



PERSONAL STATEMENT – COURSE IB #2

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Personal Statement ~ Course IB

My interest in Classics, like the subject itself is truly boundless. My love of linguistics led me to study Greek and Latin, but I soon realised that these languages were the keys that accessed limitless amounts of literature, culture and philosophical discussion.

Continuing my classical studies will equip me with an all-encompassing education. As the founder of the National Council of Young women society in school, I often question the role of women in the ancient world. Thus, I completed an independent project to answer the question: 'To what extent were women emancipated throughout classical antiquity'. I found the challenge of a personal project liberating. I began to set realistic deadlines, leaving space for intellectual exploration. For this project I read books by Sarah B. Pomperoy. 'Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves' particularly stood out to me. Pomperoy's declaration that 'Women are a perennial source of friction against men' helped me to understand the treatment of women like Brises and Helen in the Iliad. Pomperoy's work also contributed to my ideas about where sexism originally manifested.

Inspired by my research, I questioned the representation of women in classical literature. This led me to read Ovid's Heroides; These poems are unique and refreshing for their female narrators. They add value to the female emotions that are often trivialised in classical literature. I attended the Greek Summer School at Bryanston, which enabled me to understand the Greek world at a far deeper level. Outside of lessons I also attended optional lectures, including one given on Euripides' 'Electra'. After, I discussed with the lecturer what effect a vengeful female such as Clytemnestra had on the Greek perception of women.

This year I was awarded a certificate of merit in the Fitzwilliam Essay Competition. The title of my essay was 'Is it anachronistic to suggest that racism existed in the ancient world?'. This was a very personal topic for me being of dual heritage, so I approached it with much enthusiasm. Benjamin Issac's 'Racism in Graeco-Roman antiquity' heavily inspired my essay. I concluded



that racism came as a result of imperialism; meaning conquered citizens became socially inferior, this later developed into the belief that they were biologically inferior.

Competing in a national essay competition encouraged me to critically analyse academic options, to form my own personal conclusion. These skills are crucial for a classicist as perceptions of antiquity change rapidly.

I also researched immigration in the ancient world. I listened to a lecture by James Clarkson on the influence of Greek migration on Latin. Studying language change in English Language A-Level led me to conclude that the Romans shared similar anxieties about Greek invading Latin as British-English speakers have about American influences on English. This suggests that some attitudes towards language change that are perpetual. Beyond the classroom, I annually attended the Latin reading competition at Leeds University as I believe, in order to fully appreciate Latin verse, it must be read aloud. This year, I achieved second place in the Latin in translation duet category. As Latin prefect I am always keen to help others with their Latin learning. I run classics club for KS3's and tutor year 11's struggling with Latin. I also took part in an outreach project that gave me a chance to share my passion for Classics with younger children. Aside from Classics, I am a competitive debater. Debating has made me a confident public speaker and has encouraged me to think analytically and spontaneously; this has helped me when approached with challenging translations. I started Italian lessons at the end of year 12 to bolster my ability to learn languages. I also take singing lessons, performing annually at the local singing festival.

Overall, I am a diligent student. I pair a sharp intellect with a vivacious attitude towards Classics, making me a robust candidate.

