

## LOWER SIXTH GREEK - AN INTRODUCTION

Double congratulations for choosing Latin and Greek at A level! You have impeccable taste. As with your Latin guide, the purpose of this booklet is to give you an idea about what you will be studying next year and also to outline some holiday work that you will be expected to undertake. It is particularly important that you learn the new Lower Sixth vocabulary as early as you can. However, the two papers you will sit at the end of the year are very straightforward, and they contain exactly the same elements (translation and set texts) that you found at GCSE.

At the end of the Lower Sixth, you will sit two internally-set examination papers designed to make sure that your knowledge of the work we have covered is tip-top: this will enable you to approach the more challenging Upper Sixth work with confidence. You will sit papers in both **Greek Language** and **Greek Verse and Prose Literature**. Each paper will be **1 hour 30 minutes** in length (to be confirmed). You will be relieved to know that Greek A Level involves no coursework.

All your **formal** Greek exams come at the end of the Upper Sixth where you will sit four papers: two involving language (translation etc. from Greek to English) and two involving literature (i.e. the set texts which you have studied in the Lower and Upper Sixth).

### **Greek Language**

This paper contains two sections and carries a maximum of 100 marks. In **Section A**, you will have to translate one passage of Greek prose into English. This will be adapted from the work of an historian such as Xenophon. The passage set will have a full title and the first few lines will be in English, in order to help you understand the context of the story. The passage is approximately 130-150 words in length and is worth 50 marks.

**Section B** consists of another passage of Greek prose, again based on Greek history, where you will be asked a mixture of translation, comprehension and grammar questions (rather similar in style to those you have been answering for homework exercises in the Fourth and Fifth Year). The passage is approximately 130-150 words long and is worth 50 marks.

For both Sections A and B, you have to know **all** the words on the AS wordlist (approximately 800 words, but this includes the GCSE vocabulary which you have already learnt); the meaning of other Greek words will be given to you on the paper.

To help you prepare for this paper, you will receive a specially written Greek textbook, *Hellenikon V*, in September. This contains a step-by-step approach to approaching Lower Sixth Greek grammar and constructions, and contains numerous practice passages as well as a complete summary of all

the vocabulary and grammar which you need to learn for Sixth Form language exams.

Over the course of the year, you will hone your translation skills on Greek passages of gradually increasing difficulty, but over time you will find that the translation questions you face in the Lower Sixth are, apart from an increased range of vocabulary, only a moderate step up in difficulty from the difficult Greek GCSE translation question which you attempted this year. So, if you have revised your vocabulary carefully, then you should be confident of gaining an excellent score on this paper.

### **Greek Verse and Prose Literature**

This paper also contains two sections and carries a maximum of 100 marks.

**Section A** contains questions on the Lower Sixth prose author. We will be studying the work of the world's first (and greatest) philosopher Plato, and his work *The Symposium*. In the course of a lively drinking party, a group of Athenian intellectuals exchange views on *eros* or desire ... Plato is always a fabulous read, and this set text is also a great introduction to the ancient world of the Fifth Century BC.

**Section B** contains questions on the Lower Sixth verse author. Here, we will be reading an extract from one of the most important poems ever written: Book 1 of Homer's *Odyssey*. The epic tale of Odysseus and his ten-year journey home after the Trojan War forms one of the earliest and greatest works of Western literature. Confronted by natural and supernatural threats, Odysseus must test his bravery and native cunning to the full if he is to reach his homeland safely ...

Questions on this exam paper contains a Greek passage or passages with sub-questions including a short essay. You might be asked to translate short extracts, comment on the author's style, or answer straightforward comprehension questions on the text. If you have revised both the set texts carefully then you are well in your way to gaining a tremendous grade at A Level. Each section is worth 50 marks, and the total mark for the paper is 100.

We will be giving you more information on the set texts in September. In the meantime, some initial preparation on your part is thoroughly recommended! See the section on *Holiday Reading* below.

### **Holiday Preparation**

As with Latin, you should view the holiday as an important way of chipping away at the donkey work that would otherwise make your first half-term's assignments rather vocabulary-heavy.

Therefore, during the summer you should learn (from Greek to English) the Lower Sixth (old AS Level) vocabulary list contained in this folder. You will already know some of the vocabulary in this list. Knowledge of these words

will put you at a great advantage when we restart in September. You will be expected to pass all vocabulary tests next year at the first time of asking, so an early start on the vocabulary revision is essential.

When you have gone through these words carefully, an on-line Greek vocabulary tester will prove invaluable, so that you can check that you know these words thoroughly. You can google “Greek AS Vocab Tester”, but your best bet is to find the words on Quizlet, too (just search for “**CatLat Lower Sixth Greek Full List**”).

One other area of holiday revision that could prove very useful is to learn the aorist and aorist passive tenses of the new Lower Sixth verbs listed in this folder. Again, you will need to be familiar with these very soon into the start of next term, so anything done now is “money in the bank” as far as your studies are required.

### **Holiday Reading**

As well as the reading list contained in this booklet, we recommend that you should buy the following books in the holiday and do as much background reading as possible. The books listed can easily be found cheaply using the usual on-line sources, or can be ordered through any good bookshop.

## **GREEK HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY**

### **To Start With ...**

**IT’S ALL GREEK TO ME** by Charlotte Higgins (Short Books)

*Brilliant introduction to the Ancient Greek world, stopping off at Homer, the rise of Athens, Greek philosophy, culture, architecture, warfare and a whole lot more!*

**MYTHOS** by Stephen Fry (Penguin)

*No-one loves or quarrels, desires and deceives as boldly or brilliantly as Greek gods and goddesses. Stephen Fry’s new book is the best possible retelling of these famous stories and captures these extraordinary myths for our modern age - in all their dazzling and deeply human relevance.*

### **AND THEN ...**

**EUREKA!** by Peter Jones (Profile)

*Subtitled “Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About the Ancient Greeks but Were Afraid to Ask”, this great all-encompassing book deals with all aspects of Greek history and culture: a great bedtime read, ideal for reading a chapter a night.*

**THE ANCIENT GUIDE TO MODERN LIFE** by Natalie Haynes (Profile)

*A fine starter guide to the cultural side of the ancient world - both Greek and Roman - with good chapters on everyday life, women, slavery,*

*entertainments, philosophy, and so on. A great book to read if you want to know exactly what made these ancient cultures tick.*

**PERSIAN FIRE** by Tom Holland (Abacus)

*Excellent one-volume history of Greece's finest hour: retelling the daunting Persian invasions of 490 and 480 BC. If you've seen the film "300" or want to know exactly how Athens became (for a time) one of the world's most important and influential cities then this is the book for you.*

**SOCRATES** by Paul Johnson (Penguin)

*One of the best introductions to Greek philosophy and a great one-stop guide to one of the ancient world's most interesting figures.*

**THE ODYSSEY** by Homer, translated by E.V. Rieu (Penguin Classics)

*The legend of Odysseus is one of the most famous adventure stories in the world: it is worth reading all the way through in its own right.*

The story of the Trojan War is also told brilliantly in *Songs on Bronze* by Nigel Spivey. This book is a great read, linking in with all sorts of stories that you will meet in Latin and Greek over the next two years.

### **Reference Book List**

You will find it invaluable to own a decent Greek dictionary and grammar which you should keep at home. We strongly recommend the following:

*Pocket Oxford Classical Greek Dictionary*, edited by James Morwood and John Taylor (Oxford University Press).

*Oxford Grammar of Classical Greek* by James Morwood (Oxford University Press)

This book cover all the essentials (noun declensions, verb tenses etc.) and all the grammar and constructions that you could ever need, right up to university level.

### **The Oxbridge Supplement**

Further information about Classics at Oxford and Cambridge - for those of you considering an application in this area - can be found on a separate file in this folder. The supplement contains a full reading list.

Have a relaxing summer break, and we look forward to seeing you in September!

*Mr Waite*

*Mr Owen*

Caterham, June 2022