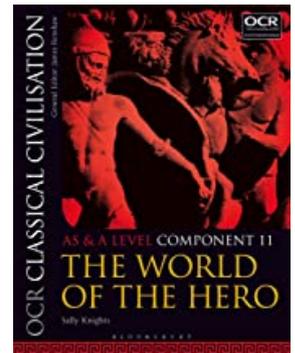


## Classical Civilisation transition project

At A-Level we follow the **OCR Specification** and will study the following units:

World of the Hero: Homer's *Odyssey*  
 Imperial Image  
 World of the Hero: Virgil's *Aeneid*  
 Democracy and the Athenians

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-and-a-level/classical-civilisation-h008-h408-from-2017/>



We treat Classical Civilisation as a new subject for everyone, and are fully aware that you may not have looked at the ancient world since primary school! So to help prepare you for what is potentially an entirely new subject, and keep you occupied over the summer, choose one or more of the investigations outlined below.

The difficulty of each task is shown by the type of ancient coin next to it. These mirror the progression which you will experience over the course.

We'd like you to bring your investigation(s) to enrolment in August, but if you'd like to get in touch about the project, get some feedback or find out more about the course, please email Helen Richards at [hri@woking.ac.uk](mailto:hri@woking.ac.uk)

Happy investigating!

	Bronze: Knowledge gathering tasks. The internet is your friend here
	Silver: a step beyond mere googling! Analysis and creative use of content
	Gold: Academic writing tasks or big searching questions (there's no right or wrong here, it's a matter of argument and persuasion!)

### World of the Hero: Homer's *Odyssey*

To begin the course, we look at Homer's epic poem, the *Odyssey*. It is set after the *Iliad*, in the aftermath of the Trojan war. Here are your tasks:

Watch the Overly Sarcastic Productions' version of the *Iliad* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=faSrRHw6eZ8>) and the *Odyssey* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-3rHQ70Pag>). Use these and Schmoop summaries (*Iliad* - <https://www.shmoop.com/study-guides/literature/iliad/summary> and *Odyssey* - <https://www.shmoop.com/study-guides/literature/odyssey>) to make your own summary. You can use whatever format you like – bullet points, a slideshow, flash cards, quizlet, you decide!



Design a book cover for the *Odyssey*. Think about which image is going to catch people's eye on the front cover, and best represents the plot, then write a blurb for the back. You could invent some reviews too if you like!



Homer – who's that? Research the Homeric question (it's been debated for millennia, so there's quite a lot out there!) and write a 500 word essay on who you think Homer was. Consider the different sides of the argument, and explain why you have come to your judgment.



Do you think that the *Odyssey* is still relevant today? Write a convincing speech, arguing for whichever side you believe in!



## Imperial Image

This unit combines ancient history with history of art, and focuses on how the ruler Augustus rose to the position of ultimate authority in the Roman empire. The following tasks give you some background context and also start to hone the skills needed for this unit.

Augustus, before he gained lots of power and prestige, was called Octavian, and he was the great-nephew of Julius Caesar. To understand how Octavian managed to become Rome's ruler, you need to know how Caesar acted as a role model and warning. Watch Tony Robinson's Romans episode 2 on youtube, and make some bullet-point notes as you go:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3duE5TzSWco>



Create a timeline of Augustus' life. There are plenty of websites out there to help (Wikipedia is actually pretty good for basic information), and feel free to make your timeline on paper or on the computer.



Imagine you were a Roman emperor – how would you want to be identified? Design three coins to commemorate your rule – one low denomination (which will be seen by all sorts of people), one mid (seen by those who are financially comfortable) and one high (only used by the mega wealthy). Consider how you would want your impression to be different on each coin, and how to appeal to your people to make sure they don't want to assassinate you!



Research how historical leaders have attempted to increase and communicate their power and authority through art. Create a fact-file for one or more of the following, using three pieces of art as examples.

- Queen Elizabeth I
- Charles I
- Lorenzo di Medici
- Napoleon
- Chairman Mao



Top tip: portraits and propaganda are often useful starting points, but feel free to branch out!

Do you think that art still holds power as a medium for propaganda? Are there more effective methods in the modern world? Make a mind-map of your thoughts.



What is art? (Big question! Answer as you like, although an artistic response grants more kudos!)



## World of the Hero: Virgil's Aeneid

This is part of the same unit as Homer's *Odyssey*, and is influenced both by Homer's works and by Virgil's Augustan context. The following tasks will start you off with becoming familiar with the text and its background.

Who was Virgil? Create either a fact-file, summary or timeline of Virgil's lifetime.

The following links will help your research:

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Virgil>

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/virgil>

<https://www.ancient.eu/virgil/>

<https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/a/aeneid/virgil-biography>



Create a summary of the plot of the *Aeneid*. Use these links to get an overview, and record your summary in whatever format you wish.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRruBVFxjnY>

<https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/a/aeneid/summary-and-analysis/book-i>



Much of Virgil's work is interested in promoting Augustan values. Copy and complete this table:

Roman value	What does it mean?	Is this value still relevant today?
pietas		
clementia		
iustitia		
virtus		



What gives meaning to literature, and who decides? Write a 500 word discourse. You may wish to consider genres, content, the role of the author and the audience.



## Democracy and the Athenians

In this unit, we look at the development of democracy in ancient Athens, as well as questioning whether or not it was ultimately good for the city. These tasks give you a flavour of the content we cover, and the kinds of questions we'll be considering.

Watch the following short videos, and create a brief fact-file for:

1. Solon and Cleisthenes  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kj2R0rrFSNM>
2. Pericles  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88bBdTg61mQ>
3. Socrates  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fLJBzhcSWTk>



Ancient comedy provides many of the most valuable sources we have on what life was like in the Athenian democracy. Watch one of the following productions of Aristophanes' *Frogs* and write a review. It's a pretty whacky play, so I'd recommend reading a synopsis first!

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DM7JfS4Q\\_ww](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DM7JfS4Q_ww)

OR

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYYQIn\\_sC-4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYYQIn_sC-4) – this one is performed in Greek, but you can turn on English subtitles (you are not expected to know ancient Greek to do this course!)



Which is the best form of government? Write a 750 word essay, assessing the value of each of the following:

- Monarchy (rule by a single individual)
- Oligarchy (rule by a few individuals, most commonly aristocratic)
- Democracy (rule by the people as a whole)



If you would like some classical examples, Aristotle's *Politics* looks at this question, while Plato's *Republic* explains what Plato believed to be the best form of government. Both can be accessed on line in translation, or you could look over summaries.