

Ancient History A Level

Preparation work: Pre-course Reading, Research and Tasks

Pre-reading and research will help you to become more familiar with the topics you are going to study on your A Level Ancient History course. If you complete the tasks below they will also help you to become more confident when you start your course. Remember it is also a good idea to make sure you recap and consolidate your GCSE History knowledge as well.

Specification :

A good place to start to look at the A level specification and familiarise yourself with what you will be studying on the course:

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-and-a-level/ancient-history-h007-h407-from-2017>

Task 1:

To help familiarise yourself with some important elements of the Greek and Roman periods you are going to study, watch the following 'TedEd' talks on YouTube and produce two mind maps – one entitled 'An Introduction to Ancient Greece', the other 'An Introduction to Ancient Rome'

- *A day in the life of an Ancient Athenian* - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ar8S6virCwM>
- *This is Sparta* - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M7V1a1I5BL0>
- *A day in the life of a Roman Soldier* - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P5e7cl19Ha0>
- *History vs. Augustus* - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrcmojhFmzY>



Case Studies:

Pick one of the following options to research and produce a brief profile – this should be a maximum of one side of A4 and include headings such as: Background, key dates, key figures etc.

- Option 1: The Battle of Marathon (490 BC)
- Option 2: Emperor Nero

A good place to start your research in www.ancient.eu. YouTube also has a number of good documentaries and if you want something a bit more challenging, then listen to the one of the 'In Our Time' episodes from Radio 4 (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0006qyk1>)

Task 2:

Below in our list of books we have referred to the gripping trilogy by Robert Harris about the Consul and writer Cicero. He is a great resource and describes the end of the Republic and the impression initially made by the first emperor Augustus. It would be good if you could find out a bit more about him. A picture and a few points would be excellent.

Something to do for further research and enjoyment:

- **The British Museum** – essential for the Greek side of the course as it contains a wide selection of remains from 5th-Century Athens, including a large portion of the Parthenon frieze
- **The Museum of London** – an excellent insight into Roman life and religion in *Londinium*
- **Fishbourne Roman palace and gardens** – the most lavish villa in Roman Britain, Fishbourne is a great example of the impact of Roman rule.
- **Butser Ancient Farm** – an experimental archaeological site which includes Celtic and Roman buildings

Books to Read:

- **BBC History Extra Magazine** (www.historyextra.com)
 - Ancient Greek democracy: as similar to ours as we think?
 - What did the Ancient Greeks do for us?
 - The bloody rise of Augustus
 - Who ruled in Ancient Rome?
- **Imperium, Lustrum, Dictator** by Robert Harris
- **SPQR** by Mary Beard
- **Ancient Greece** by Thomas Martin
- **The Classical World** by Robin Fox
- **Mythos** by Stephen Fry

Podcasts:

BBC Radio 4 'In Our Time'

- Nero
- Agrippina the Younger
- Boudicca
- Roman Britain
- The Battle of Salamis
- Thucydides
- Sparta
- Thermopylae

Task 3:

Source one of the above books or listen to one of the podcasts. Write a summary of the key facts and main points you have learnt.

If you can find it watch the movie "Eagle of the Ninth" with Channing Tatum and Jamie Bell

Films to Watch:

- **BBC Documentary 'Who were the Greeks?'** Often on iplayer and a good introduction to the Greek world.
- **Bettany Hughes' Ancient World – 'Athens: The Truth about Democracy' and 'The Spartans'** (Available on 4OD or YouTube)
- **'Eight Days that made Rome'** – Bethany Hughes



- **Ancient Invisible cities – Athens** (Available on iplayer) excellent introduction to the city and its ancient architecture.
- **Meet the Romans with Mary Beard** – 3 part series available on YouTube
- **'Nero'** and **'Caligula'** documentaries by Tony Robinson on YouTube

Progression Opportunities

Why choose Ancient History A Level:

Studying Ancient History will provide the opportunity to study these two foundational ancient civilisations and their reception in modern times. You can study it at the American University in Rome or most British universities, and using it you can go on to work in research, museums, art galleries and heritage management, as well as a full range of traditional graduate careers such as law, media, accountancy, management and teaching.

We hope you enjoy completing these tasks and look forward to you joining the course.

