



PERSONAL STATEMENT – COURSE II A/B #2

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Personal Statement ~ Course II A/B

My love of the ancient world has been fuelled by my study of Epic and Drama for Classical Civilisation, which has given me an insight into customs, characters and moral values. I find the idea of learning about the culture, the politics and history through investigating material culture stimulating.

This summer, I attended the JSST Classics and Ancient History camp. My time there gave me the chance to immerse myself in Ancient History and Archaeology and debate issues with individuals who shared my love for classical topics. I found the Art and Archaeology class, in which we explored the glorification of the human form in sculpture, particularly interesting. I studied the development of the depiction of the human body, from the non-naturalistic depictions of kouroi, in the Archaic period, to fully naturalistic ones of the Hellenistic period. It was clear to me that as techniques developed so too did depictions of the human body. In the 5th century Athenian Democracy class, we discussed the limitations of democracy, and explored it in an ancient and modern context. Scott Scullion's lecture about fate and the gods in Greek literature was a personal highlight of the week. I had studied Antigone and the Iliad and I found his arguments on determinism and free will enlightening. His lecture inspired me to think about how fate may pose and issue with the concept of reward and punishment.

I enjoy making comparisons between the ancient and modern world. 'The Hemlock Cup' by Bethany Hughes, which I received for the Classics prize, discussed the life of Socrates and 5th century Athenian life. It was interesting to read about gender roles in the ancient world which led me to reflect upon gender roles in the modern world. My study of Lysistrata also raises issues on women's position in society and the fact that, for Aristophanes, it was ludicrous and highly amusing to see women handling the affairs of the city and taking charge of men.

My study of 'The Odyssey' has enabled me to appreciate that fiction often follows a similar structural path. Spontaneously choosing to re-visit 'Wind in the Willows', I made a connection between the two: both stories include a character's adventures, and end with a battle to restore peace in the domestic sphere.

As the Subject Mentor for Classics, I started a Classics Society to educate the younger years about the joys Classics. I introduced them to Greek mythology and encouraged them to explore the interpretive possibilities within them.



A school visit to Rome in February was truly awe-inspiring. As I walked around The Forum, I imagined it as it had once been. While visiting religious buildings such as the Pantheon and the Vatican I saw for myself the effect religion has on a society. In the Villa Borghese, I saw Bernini's 'Rape of Proserpina' and 'Apollo and Daphne' and I thought that he had perfectly encapsulated the most dramatic part of each myth. Proserpina's flesh seems to be pressed in by Hades' hand as she struggles.

While academic work is my priority, I manage commitments alongside it. I am well-rounded and I like to push myself in everything I take on. This is demonstrated through doing Silver and the Gold D of E, being in the 1st lacrosse team, Debating Society and volunteering in the Prep Department. My prefect role is House Captain. I also work at a horse racing yard and have displayed commitment as hours are long and anti-social.

I have visited the Ashmolean and the Roman Baths Museum on school trips and independently. The painted Augustus statue in the Cast Gallery stood out and I later attended a lecture about sculptures being painted. It is ironic to think that, what most people presume to have been plain, marble sculptures were in fact highly patterned and skilfully painted. I found a recent Study Day at the Ashmolean, which involved direct observation and drawing conclusions from artefacts rewarding, as it gave me a taste of what university study of Ancient History might be like.

