Arts and Humanities Excellence Programme

At Woking College, all individual subjects stretch and challenge our students and you will find a large range of these tasks and activities contained in our Year 11 transition work.

In college, however, we offer additional sessions for those who are ambitious and academically focussed. The Arts and Humanities sessions are not focussed on a particular subject, but instead are designed to enhance your academic skills and prepare you for your next step after college. Despite the current lack of contact, it is important to keep pushing and stretching your mind. Here are some ways in which you could do this, with the difficulty level shown by the number of stars.

If you'd like to share your work, or ask for any guidance and support, email Helen Richards at hri@woking.ac.uk

One star indicates a task that will broaden your knowledge base

Two stars shows that you will be developing skills actively

Three stars shows A-level standard skills, and should really push you!

MOOCs

These are Massive Open Online Courses. Many are created by universities and are completely free (although some require a subscription or one-off payment, so pay attention to what you are signing up for!). Here are some links to get you going:

https://www.classcentral.com/help/moocs/
https://www.mooc-list.com/
https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/collections/boredom-busters
https://www.edx.org/
https://www.khanacademy.org/
https://www.coursera.org/

Keep a Reading Journal

A reading journal is a record of what you have read, and your thoughts. You could write it down in an exercise book or diary, have a spreadsheet or document on your computer which you regularly update, or use a notes app on your phone. It doesn't really matter what you read – the key is to keep yourself engaged, and make a note of how your reading makes you think and feel. It can be helpful to keep a note of dates, too, so you can track how long books or articles take you to get through. Here are some guides:

https://www.thoughtco.com/how-to-keep-a-reading-log-or-book-journal-739793
https://www.wikihow.com/Keep-a-Book-Journal

This is a great opportunity to broaden your knowledge through reading. Amazon has a huge presence in this field through Kindle and Audible. Kindle is a free app, and allows you to buy many books at a discounted price (plus saves you space on storing them all!). Audible has a free 30 day trial, meaning you get your first audio book for free (even if it's a mammoth like the 45 hour long 'The English and their History'), and allows you access to their range of free content, such as podcasts – if you don't want to pay make sure you set a reminder to cancel your subscription before they charge you!

There are also a range of open-access materials out there:
https://www.digitalbook.io/
https://openlibrary.org/

And since you can't go to your local library, many have made some materials digital:
https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/libraries/borrow-or-renew/ebooks-eaudiobooks-emagazines

Independent research project

This is a way of giving your exploration a clearer focus.

Pick a topic which interests you. Aim to expand beyond material you have already learned – you could look into an aspect of your favourite subject, or use this as an opportunity to find out about a topic you have not had the chance to study before.

Utilise the resources and practices listed above, but don't be limited to them! There is a wealth of academic websites (for instance, many universities are offering free access to content at the minute) as well as loads of documentaries online and on platforms such as Netflix and Amazon Prime. Also, there are several free platforms for podcasts, such as Spotify and Stitcher, with a huge array of content.

Make sure you log your research as you go – it'll save you from having to repeat anything, and will help you to build on what you have done. The Univeristy of Texas offers some advice: https://guides.lib.utexas.edu/c.php?g=674020&p=4905275. At the very least, make notes as you research, record any quotations which you found particularly thought-provoking or incisive, and make sure to jot down the source for your information, as well as a way for you to retrace it (e.g. page number if you are using a book, title and episode if using a podcast or video, URL if you are using a website, and perhaps a note of roughly how far down your reference is from). If you like to be working towards something more formal, you could give yourself a title or question, and write a response once you have conducted a range of research. Play around with a few titles before you settle on one, and discuss this with your peers and those close to you if they'll listen!

Creative Outlet

Rather than working towards an essay, you could instead create something. Give yourself a title or phrase as a stimulus, and carry out some exploratory research as detailed above – Khan Academy has an excellent range of History of Art material. You could work towards creating a video, a sculpture, an animation, a painting, photography, whatever outlet appeals most to you. An alternative to the reading journal could be a drawing journal – set yourself the goal of creating a drawing a day (you could set yourself a strict time-limit on busier days). You could create from digital images, or draw objects or willing sitters from your home. Date your work, and see how your skills develop. If you're feeling a little lacking in inspiration, Noel Fielding has launched a series of art sessions: https://www.creativebloq.com/news/online-art-club, and Youtube has hundreds of art tutorials (albeit of varying quality!) for you get your teeth into.