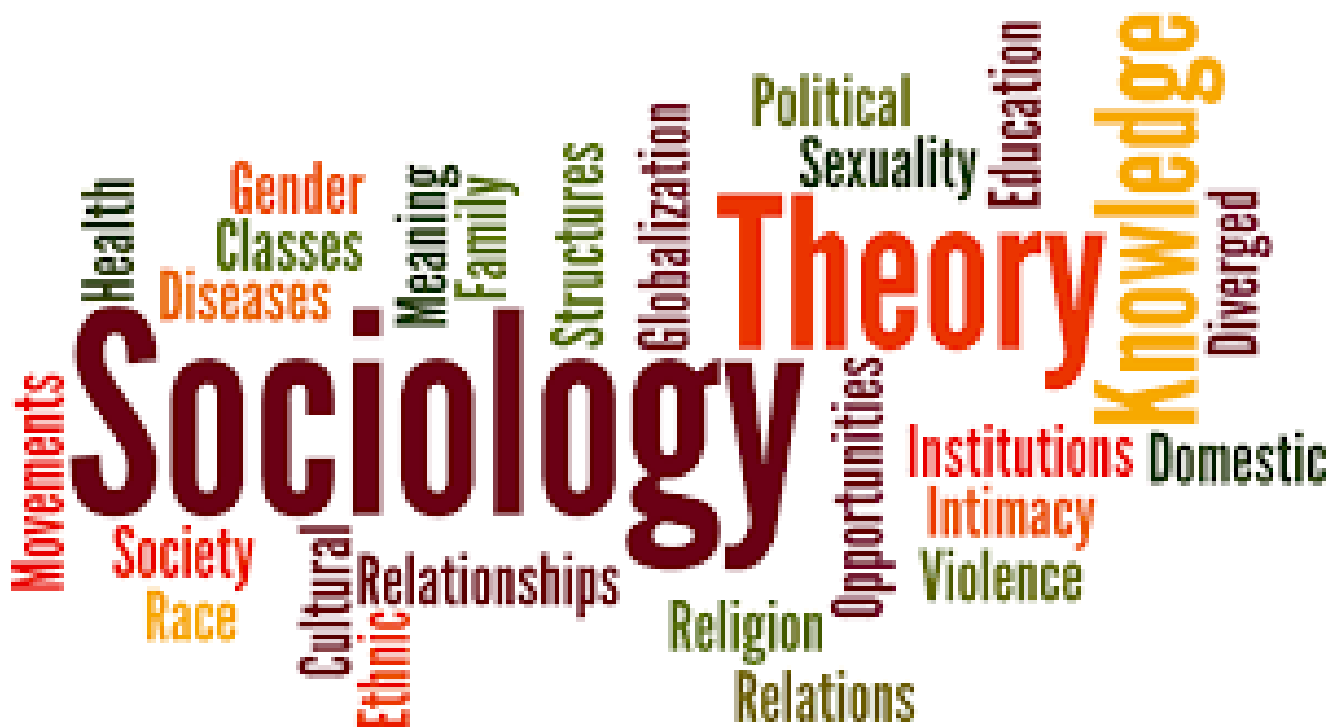
Sociology

Welcome to Sociology. Across the next two years, you will be studying topics that include the social construction of identity; inequality in society, explanations of crime and deviance and youth subcultures.

You can start thinking about the many social issues we will be discussing over the year by keeping up with current affairs through reading or watching the news. Read a serious newspaper regularly online: The centre-left newspaper, *The Guardian*, gives the best coverage of social issues, while *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* support the Conservative approach to social, political and economic policies. The Guardian, for example, has an inequality section that can be found [here](#).

In addition to the news, you could read [Natives](#) by Akala or [Chavs](#) by Owen Jones, which discuss some of the key issues we will be covering in the A Level or explore some great podcasts on a range of sociological issues. We recommend the 'Thinking Allowed' BBC podcast series, hosted by a former Professor of Sociology or 'The Sociology Show' podcast series, created for A Level Sociology students.

If you have any questions, feel free to email Ms Wroe: ewroe@csg.school.



Spanish

In Spanish, we are currently following the Edexcel exam board.

Four themes (see below):

- A film in Year 12 (*Todo sobre mi madre* (1999) by Pedro Almodóvar)
- A novel in Year 13 (*La casa de Bernarda Alba* by Federico García Lorca)

Please, do not read the book or watch the film before starting the course.

What to do to prepare for A Level Spanish:

- Go over your GCSE grammar, especially tenses and verb endings. You will be given a grammar test at the start of the course so that we can assess your grammatical understanding.
- Complete our Spanish GCSE to A Level Workbook (email Ms Garcia for a copy)
- Read in Spanish - magazines & newspapers *El Mundo*, *El País*.
- Websites (<https://primerasnoticias.com/>)
- Watch Spanish movies (check *Time Out* as many films are available on DVD e.g. *Volver* (2006), *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006), *La Zona* (2007), *Sin nombre* (2009), *The Secret in Their Eyes* (2009), etc.)
- Listen to Spanish music (check Spanish charts, Spotify, music festivals) and podcasts
- Keep up to date with Spanish current affairs

Tema 1: **La evolución de la sociedad española**

This theme covers social issues and trends.

- Changes in family structures
- Education
- World of work

Tema 2: **La cultura en el mundo de habla española**

This theme covers political and artistic culture.

- Music
- Media
- Festivals and traditions

Tema 3: **La inmigración y la sociedad multicultural española**

This theme covers social issues and trends.

- Positive impact of immigration
- Challenges of immigration and integration
- Social and public reaction to immigration

Tema 4: **La dictadura franquista y la transición a la democracia**

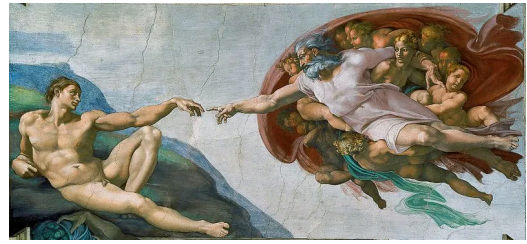
This theme covers political culture.

- Civil war
- Francisco Franco
- From dictatorship to democracy

If you have any questions, feel free to email Ms Garcia: mgarcia@csg.school.

Theology

Your Theology A Level (also known as Religious Studies) is [OCR](#) and will be divided into three strands: Christian Theology, Ethics and Philosophy of Religion. Each of these different strands is fascinating and requires a different way of thinking.



At the very least, in preparation for the start of your A Level, you should be familiar with:

- An overview of the history of philosophy and theology, starting with the ancient Greeks (Socrates, Plato and Aristotle), the rise of Christianity, the middle ages, the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and modern trends.
- An understanding of ethics as the science of making good moral decisions. You should be starting to think theoretically about how human beings decide what is right and what is wrong.
- A basic overview of the structure of the Bible, how Christianity came from Judaism, what Christians believe about the person of Jesus and the nature of the Christian Church today.

How will I be able to do this?

- [Very Short Introductions](#) offer short texts on virtually all of the above ideas, movements and philosophers/theologians.
- In addition, David Ford's [Very Short Introduction to Theology](#) would be a great start to exploring the Christian Theology part of the course
- [The School of Life](#): has a syllabus of videos on the great philosophers. Each video is about ten minutes long. Try to complete this syllabus before September.
- [Alex O'Conner/Cosmic Sceptic](#): This young graduate of Theology from Oxford has hit the big time with his YouTube channel - he debates God's existence, veganism, and a whole range of other issues. It's great, check it out.
- [Philosophy Tube](#): Abigail Thorn is a master in exploring philosophy in a highly original way. Check her out also.

Come to class in September knowing something about the life and thought of the following philosophers:

- Plato
- Aristotle
- Augustine of Hippo
- Thomas Aquinas
- Rene Descartes
- Immanuel Kant
- John Stuart Mill
- Karl Marx
- John Paul Sartre
- Peter Singer
- Richard Dawkins



If you have any questions at all, feel free to email the Head of Theology & Philosophy Mr O'Connell: moconnell@csg.school.