



## A LEVEL CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

### What does the course involve?

Classical Civilisation is a study of the ancient societies of the Mediterranean area, especially Greece in the 5th Century BC and Rome in the 1st Century BC. This is an important and interesting age for us because many of our ideas on Drama, Mythology, History, Architecture, Sculpture, Philosophy and Politics originate in those countries at that time. At A Level it is impossible to do any more than scratch the surface of Greek and Roman civilisation and therefore we have selected various areas that previous students have found interesting and stimulating.

### A Level

There are three units which will be studied over the two year course:

- **The World of the Hero.** Students will study Homer's *Odyssey* and Virgil's *Aeneid*. Students will be encouraged to make their own personal responses to the characters, whilst studying the conventions and dramas of the Greek society of Odysseus and comparing them to the Roman culture of Aeneas.
- **Culture and the Arts: Greek Theatre.** Students will learn about the origins of the theatre and its importance to the ancient Greeks. They will read two tragic plays (Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*, Euripides' *The Bacchae*) and one comedy (Aristophanes' *Frogs*) by three of the most important playwrights from this era.
- **Beliefs and Ideas: Love and Relationships.** This component offers the opportunity for learners to recognise and relate to the passions, frustrations and delights of love in the ancient world. The ethical questions raised by these ideas continue to be wrestled over by successive generations and this unit will generate interesting and important discussions about love, desire, sex, sexuality and the institution of marriage. Texts studied include Plato's *Symposium*, selections from the works of Seneca the Younger, the fragmented remains of poems written by the Greek poetess Sappho, and Book III of Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*.

All literature will be read in English translations not the original Greek or Latin.

### What are the entry qualifications?

- Some interest in the Ancient World, whether from earlier lessons, wider reading or even holidays is obviously helpful, but more important is enthusiasm and determination to do well.
- No previous knowledge is required, but grade 4 in English language would be preferable.
- We welcome students from other schools who would start this course on an equal footing with St John's students.
- There are clear links with other A Level subjects, especially English Literature, History, Drama, Art and Philosophy & Ethics

### What exams and coursework are involved?

- The three units will be examined at the end of the second year of study.
- The World of the Hero – 40% of total A Level
- Culture and the Arts – 30% of total A Level
- Beliefs and Ideas – 30% of total A Level.
- There is no coursework.

### What could I do after completing the course?

Many students go on to University to continue their study of Classical Civilisation, or related areas such as Ancient History, Archaeology or Philosophy. Some take up the Latin or Greek language also. Graduates in Classical subjects have the lowest unemployment rate amongst all graduates. For others, Classical Civilisation is considered by admissions tutors and personnel officers as a very reputable academic subject.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT MISS S THOMAS**