



Classical Studies

Online Course

2020 – 2021

OUTLINE & METHODOLOGY

Tutor : Neil Dargan.

The aim of this course is to explore the world of ancient Greece and Rome, appreciate the achievements of the classical world and how it continues to speak to and influence our lives today. Candidates wishing to sit the Leaving Certificate Examination in Classical Studies in 2021 & 2022 will be thoroughly prepared.

Sixth Year students may enrol to study for **one** year and take the exam in 2021. Fifth Year students may study over a **two** year period and take the exam in **2022**.

Mature students wishing to study this subject are most welcome. (They will form a separate class group).

(A major revision of the Syllabus for Classical Studies has taken place and is due to be introduced into schools in **September 2021** with the first exam in the new format taking place in **2023**).

The existing Syllabus is organised into **ten** topics. These are organised in **three** groups **one topic from each group and one more of choice**.

I propose the following **four** topics as a good mix and balance:

- *Ancient Epic
- *Alexander the Great
- *Greek Drama
- *Roman Art and Architecture.

The year **2020 – 2021** will be divided into **three terms**:

September to Christmas
Christmas to Easter
Easter to Examination.

Two topics will be studied in each of the first **two** terms and the **third** will consist of revision and consolidation of course work with an emphasis on exam technique.

Practical Points.

Students need to have **internet access**.

Tuition will be through the **Zoom online video meeting**. (This is free. Classes and one to one tutorial sessions will not last longer than 40 mins).

Written assignments and feedback will be managed through a shared file in: **Dropbox**.

Course work will be submitted **online**, marked and stored securely in the Dropbox file.

Every effort will be made to schedule classes at the **most convenient** time for students.

There will be **monthly assessments** which will be shared with student and parent(s) / guardian(s).

(In this **Covid -19** time it will be important to have a collection of assessed work available in the event of there being a 'predicted grades' situation in 2021).

Study Topics.

1. Ancient Epic:

It has been said that the house of literature has many rooms but only one basement. Homer's Epic Poem: **The Odyssey** marks the very beginning of European literature and together with The Iliad are achievements which arguably have never been surpassed.

In the Roman period Virgil, taking his inspiration from Homer created **The Aeneid** recounting the heroic journey of Aeneas which led to the foundation of the city and empire of Rome.

The Tain is the great Epic Poem of the Irish. It brings alive the society and culture of ancient Ireland and can take its place with the great foundational Epics of the world.

These three works form the first topic for study. It will be fascinating to compare these great literary works and explore their origin and the varied lights they each shine to illuminate the social and cultural life of their people and time.

Books:

Homer: The Odyssey (Translated by E. V. Rieu, Penguin Classics)

Virgil: The Aeneid (Translated by W. F. Jackson Knight, Penguin)

The Tain: (Translated by Thomas Kinsella, Oxford Paperbacks)

2. Alexander the Great:

Few historical figures have gained such fame, achieved so much in the course of their lifetime and whose memory has been handed down through the centuries.

Alexander had leadership qualities which astounded his contemporaries and led him to inspire his people to create one of the greatest empires in human history before his early death at the age of thirty three.

In this topic we will see how two biographers, Arrian and Plutarch recorded his life and times. We will trace Alexander's native origins, character and leadership skills; what drove him, how in his relatively short life he reshaped the ancient world and how from Alexandria to Kabul echoes of Alexander persist.

Books:

Arrian: The Campaigns of Alexander, Penguin Classics.

Plutarch: The Age of Alexander, Penguin Classics.

3. Greek Drama:

The Greek world was steeped in myth and story. They had a huge repertoire to draw on and a deep sense of the transcendent world of the gods and various divine presences. The Greeks thought deeply about how the human and divine interact and how human behaviour and character determine how life unfolds.

This topic studies three tragic plays:

Aeschylus: Prometheus Bound, Sophocles: Oedipus the King and Euripides: Medea.

We also study a comedy by Aristophanes: The Frogs.

Books:

Aeschylus: Prometheus Bound and Other Plays, Penguin Classics.

Sophocles: The Theban Plays, Penguin Classics.

Euripides: Medea and Other Plays, Penguin Classics.

Aristophanes: The Frogs & Other Plays, Penguin Classics.

4. Roman Art and Architecture:

The artistic and architectural legacy of the ancient world is all about us in our daily lives. Walk through any town or city in the world and the Roman Arch and a variety of architecture influenced or inspired by Rome is most likely present.

The Romans were indebted to the earlier achievements of the Greeks. They brought their practical engineering prowess to bear in creating great public buildings, coherent town plans and a system of roads which reflected their ordered mindset and the communication and military necessities of their vast empire.

The remains of Roman towns and cities from Caerwent in Wales to Palmyra in modern day Syria are fascinating in terms of what they reveal of daily life and thought in the world of antiquity.

The Roman contribution to painting and sculpture will also be assessed.

Text:

Roman Art and Architecture by Mortimer Wheeler, Thames and Hudson (World of Art series.)

Methodology.

The main resources for the course are the **prescribed texts**. Reading and absorbing them is key to success. Familiarity with the content of the work, the characters, plot and incident is most important.

The student will develop the ability to refer to the texts (not to quote) in support of an interpretation or critical evaluation.

The tutor will guide you through each topic. Resources will be available, stored online, to which students will have access. This will be in the form of pdf notes and audio visual talks.

Classes will be held twice weekly in a group. These will be for a duration of 35 mins. A suitable timetable will be established based on consultation with the students.

One to one tuition will take place weekly (Timetable to be agreed).

It will be helpful to have a dedicated work folder where students can store their notes and resources.

The tutor will be available to respond to questions submitted online by students.

The tutor will be available for contact by Parent(s), Guardian(s).