



CLASSICS FORUM

Welcome to the second issue of Classics Forum. We hope that you enjoy this issue and find it useful and informative. Classics Forum provides updates on what's going on in the wider Classics community, news from teachers in schools delivering Classics, and information about events and activities that may be of interest to you and your students.

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Focus on A405 and B405

Distinct from the Roman and Greek Civilisation papers in the previous GCSE Latin and Classical Greek specifications, the 'Sources' units were designed to develop the skills of reading, evaluating and responding to primary source material as evidence of Roman and Greek civilisation. In order to develop these skills, candidates are encouraged to read as widely as possible and learn to question the evidence, detect any bias and limitations, and see how different sources can complement or contradict each other. The examinations test these skills rather than the prior learning of factual content.

What approaches are teachers using to prepare their students for A405 and B405? How does a study of primary source material complement candidates' wider studies of Latin or Classical Greek?

Three teachers share with us some of their reflections on the new source-based units:

Lucy Harrow

Principal Examiner A405 (and teacher)

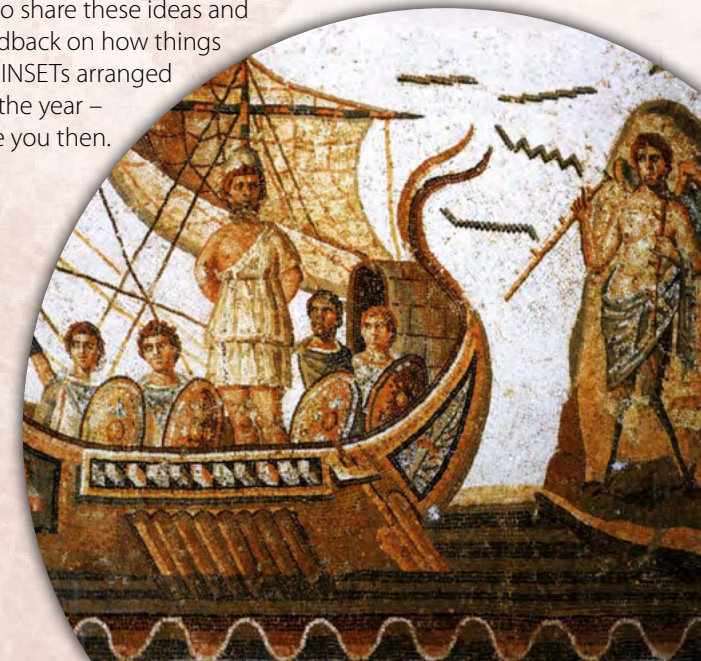
Normally at this time of year I would be racking my brains for a fresh range of activities on Roman daily life for my Years 7, 8 and 9. This year, however, it will be different. I have decided to rethink the way I approach topics in light of the new GCSE sources paper. I have been piloting a few ideas about houses and food already, which were really popular.

I have prepared information sheets on topics – houses, women, etc. – of about one side of A4. This replaces the usual reading from the textbook. Then using selected sources from the website and images (more of these in Year 7!) my students begin to draw their own conclusions and collect their own information.

More guided questions are needed in the beginning but eventually they develop skills in applying knowledge which will become second nature to them by the time they take the examination in Year 11.

More importantly, the students learn to think independently and appreciate that more than one opinion is valid. Along the way I shall enter students for Entry Level Latin – the extended writing option should give them practice in organising their material.

I am happy to share these ideas and give you feedback on how things are going at INSETs arranged throughout the year – I hope to see you then.



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Gillian Mead
Head of Classics, Chesterton Community College

Some pupils think that translation from Latin to English is a decoding exercise – for which you need only a code book and a set of rules – and the code book is a series of mechanical substitutions – *pater* = father, *forum* = market place, *deus* = god. The challenge for teachers is to go beyond this surface to convey translation as an imaginative and creative communication with a past world in which the most seemingly straightforward words carry penumbræ of meanings, associations and cultural significance.

One cannot understand *pater*, for example, without having some notion of familial expectations of the Roman household; *deus* in a Roman context makes no sense to those whose background is Judaic-Christian; to see the word *gladiator* should be to sense fear, degradation, pain, exhilaration, agility and skill. That is why the sources paper is so important.

In A405, pupils are rewarded for their cultural understanding, knowledge and empathetic awareness. They have a chance to explore, conjecture and question – to make explicit what is only implicit in their translations. I am rewriting my schemes of work to make primary sources the underlying focus of every exploration of Roman life – to develop skills of evaluation and comparison, to stimulate curiosity and to give appropriate cultural context to even the most mundane of translation exercises.

After all, the purpose of teaching Latin is not to translate ablative absolutes but to understand in one's head and in one's heart the workings of another culture and to discover other ways of being human. The sources paper allows pupils and teachers to be partners in that endeavour.

Jane Mayon-White
Teacher of GCSE Latin

The Sources for Latin unit has proved to be a real success for my students, both more and less able. I find that the students appreciate a change of pace from the grammar and translation lessons and the unit is much more student led. Giving a source to the class and asking them to evaluate it consolidates what they have learnt over the previous years. It requires a different skill set from the translation papers while at the same time reminding the students of how much they know.

Using the sources as a context for the translation papers offers students a more rounded view of the subject, and the students appreciate the chance to revisit some of the history they skimmed over during Key Stage 3.

Overall, I think the unit is a great way for students to consolidate and build on their knowledge of the subject.



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British Museum Classics Conference

On 20 May we held the first annual OCR Classics Conference at the British Museum. The conference focused on teaching Classics through material culture. The aim was to bring the latest in academic thinking and ideas directly to teachers, so that they could incorporate this in their teaching of the subject. We had lectures from four academics on their research into various aspects of the ancient world, relating to areas in the various Classics specifications. Ray Laurence spoke on new ideas about childhood in Pompeii, Peter Liddel discussed Greek literary epigraphy, Penny Murray presented her ideas about the geography of ancient cities, and Carrie Vout discussed perceptions of nudity in ancient art.

The British Museum was a wonderful venue and a long lunch break gave everyone the opportunity to explore its collections. In addition, Richard Woff and Sam Moorhead from the museum ran gallery-based workshop sessions throughout the day, explaining how museum collections can be used as a basis for teaching. Julie Welsby and Terry Edwards, the Chief Examiners for GCE Classical Civilisation and Ancient History, were present throughout the day to chat to teachers about their specifications, and in the afternoon both ran sessions offering their top tips on how to teach material culture in the classroom. With all of this going on, it was a very busy and exciting day, but if anyone did have a free few minutes to fill, the Hellenic Bookservice was in attendance with a wide selection of relevant books to browse.

After the day, all the materials, presentations and the audio recordings of the lectures were collated onto a CD which was sent to all the delegates, so that they could share the lecture experience with their students back in the classroom.

Teachers who came along identified the following as some of the best aspects of the day:

"Chance to hear the latest thinking from experts"

"Location [British Museum] superb"

"Opportunity to meet with the Examiners"

"Seeing how I can use the museum"

"Variety of topics and sessions (academic and practical)"

People were particularly keen on the museum workshop sessions and there was also much praise for the lecturers and the sessions run by the Chief Examiners. One teacher commented: *"An excellent new initiative – thank you. Please do it again."* Teachers also gave us lots of ideas on how we could improve the conference and what they would like to see at future events.

We really feel this first OCR Classics Conference was a huge success, and we want to make it an annual event. Next year's conference will take place at a similar time of year and will have a more literary theme. Although we are pleased with this year's event, we want to make next year's even better, so please get in touch and let us know what you would like to see. You can send us your suggestions and ideas by emailing us at ocr.classics@ocr.org.uk.

Sarah McPhee

Qualifications Manager for Languages and Literature, OCR



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British Museum tour review

Grahame Giles of Townley Grammar School attended the Classics Conference in May. Here he gives his review of the gallery sessions and how he plans to use some of the ideas from the day in his own teaching.

Taking large numbers of students to a museum can be a daunting prospect: navigating through the crowds, finding activities to stimulate and involve all students, can be stressful on the best of days. The sessions on British Museum tours organised as part of the OCR Classics Conference (20 May) were both fascinating in their own right but, more importantly, they were hugely useful for teachers with plans of returning with students.

Sam Moorhead's tour of the Weston Gallery showed how one room of the museum can be a powerful resource in which multiple questions and investigations can be explored using enlightening cross-referencing of artefacts – brilliant for anyone studying or teaching Roman Britain.

Richard Woff's approach to using the museum to teach and investigate Greek art was dynamic, inclusive and great fun. The idea of using students as sales teams, pitching their wares, which in this case comprised pieces from different periods and/or geographical regions of the Greek world, served to involve and engage everybody and is definitely a strategy to be used again in this and many other learning situations. This activity and the many others suggested on the day all stressed the direct participation of the students in fun evaluative and analytical exercises.

Overall, the day at the museum was hugely stimulating and left me eager to come back with my own students. I also look forward to similar conferences in the future.

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Classics for All

Classics for All is a new, self-standing, registered charity (no. 1135379) founded by Friends of Classics and the Joint Association of Classical Teachers. Its purpose is to raise funds to kick-start the four Classical subjects in UK state schools.

At the moment, its strategy is to invite bids from individuals or teams to launch projects that meet its criteria. In the first round earlier this year, £80,000 was disbursed to eight projects. These included (among others) schemes to train up non-specialist teachers, to forge partnerships between schools that taught Classics with those that did not, to send out teams from universities into local schools, and to work through an education authority to build and forge links between Latin in state primary and secondary schools in that area. A second round of bids will be invited next year. Classics for All hopes to convert one hundred such schools a year for ten years. That would mean that half of all state schools would then be teaching something Classical. If you have a project that meets our criteria do let Classics for All know.

www.classicsforall.org.uk

Latin in London

Meanwhile, Boris Johnson will be fronting a 'Latin for London' drive from October. London state schools are being offered the chance to have one hour of Latin a week for 30 weeks; and/or a one-hour talk about the ancient world on a range of topics: *The Olympic Games*, *Latin in English*, *Famous Ancients*, *Athenian Democracy* and/or *Gladiators*. If you know of Classics-free state schools in London that would like to take up this offer or you yourself would like to teach on it, please email me: pvjones@friends-classics.demon.co.uk.

Peter Jones

Friends of Classics

www.friends-classics.demon.co.uk

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Cluster group update

Since the spring we have been collecting and analysing all the requests received from you asking to join a local Classics cluster group.

We have been working on the model of finding at least five centres within an hour's travelling time of each other and have identified eight potential cluster groups initially: North London, East London, West London, Oxford, Bristol, Birmingham, Manchester and Merseyside, and the Lancashire/Yorkshire Pennines area.

Just before the summer break we started contacting centres who fall within these areas to ask if they were still eager to join the group and started gathering information about dates, times and places to set up the first meetings.

Our first meeting will be held at Manchester High School for Girls on 28 September and will include a number of centres from the Manchester and Merseyside area. The aim is to focus on Classical Civilisation and Latin, as that is the principal interest of the centres involved. Ellen MacKay, Qualifications Manager for Languages and Literature will attend as the OCR representative to set the ball rolling and take part in a question and answer session.

Close on the heels of this meeting we have arranged a meeting in Oxford on 29 September involving ten centres.

We hope to set up some more meetings after half term, as and when we have enough information from the centres to arrange a suitable time and place, and hope that by the end of this academic year we will have eight or ten groups up and running.

We have drawn up a map to show the extent of the responses and are still receiving requests from new centres. If you would like us to add your details to our list, or think you would like to join an existing group, please let us know at ocr.classics@ocr.org.uk.

Thank you all for such an excellent response. It is great news that so many of you want to collaborate with each other, and very satisfying to know that you appreciate our effort in getting the groups started.



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Hants and Dorset Ancient History Cluster Group

There are currently three centres involved in this group – The Gryphon School Sherborne, Queen Mary’s College Basingstoke and South Downs College Waterlooville. All of us have been pleasantly surprised by the enthusiasm that has been generated among our students by the study of Ancient History and the rapid growth that we have seen in the numbers taking the subject. This year there is a combined total of about 250 AS students and 150 A2 students at the three centres spanning the whole ability range.

In all three centres, Ancient History is taught within the History department by people whose teaching background is generally as modern historians, and this has brought with it a particular set of common issues, particularly obvious in the wake of the changes that began in 2008. It was to deal with these common issues that we first decided to meet as a group in the summer of 2010. We were fortunate in knowing each other through other contexts and being sufficiently close to each other geographically to make a meeting feasible. We had previously engaged in a sharing of a number of our resources and so the idea of a self-help INSET event attended by all of those teaching Ancient History in the three centres just seemed to be a natural progression. This has enabled new staff to understand some of the issues that are specific to Ancient History, as they too have come from a History background and the events of the ancient world generally constitute new ground. That first meeting, kindly hosted by Gryphon, enabled the two Hampshire colleges to follow in the footsteps of the Comic Strip and go mad (metaphorically) in Dorset!

At that first meeting, we had two main concerns: the accessibility of the language of the papers and the balance that needed to be struck between the use of the sources and historical argument, which it had become clear was different to the balance of the previous specification. To have space and time to reflect on shared problems has been a genuine benefit. This was perhaps the advantage of having the meeting after the external exams had been sat. We all found this first session so useful that we decided to meet again in

the autumn term, but we managed to set the date to coincide with a shutdown in the snow! The meeting was therefore pushed back to the summer term. This time we focused on what needed to be taught in the A2 Greek unit – we all do the same unit here and Gryphon talked about the strategies that they use to deal with borderline E/U candidates, something that they have been really successful with.

It has helped that we all teach the same Greek units at both AS and A2, but we also discuss issues that pertain to Rome – and at AS we all teach different options while at A2 two different options are studied. We use this meeting to share ideas, resources and concerns. Both our meetings to date have been full-day sessions, as this enables us to really think about the issues, but for centres that are very close to each other, this approach would certainly work for shorter meetings. Success depends on everyone being prepared to share and contribute their ideas. Sarah McPhee, Qualifications Manager’s support for our meetings has certainly been invaluable and we have already agreed that we will be meeting again next summer.

The Gryphon School Sherborne, Queen Mary’s College Basingstoke and South Downs College Waterlooville.

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Meet the Examiner

David Hodgkinson is the Chief Examiner for GCSE Ancient History and also Principal Examiner on the Ancient History GCE paper F393. He teaches at Headington School Oxford.

1. What inspired you to study Classics?

I went to Greece when I was seven and fell in love with the culture. I was also fortunate to have a very inspiring Greek teacher, and outstanding tutors at university, who led me to a new world in which Classics went beyond translation and became the understanding of the literature (in its widest sense): one taught me how to analyse the detail of the literature, another offered a wide view of history, while the third offered an inspiring vision of coming to understand how the thoughts and ideals of the ancient world might affect us today.

2. Who was your favourite teacher and why?

My Greek teacher, because he was always willing to help and give me further opportunities to develop my knowledge of Greek. His scholarship, combined with a real enthusiasm for each of his pupils, was both inspiring and an example for me to aspire to.

3. What has been your best teaching moment?

I was in Delphi with a group of 12/13-year-old boys a couple of years ago. We stopped under the Temple of Apollo and I was talking to them about the Chaerephon episode in Plato's *Apology*, describing how Chaerephon had gone to the oracle and returned with the answer that there was no man wiser than Socrates, and how this led to Socrates' quest to discover what the oracle meant. This led to a series of questions from the boys which were outstanding, as we discussed the origins of Western philosophy. It was really inspiring to see the boys thinking on such a deep level.

4. Where was your favourite site visit to? When did you go? What is special about that site?

The Athenian Agora – I have been many times over the years, and always enjoy looking at places where the Athenians would have

conducted their daily lives. There is a strong sense of everything coming together, with the religious buildings around the Agora, the political buildings housing the democratic process, and the sense that this is where Socrates wandered and asked people challenging questions. So much of Western European culture and thought seems to stem from this spot. Archaeologically the development of the site is also particularly interesting, as you get a real sense of the development from the earliest times through to the developments under the Romans and beyond.

5. What courses/units are you teaching at the moment?

AS Ancient History (both Greek and Roman), A2 Latin (verse literature), GCSE Greek and Latin, Year 9 Latin (WJEC Level 1).

6. What is your favourite subject to teach and why?

Ancient History, because it offers a range of opportunities to look at Greek and Roman culture and literature in a broad but detailed manner, as well as encouraging students to really think about what they can learn from any given piece of evidence. This then enables them to learn both about the values of the ancient world, and how these have influenced us today, and also the important skill of reasoning and developing an argument, while not accepting evidence at face value.

7. What is the best thing about being a Chief Examiner/Principal?

The development of the new GCSE Ancient History qualification has been particularly exciting, but on a day-to-day basis the variety of answers and arguments presented by students is always of interest. It is particularly pleasing to see how many students and teachers seem to have engaged with enthusiasm with the Classical world, and being part of the process that enables them to do this and gain recognition is most fulfilling.

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8. What books are you reading at the moment?

Ovid's *Amores* and various critical works on them. I am also about to start reading Robert Parker's latest book on Greek religion.

9. What is your favourite book of all time?

Plato's *Apology* seems to offer almost everything – there are moments of political intrigue, there is the sense of Socrates baiting the jury, and there is a lot to think about – from questioning what knowledge really is to considering the human condition in its entirety.

10. Which one book should every Classics student read?

The *Odyssey* – it provides such an entertaining read, and yet also challenges us to think about many aspects of human life. It is also at the root of so many Classical ideas. The *Iliad* may have been more dominant and finer poetry, but the *Odyssey* is probably easier for everyone to connect with and enjoy, and it's a great story.

11. Which three figures from the ancient world would you invite to your ideal imaginary dinner party? Who would the other guests be?

Pericles, Augustus and Socrates – it would be very interesting to see what their different ideals were, and how Socrates would challenge them. Both Pericles and Augustus are somewhat enigmatic, and to have the chance to see someone challenge them would be fascinating. I would also like to have their respective wives there, both to see how they related to their husbands, and, more significantly, to gain some insight into their real position in society. In the cases of Aspasia and Livia, I fear that there is an enormous amount that we do not know, or that has got rather muddled over the centuries.

12. If you could travel back in time to the ancient world for one day, when and where would you go and what would you do?

Fifth century Athens, probably during one of the festivals. I would love to see what was happening, and how the Athenians behaved. In particular, I would like to see the sophists in action and the Assembly. It would also be good to see the Parthenon at a point when the sculpture was being started, so some time in the early 420s would probably work.

13. If you could make any find/discovery from the ancient world, what would it be?

The lost books of Tacitus – there is so much about Caligula, in particular, that is so one sided at present (not that Tacitus would necessarily help with the one-sidedness!).

14. What artefact or piece of literature from the ancient world would you send out into space to inform other civilisations about life on earth?

Thucydides, in some translated form (that is assuming that they would be able to understand what he was saying in translation). It just seems that, as he observed, things do repeat themselves, and there is much that can be learnt from his views on human society.

15. If you hadn't become a Classicist, what would you have studied?

Chemistry!

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Exhibitions

The cost of living in Roman and modern Britain

11 August 2011 – 15 April 2012

British Museum Free



Pharaoh: King of Egypt

This exhibition features highlights from the British Museum's superb collection of ancient Egyptian objects. The exhibition is the largest UK loan of Egyptian artefacts ever undertaken by the British Museum and includes wonderful examples of sculpture, jewellery, palace ornamentation, papyri and funerary objects.

Tour dates

Great North Museum: Hancock,
Newcastle upon Tyne

16 July – 25 September 2011



Dorset County Museum, Dorchester

17 October 2011 – 22 January 2012



Leeds City Museum

10 February – 17 June 2012



Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery

7 July – 14 October 2012



Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow

3 November 2012 – 24 February 2013



The Roman Frontier

Open from 25 June 2011

The Roman Frontier: stories beyond Hadrian's Wall showcases Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery's significant Roman collections along with objects from the British Museum.



Ancient Greeks: Athletes, Warriors and Heroes

1 November 2010 – December 2012

Supported through the generosity of the Dorset Foundation This exhibition focuses on competition in the Ancient Greek world in sporting events such as the Olympics, as well as in politics, drama and warfare. The exhibition forms one of the largest selections of Greek artefacts ever lent by the British Museum.



Roman York – Meet the People of the Empire

Yorkshire Museum

With a focus on the glory of the Roman Empire at the height of its power, this exhibition features treasures collected by historians in the 1800s including mosaics, earthenware and a life-size sculpture of Mars, Roman God of War.



Events

Roman fort visit

Museum of London

Friday 21 October, 18 November, 16 December 2011 and 20 January 2012, 2–2.30pm and 3–3.30pm

FREE but tickets allocated on arrival

Tour the remains of the western gate of London's Roman military fort, located beneath the streets next to the Museum of London.



Performances

Medea, by Splendid Productions

7 September 2011 to 23 March 2012

Splendid Productions create high-quality, professional, political theatre with theory-based practical workshops for young people across the UK.

Splendid's new creative adaptation of Medea by Euripides puts the audience at the heart of the performance, as a twenty-first century chorus presents a timeless tale of passion, betrayal and revenge.



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Talks

Sculptures of the Parthenon

British Museum, Room 18

Wednesday 12 October, 1.15pm **Free**



A gallery talk by Susan Woodford, independent speaker. Gallery talks last 45 minutes. They are given by museum staff or guest speakers and are suitable for all levels of knowledge.

Roman Gloucestershire

Tim Copeland

Gloucester Museums

13 October, 6.30–8.30pm, including museum tour

Museum members **£5**, non-members **£7**



Tim Copeland talks about his book Roman Gloucestershire. It is not a book about 'the Roman Empire in Gloucestershire', but about 'Gloucestershire in the Roman Empire'. It looks at the Roman 'period' of 12 generations throughout which Late Iron Age ways of life continued and which were perhaps more common than those typical of the wider empire.

Foretold by thunder: an Etruscan book of omens revealed

British Museum, BP Lecture Theatre

Friday 14 October, 6.30pm **Free**

Jean MacIntosh Turfa presents the first English translation of an Etruscan book of thunder-omens, revealing the dynamic and perilous world that was ancient Etruria.



Prices in Roman Britain

British Museum, Room 69a

Wednesday 26 October, 1.15pm **Free**

A gallery talk by Sam Moorhead, British Museum. Gallery talks last 45 minutes.



Herculaneum: ashes to ashes

British Museum, BP Lecture Theatre

Friday 4 November, 6.30pm **£5**

Andrew Wallace-Hadrill discusses his recent publication which gives a definitive overview of what we know and understand about Herculaneum, of what is still unknown and mysterious, and of the potential for future discoveries in both archaeological and political contexts.



Study days

Knossos: from labyrinth to laboratory

British Museum, BP Lecture Theatre

Saturday 12 November, 9.30am–5.30pm

£35 members and concessions **£28**



A study day at the British Museum: an international group of speakers will share their in-depth knowledge of the site of Knossos with a general audience.

This study day will help to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the British School of Athens by presenting recent discoveries and current projects bringing the palace and its surrounding area back to life.

The day will also reflect on the British Museum's long history of involvement with Knossos, including the huge storage jar from the palace donated by Minos Kalokairinos in 1884. By looking at the modern and ancient history of the site it is possible to explore the labyrinth in all its complexity.

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Lectures

Wilson's School Classics Club is organising a series of lectures in October/November to raise awareness of Classics and encourage students to engage with the latest thinking on a variety of topics. All are free to attend; the lectures are all suitable for pupils of all ages, though the last in the series (Mr Denyer's) may be better suited to older students.

The speakers and titles are:

Mon 31 Oct — Dr Peter Haarer (Oxford) on ***The emergence of the alphabet*** and other writing systems.

Mon 7 Nov — Dr Matthew Nicholls (Reading) on ***Bread and circuses*** — the architecture of entertainment in ancient Rome. Using Dr Nicholls' own digital reconstructions of sites in ancient Rome, this talk will look at some of the best-known examples of theatres, amphitheatres, circuses and bath houses from Rome and her empire to see how emperors and other patrons made use of entertainment architecture.

Tue 15 Nov — Dr Llewelyn Morgan (Oxford) on ***The Gods of Greece and Rome*** — this talk will introduce students to some of the most interesting characters to be found on Olympus. We will discover how the ancients understood their gods and used them to make sense of the world around them; just like Christian saints, these individual characters could encourage people to feel that they had special relationships with certain gods, or that the gods had roles to play in particular circumstances.

Mon 21 Nov — Nicholas Denyer (Cambridge) on ***Why doesn't the Earth fall?*** — about the theory of Anaximander: the earth does not fall, not because there is anything beneath to hold it up, but because, being in the middle of a uniform cosmos, it has no reason to move in any one direction rather than another.

Wilson's School is situated in Wallington (between Sutton and Croydon in south London.



Refreshments are served at 4pm and the lectures will begin at 4.30, lasting for about an hour. Lecturers are always happy to answer questions at the end!

Wilson's School Classics Club



If possible please email js@wilsonsschool.sutton.sch.uk beforehand to give an idea of numbers (helps with providing refreshments).

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If you know of an exciting Classics event taking place near you, or would like to share your experiences of Classics in or out of the classroom, then let us know! Get in touch by emailing ocr.classics@ocr.org.uk.



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OCR customer contact centre

General qualifications

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