



AS Classical Civilisation GCSE to A level

Bridging Work
Year 11 into 12 for 2021/22



Name: _____

Tutor Group: _____

Teacher: _____

Welcome to AS Classical Civilisation!

You have just made the best choice of your life.

Classical Civilisation is the best subject for those who have an interest in everything.

During the course we will cover:

- History
- Literature
- Drama
- Politics
- Art
- Archaeology
- Anthropology
- Reception Theory
- Theology
- Architecture
- Philosophy
- And much, much more.



JK Rowling and Oscar Wilde studied Classics at University

What is Classical Civilisation?

Classical Civilisation is the study of the cultures of Ancient Greece and Rome. It is a very wide ranging subject involving the study of literature, art and ancient thought and ideas, which are studied in the historical context.

Though all of the literature would have been originally written in Ancient Greek and Latin, everything that we study will be in **translation** (in English).

Why study Classical Civilisation?

The number one reason to study Classical Civilisation is that it is endlessly and enduringly interesting. Why else would scholars have been writing about these civilisations for the last 2,000 years?

Classical Civilisation is the perfect subject for someone who is an all rounder, but also for those who would like to increase their skills in a wide range of areas since it is all-encompassing and through reading a simple extract from a piece of ancient literature, you will have already covered elements of History, Philosophy, Language and many other disciplines.

For this reason, Classical Civilisation is widely respected and can be extremely useful for whatever you might want to do in later life.

Transferable Skills:

- Analytical skills (from analysing sources and language)
- Developing argument
- Learning about and from cultures different from your own
- Developing independent, critical and evaluative approaches

Classical Civilisation can take you anywhere. It is the perfect complement to science subjects, as well as to supporting arts subjects. It is listed as an excellent subject to study to support university applications for Arts subjects and it is listed on UCL's list of 'preferred A Level options.'

What does the course look like?

Over the course of 2 years we will complete the course listed below.

We study two texts (The Odyssey and The Aeneid – the foundation texts of Western Literature) and **one** choice from Component Group 2 and **one** from Component Group 3.

We will be studying Greek Theatre and Love and Relationships. Both of these choices provide a wide overview of Greek and Roman life and provide great comparisons with the modern day.

	Content Overview	Assessment Overview	
Y12	<p>The World of the Hero</p> <p>This is a compulsory component consisting of an in-depth study of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one of Homer's <i>Iliad</i> or <i>Odyssey</i> • and Virgil's <i>Aeneid</i> <p>This component is solely focused on the study of literature in translation.</p>	<p>The World of the Hero</p> <p>H408/11</p> <p>100 marks</p> <p>2 hours 20 minutes</p> <p>Written paper</p>	<p>40%</p> <p>of total</p> <p>A Level</p>
Y13			
Y12	<p>Component Group 2: Culture and the Arts</p> <p>Learners must study one component in this component group, chosen from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greek Theatre (H408/21) • Imperial Image (H408/22) • Invention of the Barbarian (H408/23) • Greek Art (H408/24) <p>Components in this group involve the study of visual and material culture. In all except Greek Art this is combined with the study of literature in translation.</p>	<p>Culture and the Arts</p> <p>H408/21, H408/22, H408/23, H408/24</p> <p>75 marks</p> <p>1 hour 45 minutes</p> <p>Written paper</p>	<p>30%</p> <p>of total</p> <p>A Level</p>
Y13	<p>Component Group 3: Beliefs and Ideas</p> <p>Learners must study one component in this component group, chosen from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greek Religion (H408/31) • Love and Relationships (H408/32) • Politics of the Late Republic (H408/33) • Democracy and the Athenians (H408/34) <p>Components in this group involve of an area of classical thought, in combination with either the study of literature in translation or visual/material culture.</p>	<p>Beliefs and Ideas</p> <p>H408/31, H408/32, H408/33, H408/34</p> <p>75 marks</p> <p>1 hour 45 minutes</p> <p>Written paper</p>	<p>30%</p> <p>of total</p> <p>A Level</p>

Support

Classical Civilisation will hopefully be an incredibly positive and fulfilling learning environment, but there may be times that you encounter problems with work, family, health, friends etc. that may have an impact on your life in school.

If you are experiencing any difficulties, there are always people you can turn to in school.

You can also come to see Miss Illingworth, or email her on: gillingworth@bentleywood.harrow.sch.uk

Expectations

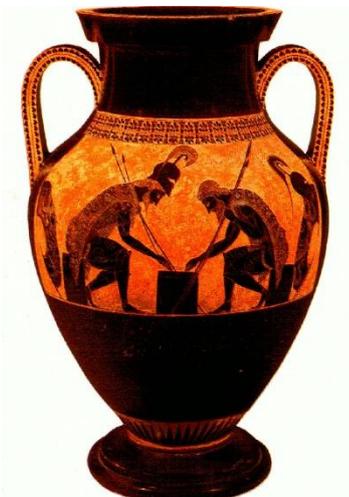
In order to succeed during Classical Civilisation A Level, there are certain requirements that are expected during your time at school.

You are expected to:

- Have 100% attendance and excellent punctuality. If you are unwell, please contact your teacher prior to the lesson. If you have to miss a lesson for medical or academic appointments, it is **your responsibility** to catch up on the course content.
- Complete **one piece of homework every week** and hand it in on time. This may take the form of some reading, preparation work, critical analysis or essay writing.
- Spent 4 hours a week on personal study for Classical Civilisation. During this time you will be required to make detailed notes, read for essays and complete your homework. In order to do this, you must ensure that you are organised.
- Manage your time both in and outside of school effectively. A Levels demand great commitment, thus you will be responsible for organising your time and your resources and keeping them tidy.
- Work well with your peers. Be a respectful listener and a critical friend. Be supportive of everyone in the class to create a safe and inspiring learning environment.

You should expect me to:

- Mark homework and return it within two weeks of the hand-in date.
 - Be willing to discuss any questions that you might have and to be supportive of your learning and progression within the subject.
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The World of the Hero: The Odyssey

For this unit you will need to swot up on your mythology. You must look up the mythology of the gods listed below and write them into the table. Dig as deep as you can and read as many stories as you can in order to gain a good overview.

Recommended books to expand your knowledge:

Orchard Book of Greek Myths by Robert Graves (it looks childish, but the myths are told well and accurately)

Mythos by Stephen Fry – a very current book. There is a lot of artistic licence in this one, but it is a very entertaining read.

<https://www.greekmythology.com/> - a good place to start for looking up the gods and goddesses.

NB: the myths will change, sometimes drastically from source to source so do not worry if you get very different ideas to everyone else.

God/Goddess	God/Goddess of?	Symbols	Known for
Zeus			
Hera			
Athene			
Poseidon			
Hermes			
Apollo			

Also look up:

Name	Who is he/she?	What is their relationship to Odysseus in the Odyssey?
Penelope		
Telemachus		
Anticleia		
Laertes		
Circe		
Calypso		
Nausicaa		
Polyphemus		
Eurymachus		
Antinous		

Read this passage to give you more information about Homeric Epic:

When you have read this essay:

- Reduce it into 10 key points
- Summarise the main ideas of the essay in 5 sentences
- Research what an 'epic' text is and read Book 1 of the *Odyssey* – bring a 300 word piece on it to our first lesson explaining why the *Odyssey* is an 'epic' and at least one detail from Book 1 that shows this.

I The Homeric epic

No exertion spent upon any of the great classics of the world, and attended with any amount of real result, is really thrown away. It is better to write one word upon the rock than a thousand on the water or the sand. (W. E. Gladstone, *Studies on Homer* 1.91)

Western literature begins with Homer. The two long heroic epics, *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, appear suddenly; we can know little about the poetry which preceded them, and composition in prose had not yet begun. They never lost their fascination for the ancient Greeks, and they continued to form the basis of Greek education, despite the passionate opposition of Plato. The Romans in turn fell under their spell, and Homer was the model of Virgil, who was to be the master and example of Dante and Milton; the Homeric poems are still the inspiration of Tennyson and Kazantzakis and James Joyce. If justification is needed for his inclusion in a series devoted not to literary criticism but to the great thinkers of the past, it can perhaps be found in the judgement of Matthew Arnold, that Homer is great 'in the noble and profound application of ideas to life' (*On Translating Homer*, 172). The aim of this book is to explain and justify that statement.

The first thing to say to all those who open a book like this one is that they should, of course, read the poems. No book about them can compete in interest or pleasure with the epics themselves. There are many readable translations, but none is completely satisfactory. Perhaps none can be, since there does not exist in English literature anything of the same nature as Homer, to serve as a model; as a sufficiently talented translator could, in principle, translate Sophocles into something like the style of Shakespeare, or Virgil into something like the style of Milton. The translations in this book represent an updating of the late Victorian versions of the *Iliad* by Lang, Leaf, and Myers (Macmillan, 1882), and of the *Odyssey* by Butcher

and Lang (Macmillan, 1879), which aimed to turn Homer into prose which should be simple but also slightly archaic. But the enormous success of the Penguin translations by E. V. Rieu witnesses to Homer's power to fascinate, even in a colloquial guise.

Both the poems are about events in the story of the Trojan War. When Greeks became scholars and historians, centuries after Homer's time, they discussed the date of the fall of Troy; 1184 BC was the year most generally accepted. For the poet, the events of which he tells are set in a fairly distant past, when men were taller and stronger than they are now, and the gods moved among them. We are not told how long ago this period was, nor why there are no god-born heroes in the poet's own day. Other early poets did attempt to produce systematic explanations; that Homer does not is, therefore, a deliberate choice, and one which is in harmony with the tendency of his work to be interested in depicting events for themselves, in their greatness and starkness, not in attempts at rationalising and justifying them.

The Trojan War began because the Trojan prince Paris seduced and stole away the beautiful Helen, wife of the Achaean Menelaus, king of Sparta. It is an unromantic touch that he also stole 'much treasure' with her (13.626). Behind this story, but suppressed by Homer, lies the tale of the Judgement of Paris: called upon to decide which was most beautiful, Hera the queen of the gods, Athena the virgin warrior, or Aphrodite the goddess of love, he chose Aphrodite, who rewarded him with the most beautiful woman in the world. This was in its original nature a moral allegory: Which is the best and most desirable life for a man – to be a great king, or to be a mighty warrior, or to live in pleasure? And the point of the story was that the disastrous choice of Paris doomed his people. But something so flatly explicit and moral was alien to Homer's manner, and as we shall see he suppressed it, making the hatred of Hera and Athena for Troy something sinister and unexplained.

Menelaus' brother Agamemnon, king of Mycenae rich in

gold, was the greatest king in Greece. He raised a great expedition to cross the Aegean, punish the Trojans, and bring back Helen. The army consisted of many contingents, each with its own heroic leaders. The greatest warrior was Achilles, son of the sea-goddess Thetis by Peleus, a human father; Ajax, Odysseus, Diomedes, and Nestor were among the Achaean heroes. When the *Iliad* begins, the Achaeans (also called Argives and Danaans) are at Troy, and we soon learn that they have been there for nine years.

The action of the *Iliad* begins with a quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles over the distribution of booty. After a violent argument Achilles withdraws from the fighting to his tents, and calls on his mother to use her influence with Zeus to bring about an Achaean defeat, so that they will be forced to beg him to return to battle and save them. This plan gradually works, and in the ninth book Agamemnon, in despair, sends envoys with offers of gifts if Achilles will come back. It is made clear that by the normal heroic code Achilles should yield, but he so resents his treatment that passionate anger will not allow him to give way. So the war goes on without him, the Achaeans are harder and harder pressed, their champions are wounded, and finally with the help of Zeus Hector forces his way to the ships and tries to burn them (book fifteen). At this point the soft-hearted Patroclus, Achilles' dearest comrade, can no longer bear the disasters of his friends, and Achilles allows him to take the field, in his own armour, to help them. After great successes he is slain by Hector, who strips him of the armour of Achilles. Burning with grief and anger, Achilles resolves to kill Hector, although he has been told by his mother that after Hector's death his own will soon follow; he slaughters many Trojans and finally comes face to face with his enemy, who turns to flee but at last stands, fights, and is killed. Still isolated in grief and hatred, Achilles refuses to give up his body for burial and drags it behind his chariot. In the last book the gods intervene to make him surrender it: Priam is brought through the night to ransom the body of his son. The old king and the slayer of his son weep together, recognising each other's

greatness and the common unhappiness of men, and the poem ends with the funeral of Hector and the lamentations over his corpse.

The *Odyssey* begins ten years later and deals with the adventures of the last hero to return home from Troy. Between the two poems the city has fallen at last, in the tenth year of the war. Flashbacks give us glimpses of the Wooden Horse in which the Achaeans made their way into the city, the burning of Troy, the chaotic departure of the conquerors, drunken and insolent, and the disasters which many of them had to suffer on their journey home. Achilles was slain before the sack, Ajax killed himself soon afterwards; above all King Agamemnon, returning in triumph, was murdered by his unfaithful wife and her ignoble lover. These linking passages between the two epics are carefully arranged and put into the mouths of characters, especially Nestor in book three and Menelaus in book four.

The poem itself concerns the return home to Ithaca of Odysseus, most cunning and patient of heroes. At the beginning he is lost to the world, far away on an island belonging to the goddess Calypso, who loves him and will not let him go, though he yearns for home. Meanwhile, his wife Penelope is the object of the unwelcome courtship of the local princes, who are carousing in his house and consuming his food and wine in a campaign aimed at forcing her to marry one of them. His son Telemachus, who was a baby when his father left, has hitherto been a helpless spectator. The poem has a double plot, by contrast with the single plot of the *Iliad*: in the first four books the goddess Athena rouses Telemachus to defy the suitors and go off in quest of news of his father. He is entertained by Nestor and by Menelaus, and we see him growing up in the course of his travels. In the next four books Odysseus is released by Calypso, under orders from Zeus; he builds a raft, sails away, and is wrecked off the country of the Phaeacians, a semi-supernatural people. From the ninth to the twelfth book he tells them the long story of his wanderings and his encounters with such perils as the Sirens and the Cyclops, and his journey to the world of the dead. They then escort him home and leave him

on Ithaca. The two plots are united when Telemachus also returns home, avoiding an ambush by the suitors, and is united with his father. Disguised as a beggar, the hero is abused by the suitors in his own house. At length Penelope seems to give in. With many tears the great bow of Odysseus is produced, and the man who can string it and shoot through a row of axes is to have her hand. None of the suitors can bend the mighty bow; the hero gets it into his hands at last, performs the prescribed task, and then, with the aid of his son and two faithful retainers, destroys them all. After his reunion with Penelope the poem ends with a vain attempt by the suitors' kinsmen to avenge them, and Athena imposes peace on the island.

It must be said at the outset that of Homer as a man we know nothing at all, outside the poems which have come down to us under his name. When the Greeks became interested in biography, nothing was recorded about the man to whom they ascribed their greatest literary treasures. It is only a romantic story that he was a blind minstrel. The Greeks ascribed both epics to one man, only a few eccentrics attributing them to two different poets; but most scholars now believe that the *Iliad* was composed first, and that the *Odyssey* had a separate and rather later origin, the second poet being influenced by his knowledge of the *Iliad*. The arguments which support this conclusion are in part technical, being concerned with features of language, but some of them are more general and will be illustrated when this book turns to the *Odyssey*. The gods behave in a different way in the *Odyssey*, which also embodies another conception both of heroism and of morality, while the highly selective picture which the *Iliad* presents of the world gives place to a much more open and varied range of interests. It is not in the manner of the epic for the poet to speak of himself; the Muse inspires him and speaks through him, and in the twenty-seven thousand lines of the Homeric poems we are not told a single fact about the poet. The individual 'Homer' is lost in the splendour of the Homeric creation, and his name is in effect no more than a synonym for the epics themselves. Various con-

siderations of language, archaeology, and history suggest that it was about 725 BC, somewhere on the coast of Asia Minor or on one of the Aegean islands, that a great poet conceived the plan of the *Iliad*, and perhaps a generation later that the second poet created the *Odyssey*, setting out to create a poem which in scale and inclusiveness should rival the *Iliad*.

Once in existence, the two poems never went out of fashion and were never lost sight of. It is the normal destiny of such early heroic poems, like the English *Beowulf* and the Icelandic *Edda*, to become old-fashioned, to be neglected, and, if they are lucky, to be eventually rediscovered. Sometimes, as in ancient Rome, by the time they are thought worth seeking they are already gone for ever. The Homeric poems never suffered this fate, but have been continuously read ever since their creation, first in Greece and then in Western Europe too. In this they differ from all the literature of the period except the Old Testament; the writings of the Egyptians, the Sumerians, the Babylonians, and all the rest were lost to the world for many centuries and have only recently been deciphered by the labours of Western scholars. Other reasons of history and geography kept our ancestors in ignorance of the literatures of India and China. They too could not directly influence European culture and history.

But although we cannot read the poems which went before Homer, it is important for the understanding of the Homeric achievement to have an idea of the background from which it emerges. This has several aspects. First, the Indo-European peoples from whom the Greeks are descended had a tradition of heroic verse. We find surviving representatives, for instance, in the ancient literature of India, in early Germanic lays, in the Anglo-Saxon *Beowulf*, and in old Irish. Such subjects as the anger and withdrawal of a hero, fights to the death between kinsmen or friends, feudal loyalty and disobedience, and perhaps above all revenge, recur in all of them; so does the conception of glory as the motive and reward of the warrior. We can see that Homer derives ultimately from such a tradition, and comparison with other branches of it can sometimes let us see the individuality of the Homeric poems. Revenge, for

example, is a great motive in both epics, but when we look at the Germanic tradition, with the ecstasy of self-destructive violence to which the lust for revenge frequently impels heroes and heroines alike, we see a great contrast with the calculating rationality of Odysseus, and perhaps an even greater one with the deep self-knowledge and human sympathy which are shown when Priam meets his enemy Achilles in the last book of the *Iliad*.

In addition to this inherited tradition, early Greeks came into contact with civilisations of the East, already ancient and imposing. The stories of the Homeric poems are set, self-consciously, in the Bronze Age, when Mycenae was rich in gold; that means the period which we call Mycenaean, about 1400–1200 BC. The epics took their final form much later, but they embody real memories of that earlier period. It was one of cultural contact and even a degree of cultural uniformity over a wide area, from Greece across the Aegean Sea to the Hittites of Anatolia, Canaanite kingdoms like Ugarit in what is now Syria, Cyprus, Egypt, and even Mesopotamia. These kingdoms traded, corresponded, and were linked by dynastic marriages. More important, they produced literature, and we can see that Greece was influenced by it.

For example, Homer is familiar with the story that Zeus had a father called Cronos and a grandfather called Uranus, each of whom in turn was ousted from supreme godhead by his son. This succession of sky-gods makes no sense in terms of the original Indo-European conceptions, and it must have been learnt and borrowed from Eastern sources before 1000 BC. Again, in Homer we find repeatedly scenes in which the gods all meet for council and discuss human actions and destiny; this important feature, too, derives from the East, and we find such divine councils in the literature of Mesopotamia and Syria. They are alien to specifically Greek religion.

These two sets of traditions converge in the Homeric epic. We have also to consider real history. The poets retained an inherited memory that there had been a time when the king of Mycenae was a great ruler, the head of a host armed with

bronze, in a Greece where the Dorian tribes, so powerful in their own time, had not yet arrived, the last of the migrant invaders from the North. We now know that real history underlay these ideas; Mycenae, in the classical period an unimportant place, was indeed a powerful stronghold in those days. But the singers, living themselves in the smaller-scale communities and poorer circumstances of Greece after the destruction of the Mycenaean palaces, no longer really understand what that earlier period was like or how it worked. The heroes and their world are presented as illiterate, while we know that the historic Mycenaeans kept elaborate bureaucratic records. The position of king Agamemnon is obscure: he is the supreme commander and in some sense 'more kingly' than the others, but they are generally represented as equals, free to accompany him or to leave the expedition, and when Achilles threatens to sail home from Troy Agamemnon can only say 'Run away, then, if that is your heart's desire; I do not ask you to stay for my sake - I have others who will honour me, and above all Zeus the Counsellor' (1.173). At moments we see a realistic picture of the circumstances of Homeric kings bearing more resemblance to those of farmers in the Dark Ages than of the powerful rulers who built the mighty fortresses of Mycenae and Tiryns, centuries before. Thus Priam's sons themselves harness his waggon, while he reviles them as wastrels and playboys (24.247-80); Priam himself feeds his own horses (5.271). In the *Odyssey* the arrival of two unexpected guests makes the servants wonder whether Menelaus' household will be able to cope (iv. 26-36). But at other times Homeric palaces are presented in terms which are imposing, if vague.

Above all, the age of Agamemnon is presented as a heroic age. It is not simply a period of past history which happens to be interesting. Men in those days were bigger and stronger than we are, and they were closer to the gods, who intervened directly in their actions and mingled with them on earth. Because the gods did this that time was a special time, and actions then had the quality of being representative of human life as a whole. We see and understand the nature and limits of human life as the gods

intervene in it; the world becomes transparent, and we see the divine forces which act in the background and which in ordinary life are hidden. Many peoples have produced poetry about a heroic age, and it is implicit in the conception that what is aimed at is not a purely naturalistic or straightforwardly historical representation of a period of the past. It was because this period was felt to be special and to possess significance that stories about it are myths; the mythical age was quite short, only two or three generations about the time of the Theban and Trojan wars, and for the thousand years that antiquity lasted that period of the past was felt to be separate and continued to be the subject of poetry, tragedy, painting and sculpture. From Greece and Rome this passed to the art of Renaissance Europe, and it was as natural that the first operas to be produced in Italy should be on Greek mythical themes as it was for Shakespeare to write *Venus and Adonis*, Handel to write *Acis and Galatea*, and Leonardo, Titian and Poussin to represent mythological subjects.

It is one of the most characteristic features of Greek mythology that it is dominated by heroes and heroic stories. This makes it unique among the mythologies of the world. Normally we find far more about the gods, about the creation of the world, and about the fertility of plants, animals and men; and also about the activities of animals which can speak and have human or superhuman qualities. In most mythologies heroes are either inconspicuous or altogether absent. The paramount position of the Homeric poems in Greek literature is connected with this, although we are not in a position to find a simple relationship of cause and effect. The replacing of the colossal, the vague, and the bestial with the human image and the human scale is perhaps the most vital and the most lasting of all the achievements of Greece, both in literature and in art. In the *Iliad* that achievement appears already complete.

It was not achieved without self-conscious reflection and stylisation, and the careful combination of different elements. We see that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* combine features from the Mycenaean past with others of the poets' own time. For example,

the heroes are conscientiously represented as fighting with bronze, but incidental touches reveal that the poets were perfectly familiar with weapons of iron. They put side by side characters who look human and historical with others who had a quite different origin, like Helen, who was originally a goddess of vegetation, stolen away and brought back like Persephone the Corn Maiden, daughter of Demeter; and like Achilles, who is the leader of a completely mythical people, the Myrmidons, who is the son of a goddess of the sea, and who in most early Greek poetry (though not in Homer) was, like Siegfried, invulnerable save for one spot. The warriors at Troy are made to include the Lycians, living at the other end of Asia Minor, and Diomedes, who belongs not in the Trojan cycle of myths but in that of Thebes; while in the *Odyssey* we find magical people like the Phaeacians and fairy-tale monsters like the Cyclops. In all this they are not unlike the German *Nibelungenlied*, which combines historical figures with mythical heroes and moves characters from century to century at will. These differences of origin are not apparent to the reader, because of the energy of the Homeric style and the consistency of the Homeric picture of the world. When they are pointed out by critics, they can help us to appreciate those qualities more fully.

The poems are composed in a complex metre. Like all Greek verse, it is built on patterns of long and short syllables; the stress accent which makes English poetry did not exist in early Greek. The unit is a long line, which remains constant in its basic pattern but admits controlled variation in such a way that it can contain from twelve to seventeen syllables. Both the length and the complexity of this line are unusual in heroic verse. The language is consciously poetic, and it contains words whose meaning was already obscure to the singers themselves, but which were felt to belong to the epic style. At the same time it can be very direct and simple, and it is not at all given to the rather humourless grandeur which is, perhaps, the characteristic vice of the style of such poets as Virgil, Milton, and Racine. Matthew Arnold, in his rewarding little book *On*

Translating Homer, gave as the chief qualities of the Homeric style: 'He is eminently rapid; he is eminently plain and direct . . . and he is eminently noble.'

One striking feature of the poems calls for special comment, since although it is a matter of style it also has consequences of a more general sort. The Homeric poems differ from all other epic traditions, except those which derive from them, in their extended similes, comparisons which may be as long as a dozen lines. Sometimes a hero acts simply 'like a lion'; this may be developed until we read, for instance,

Achilles rushed to meet him like a lion, a ravaging lion, whom men are resolved to slay, the whole village uniting: at first he goes on, heedless, but when some fighting man wounds him with a spear, he gathers himself open-mouthed; there is foam about his teeth, his fighting spirit groans in his heart, and with his tail he lashes his flanks on either side, goading himself to fight, then comes straight on with glaring eyes, either to kill a man or be killed himself in the first onset: even so was Achilles driven on by his anger and his brave spirit to confront great-hearted Aeneas. (20.164-75).

Such a comparison becomes an end in itself, a striking piece of ornament and variety, and often it is unfolded in such a way that the simile differs from what it describes. Here, for instance, Achilles is not wounded, nor is he attacking a whole group of men. No doubt the avoidance of exact correspondence was deliberate; instead of the same picture twice repeated we see two different pictures.

Many of the similes are obviously heroic, derived from lions, wild boars, serpents, storms, floods, forest fires; others are drawn from trees, clouds, stars, the quiet sea. Many human activities appear, some of them decidedly practical. There are the agricultural tasks of irrigation, ploughing, reaping, threshing and treading out the corn; and such special trades as the smith cooling hot iron, woodcutters at work, the potter's wheel, tanners stretching out an ox-hide, a carpenter boring a beam, an artist gilding a statue, a woman weighing out wool. We see a little girl crying and pulling at her mother's skirt, women quarrelling in the street, a widow lamenting over her husband's

After the final destruction in the twelfth century BC of the Mycenaean palaces and the developed culture which went with them, the end of a long process of decline, there followed a disturbed and much impoverished period, in which Greece was for a time cut off from the East. Old centres were abandoned, and artistic levels seem to have fallen sharply. The Homeric epics in their present form date from the end of this age, when Greece was growing richer again, and the alphabet was borrowed and adapted from the Phoenicians. Somewhere about 725 BC, it seems, the *Iliad* came into existence, at much the same time as other epic poems on mythological themes.

Although these other poems are lost, we know a certain amount about some of them, and it is clear that the *Iliad* is in important ways different. First, it is more than twice as long as any other we hear of, and very much longer than most. Second, it is organised in a different way. Whereas the *Thebaid* told the whole story of the Theban war, and such a poem as the *Sack of Troy* dealt with the obvious climax and end of the Trojan story, this enormous Troy-poem included neither the beginning of the war nor its end. It singled out an episode, in itself apparently indecisive, and made it represent the whole; the death of Hector means that Troy is doomed, while Achilles is also fated to die soon and has accepted his own death, but is still alive at the end of the poem. We shall see later how this is done. Third, the other early epics were very much freer in admitting the magical, the miraculous, and the bizarre. In those poems we find Amazons and Ethiopians, marvellous armour which cannot be pierced, magical means which restore an old man to youth, and girls called Wine-girl, Corn-girl, and Oil-girl, who can produce without limit the provisions after which they are named. Among the Argonauts, Orpheus with his lute could control birds and animals, the two sons of the North Wind had wings, Lynceus had supernatural eyesight, and the ship itself could talk. There were magical objects. Troy could not fall as long as it kept the image of Athena called the Palladium; a hero suffered a wound which could be cured only by rust from the spear which made it; and so on. Above all, in those poems

heroes could be raised from the dead, and we know that not only Achilles but also Penelope and Telemachus were made immortal.

Against this background the *Iliad* stands out as a conscious effort at something very different. We have seen that we know nothing of the author; we must add that we know as little of his audience. The *Iliad* takes a highly aristocratic view of human life, the common people being kept firmly in their place. That perhaps suggests an original audience which felt itself to be aristocratic in a sense in which that of the *Odyssey* did not; but such an inference is clearly flimsy. Whatever his hearers were, the poet had established an ascendancy over them which made it possible for him to impose upon them a very long poem, instead of complying with their more natural demand for something which could be heard complete in one or two sittings, like the songs which Demodocus sings in the *Odyssey*. Once he was embarked on something of the *Iliad*'s scale, the poet and not the audience was in control. We are to think of a singer, conscious of his own powers and the attention of his public, conceiving a massive poem, concerned with the subject-matter and drawing on the resources of the oral tradition. The poem was to be unified in a sophisticated way, including within the story of Achilles' wrath the whole of the Trojan War; at its end the audience were to accept that symbolically Troy had fallen. The whole conception, in scale and originality, was so bold and individual that we can be confident that it was that of one man. The days when romantic scholars believed in 'folk poetry', producing the *Iliad* by collective action, are over.

Greek Theatre

For the Greek Theatre unit, you will have to read three plays:

- *Bacchae* by Euripides
- *Oedipus the King* by Sophocles
- *The Frogs* by Aristophanes

Over the summer holidays, you must read **Oedipus the King**.

You must then write an answer of about 500 words to this question: Why is Oedipus the King an effective tragedy?

Success Criteria:

- Write in full paragraphs
- Make at least 3 separate points
- Support your answer with examples from the text
- Try to include some further reading about tragedy that you have done.

You must bring this with you to your first lesson of AS Classics in September

Useful Websites and Knowledge Growing Ideas

- The course website: www.ocr.org.uk If you go onto the website and type in 'Classical Civilisation A Level' you will be taken to the area of the website that includes: the course information and some sample questions.
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qykl>: Log on to 'In Our Time' on BBC Radio4. They have some excellent discussions about Ancient Writers such as The Philosophy of Love since Plato and The Odyssey – this will serve as an excellent introduction to the text.
- Follow Mary Beard on Twitter and watch her documentaries on Pompeii and read her books:
 - *Pompeii*
 - *Confronting the Classics*
 - *SPQR*
 - *Women and Power*
- Read modern novels about Ancient Texts like:
 - *The Children of Jocasta* by Natalie Haynes (a story of Oedipus the King from his wife's POV)
 - *The Song of Achilles* by Madeleine Miller
 - *Troy* by Adele Geras
- Read about Tragedy in *Poetics* by Aristotle – this may help you with your holiday question
- Watch *Troy* (with Brad Pitt and Orlando Bloom in it!) – this tells the story of the Iliad, which comes before The Odyssey. It will provide good background.

Books you need to Buy, all available on Amazon: you must buy the translations below.

- Homer, 'Odyssey' translated by E.V. Rieu, revised translation by D.C.H. Rieu (Penguin)
- Oedipus the King, translation by Fagles, in *The Three Theban Plays* (Penguin)
- Bacchae and Frogs, the appropriate volume of Cambridge Translations from Greek Drama

You might also like to purchase:

- OCR Classical Civilisation AS and A Level Component 11 – The World of the Hero by Sally Knights (published 13.07.2017)
- OCR Classical Civilisation AS and A Level Component 21 and 22 – Greek Theatre and Imperial Image by Robert Hancock, James Renshaw and Laura Swift.
- *Ancient Greece: A Very Short Introduction* by Paul Cartledge (you could also look at Homer and The Trojan War in the same series).

Academic Enrichment Suggestions:

Over the summer you will have plenty of time to delve deep into your new subjects. Once you arrive in the Sixth Form time will go very fast. It is greatly advised that you read around your subjects in the summer of Y11 to ensure that you are well-prepared for the challenging nature of the Sixth Form.

READ!

- *Circe* by Madeleine Miller
- *The Song of Achilles* by Madeleine Miller
- *The Silence of the Girls* by Pat Barker
- *The Children of Jocasta* by Natalie Haynes
- *A Thousand Ships* by Natalie Haynes
- *The Secret History* by Donna Tartt
- *The Penelopiad* by Margaret Atwood
- *The Odyssey* translated by Emily Wilson
- *Mythos* by Stephen Fry
- *Metamorphoses* by Ovid
- *The Iliad* by Homer
- *Home Fire* by Kamila Shamsie

LISTEN!

BBC 'In Our Time' podcast:

- The Greek Myths
- Tragedy
- The Odyssey

(Always make detailed notes as you listen!)

WATCH!

U	Ben Hur
U	Hercules (Disney)
U	Jason and the Argonauts
PG	Spartacus
PG	The Odyssey (1997)
PG	Clash of the Titans (1981)
12	Pompeii
12	Agora
12	The Eagle
15	300
15	Alexander
15	Gladiator
15	Troy

