

# SATIPS

Support and training in Prep, Primary and Senior Schools

Classics

A Day for Prep School Heads of Classics at King's School, Canterbury Tuesday 7th February 2017 Janet Taylor, the Head of Classics at King's School, very kindly organised the day for Classics teachers of feeder prep schools in London and the south east. It proved to be most productive for both the King's classics department and the forty or so prep school delegates, the majority of whom are the sole Classics teacher in their school and so have little or no opportunity to discuss relevant concerns and to see the bigger picture of the teaching of Latin, Greek and Classical Civilization.

The topics introduced and debated in the course of the day at King's would have been very similar to those aired at other senior school Classics days. The opportunity for teachers to speak of their own experiences was much appreciated by the King's staff and the other prep teachers. In her Introduction, Janet Taylor spoke of her desire to promote strong links between the department and prep schools. She distributed sample Scholarship Latin and Greek papers so that delegates could see what King's was looking for in its potential scholars.

As with many other senior schools, CE Latin Level 2 was the guideline entry level for the non-scholarship pupils, such that they could continue comfortably onto Book 3 of the Cambridge Latin Course in Year 9. However, there was talk of the school using John Taylor's new course book, Book 1 of Latin to GCSE. If this course, using a more traditional and systematic approach, is to be introduced across the board in other senior schools, the transition to senior school will be a lot easier to co-ordinate, as then both prep and senior school will be following course books using a similar methodology. The arrangement is already in place for teaching Classical Greek: the Greek CE syllabus levels 1 and 2 is covered by An Introduction to Classical Greek by Waite and Pragnell. This covers similar grammatical ground as Part 1 of John Taylor's Greek to GCSE. The related question of encouraging the teaching of Greek in the prep schools, where time is often so restricted, was raised. This led on to how best accommodate the range of levels of Greek when the pupils transfer to senior school.

The question of the senior schools setting their own scholarship Latin papers was raised and debated. As well as senior schools having their scholarship exams at differing times of the

year, there is the additional problem of there being no agreed prescribed common syllabus. This of course makes things very difficult for the small prep school trying to prepare pupils for scholarship at different levels and different times.

It was suggested by one delegate that the CASE Latin syllabus could be used as a basis and any further vocabulary or constructions introduced in the papers could be glossed. Having this common syllabus would be welcome both for the prep schools and the senior schools who would know what their incoming scholarship pupils would have covered. This would require co-ordination between senior schools who prize their independence.

The group activity 'Successful Classics Teaching: Challenges and Opportunities' allowed the delegates and the four King's Classics teachers (Janet, Matt, George and Hannah) to discuss a number of questions that arise so often: and literal but unnatural English v incorrectly translated but well phrased language, how to teach and consolidate the case system, the use of realia in the classroom, and how to reconcile teaching and learning a 'difficult' subject with making it attractive to a wider audience. It was agreed that valuing students and making them feel successful at doing something difficult was crucial. This can be achieved through a variety of classroom strategies. Among those proposed were: 'Test the teacher, pass the bomb', Hannah's hippo (don't ask), singing tenses or pronouns, George's 'A spoonful of sigma helps the future case go down' (quite), 'last man standing', Janet's causing an adrenaline rush through testing declension and verb endings, flash cards, Snap and 'Odd man out'. By this time the writer's head was spinning and thought he heard another suggestion, 'parse the parcel', but he may have been mistaken.

The issue of the importance of the background question in the CE papers was raised. Of the total 75 marks in the CE paper, 10 are allocated to the background. Candidates can prepare for one of four sections. It is clear that ISEB that sets the papers does take great pains to ensure that there is a suitable range of topics available not only to engage the interests of the prep school pupils but also as a platform for pupils deciding to opt for Classical Civilisation in the senior school. Some delegates raised the question of whether this section is given fair weighting when the senior schools mark the papers. Janet was very clear

## Editor:

Ed Clarke  
Highfield School  
latin@highfieldschool.  
org.uk

© Contents should not be photocopied or otherwise reproduced in any way, except for single use within a member school.

Readers should note that the views contained in this Broadsheet are not necessarily endorsed by the Society.

This is one of the subject Broadsheets published termly by The Society of Assistant Teaching in Preparatory Schools limited by guarantee and not having a share capital.

Reg. no. 890301 England.

Registered Charity  
no. 313688

Reg. office:  
5 McMichaels Way,  
Hurst Green,  
Etchingham,  
East Sussex,  
TN19 7HJ

Tel: 07801 370973  
www.satips.com

that King’s for one do mark this section seriously. Either side of a wonderful lunch (with a choice of wine) delegates were shown around the school library and the cathedral. The highlight of the afternoon session was a most illuminating presentation by a 6th form girl on Sexuality and Gender in the Ancient World - to metathesise Henri Estienne, Si la jeunesse pouvait, si la vieillesse savait.

We departed happy that we had learned and been heard.

**Fred Pragnell**  
**Head of Classics, St Anthony’s Boys School, Hampstead**

## Preparing and Delivering a School Assembly

### Introduction

The purpose of this article is to encourage colleagues to develop their own illustrated talks (in their various subjects) to deliver to school assemblies (both senior and junior). In my experience, an illustrated talk goes down well with any audience (whatever its age) and can have an immediate impact on their view of the subject (especially its “relevance”). In my subject (classics), the use of vase-paintings, mosaics, sculpture, paintings and other objects demonstrates the lasting influence and inspiration of the Greek and Roman worlds on European civilisation in a powerful visual way. Assemblies can be delivered in many ways: a talk; an inter-active event; or a presentation by a class. This article concentrates only on the preparation and delivery of an illustrated talk. My own subject happens to be classics but I am sure that any advice given here can be adapted very easily to suit different subjects. I have divided the article into four sections: the value of school-assemblies; tips on preparing and delivering assemblies; resources and copyright; and a very brief example of a classical assembly based on Roger Lancelyn Green’s *Tales of the Greek Heroes*.

### A. Value of School Assemblies:

The school-assembly affords the subject-teacher a wonderful opportunity to interest a large group of pupils (maybe 100 or more) in his or her subject without the constraints of exam or syllabus pressures and offers the chance to explore different themes and ideas with complete freedom. As mentioned earlier, the use of many different visual artefacts can have a very powerful effect on an audience.

Furthermore, whereas day-to-day teaching is a long-term process, a well-constructed assembly provokes instant feed-back from the pupils which is very rewarding and helpful for future ideas. In a more self-interested context, an assembly offers the chance to interest potential

recruits (at GCSE and A-Level) in your subject, especially those who may never have sampled the subjects before. Again, for those who have relinquished the subjects, an inspiring talk (away from the classroom) can remind them of the value of your subjects in ways they might not have supposed.

In junior schools, an assembly provides a great opportunity to inspire youngsters and promote their enthusiasm for your subjects beyond their time at junior school. With Years 3-6, an illustrated talk can excite them at an early age and may encourage them to choose your subject later at senior school.

Where my own subject (classics) is not widely available, an inspiring talk might create an interest in introducing the subjects (especially classical civilisation which can be studied in English). Thus the school-assembly is often an under-utilised resource for the subject-teacher and an opportunity worth seizing. Finally, Headteachers or staff in charge of organising assemblies are usually very grateful for volunteers and are often happy to allocate several assemblies over a week in order to pursue a theme (e.g. *Heracles's Labours*).

### B. Tips on preparing and delivering an assembly:

- Equipment needed: Laptop; USB (back-up); Laser-pointer; CD (music) for entry/exit; CD player; index-cards (talk).

- Play some appropriate music while the audience is assembling (start) and leaving (end). It helps to set the atmosphere and settle them down.

- Use index-cards/plain postcards to plan your points in note-form for each picture. This will help you memorise your talk as you compose it.

- Think pictorially and illustrate your theme with appropriate pictures and maps.

- Number your pictures and write a caption for each one to remind yourself of key points.

- Make each picture come alive so your audience knows why you’ve chosen that particular picture.

- Look at your audience and maintain eye-contact. Try to deliver your talk without the index-cards as your talk will be much more effective. (Use the index-cards only as a prompt).

- Be enthusiastic and try to keep your talk moving fluently at pace. Try to tell a story.

- Have a dramatic opening and ending to create an impact at the start and at the finish.

### C. Resources and Copyright:

Each department usually has a wealth of resources comprising books, CDs, digital photos and a variety of other media. Google Images\* represents an obvious on-line resource. In my own subject, I used Roger Lancelyn *Green's Tales of The Greek Heroes* and other books to produce my pictorial assemblies.

**\*Copyright issues:** www.copyrightuser.org is a very useful website to consult. It states that the use of copyright material is permitted for educational purposes as long as:

- the purpose of the use is non-commercial (i.e. you are not charging a fee for your talk)

- sufficient credit is given to the author of the image

- the use of the material is fair

### D. Example Assembly: *The Adventures of Theseus* based on R. Lancelyn-Green's version

The Tale of Theseus could form two talks: Theseus’s adventures on the way to Athens and Theseus and the Minotaur. Each slide has a caption to remind me of key-points or to provide a guide for the audience.

In telling the tale, use is made of classical vase-paintings, mosaics, sculpture, and works by great painters such as Poussin, Titian and Angelica Kauffman. More modern resources would include maps showing the journeys of Theseus, diagrams of the Labyrinth and photos of sites such as the Acropolis, Knossos and Cape Sounion.

### Slide Number:

1. Theseus's adventures (vase-painting with Minotaur at the centre of the vase-painting)

2. Theseus lifts the stone to find the sword and sandals left by Aegeus (sculpture)

3. Map showing location of Troezen and Athens (map)

4. Heracles (vase-painting) inspires young Theseus; Heracles's 4th Labour (vase-painting)

5. Theseus lifts the stone to find the sword and sandals left by Aegeus (Laurent La Hire – painting)

6. Theseus lifts the stone to find the sword and sandals left by Aegeus (Nicolas Poussin – painting)

7. Map showing Theseus's journey overland from Troezen to Athens (map)

8. Theseus defeats Periphetes the Clubman at Epidauros (vase-painting and map)

9. Theseus defeats Sinis the Pinebender at Corinth (vase-painting and map)

10. Theseus defeats Sinis the Pinebender at Corinth (illustration)

11. Theseus defeats Sciron beyond the Isthmus of Corinth (vase-painting)

12. Theseus defeats Sciron beyond the Isthmus of Corinth (2nd vase-painting and map)

13. Theseus defeats Cercyon at Eleusis (vase-painting and map)

14. Reminder of Theseus's adventures so far (two maps – one illustrating villains’ abodes)

15. Theseus defeats Procrustes and fits him to his notorious bed (vase-painting)

16. Theseus defeats Procrustes and fits him to his notorious bed (2nd vase-painting)

17. Theseus meets his father and step-mother in Athens but does not reveal himself (illustration and map)

18. Theseus deals with the Cretan Bull at Marathon (vase-painting and map)

19. Theseus sacrifices the Cretan bull on the Acropolis (photo of the Acropolis)

20. Theseus's stepmother tries to poison him but Aegeus recognises his son (W Russell Flint – painting)

21. Theseus learns about the Minotaur and King Minos’s tribute-demands (vase-painting and map of Crete)

22. King Minos's magnificent palace of Knossos (illustration and map of Crete showing location of Knossos)

23. King Minos’s magnificent palace of Knossos (2nd illustration of Knossos)

24. Theseus leaves for Crete in ship with black sails. Aegeus watches him leave (two illustrations) 🍷

25. Theseus arrives, excels in athletic competitions and wins Ariadne's heart (two vase-paintings)

26. Ariadne helps Theseus enter the Labyrinth (Jean-Baptiste Regnault painting)

27. The Labyrinth of Knossos (mosaic; plan of the palace showing its complicated nature)

28. Theseus defeats the Minotaur (vase-painting)

29. Theseus defeats the Minotaur (2nd vase-painting)

30. Theseus and Ariadne set sail to Naxos (vase-painting of ship; map showing Naxos)

31. Theseus abandons Ariadne on Naxos (vase-painting)

32. Theseus abandons Ariadne on Naxos (Angelica Kauffmann – painting)

33. Dionysus rescues Ariadne (Titian – painting)

34. Aegeus watches the ship return with black sails and throws himself into the sea in despair (illustration)

35. Aegeus throws himself from the Acropolis according to the story (photo of the Acropolis)

36. Aegeus may have thrown himself off the promontory at Sounion (photo and map)

37. Aegeus may have thrown himself off the promontory at Sounion (photo of Cape Sounion at sunset)

38. Aegeus threw himself into the Aegean Sea named after him (illustration + map showing the Aegean Sea)

39. Theseus became the great king of Athens revered in Greek Tragedy (photo of statue of Theseus)

### Postscript

If you have a go at putting together an assembly and delivering it, I am sure that you will enjoy it; more to the point, your pupils certainly will and will tell you so!

William Lawrence has a range of classical talks suitable for school assemblies and is very happy to visit schools with them. He can be contacted on his classical talks e-mail ([classical.talks@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:classical.talks@yahoo.co.uk)). The talks are FREE (except for expenses).

### The Aeneid in English verse?

I have decided to give myself a long-term project to simmer on my back-burner, for those moments when I do not fancy getting on with the jobs I know I really ought to be getting on with. Like many SATIPS Classics readers, I am fond of Latin and Greek literature, which is why I do not think I would be any good at teaching these at secondary level: having to force feed youngsters so many lines of authors I may even not be keen on myself does not appeal at all. Much better to do your own thing at your own leisure. For some time now I have been forcing myself to read more original Latin (and Greek); it is very easy, leading a prep school existence, to let the months slip by without reading anything decent. I am hoping to escape during the forthcoming Easter break to spend some time with Lysias.... Anyway, over the course of last year I re-read the Aeneid twice, a delightful, satisfying and fulfilling experience from which I emerged with a high regard for the un-trendy second half of the epic – usually shunned by the examining boards – and especially Books 10 and 11.

My mind then turned to how to communicate in translation just a taste of Virgilian poetry to those unfortunate enough to be illatinate. Prose, even with plenty of epic diction, has to be a no-go zone, although it would make the task a lot easier. This of course leads on to the question: if not prose, then what kind of verse?

Some time ago I read John Dryden's version. After a few thousand lines of rhyming couplets things soon became tedious. It did not really reflect the Latin, either, so rhyme, I decided, was out as well. Nor, I thought, was the standard English iambic pentameter line appropriate. I am looking for something more weighty, more... well, epic; a longer line which can convey within itself an English version of a snappy Virgilian one-liner if need be. Other requirements? The first syllable of each line ought to be stressed, reflecting the initial long syllable in Latin; and the last five syllables of the line ought to be dactyl + spondee or dactyl + trochee, to try to capture the rhythm of the Latin. Latin hexameter lines vary from 13 to 17 syllables in length, so over last summer I knocked out some lines nominally 15 syllables in length. It was quite a lengthy exercise, and I would welcome readers' comments on what they think, and what verse form they think would be appropriate. A respected colleague has suggested, for example, that since the length of the Latin line is flexible, I should not be constrained by a line of 15 syllables. There follow two, short samples of well known pieces, and a longer, less well known piece from Book 10.

I look forward to hearing your comments before I go much further!

**1.1**  
arma uirumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab oris

Italiam, fato profugus, Lauiniaque uenit

litora, multum ille et terris iactatus et alto

ui superum, saeuae memorem Iunonis ob iram...

I sing of warfare and of a man, the first to arrive, an exile of fate, from the shores of Troy at Italy and the coasts of Lavinium. Greatly both on the land and on the deep was he buffeted about by the might of those above, all through the unforgetting anger of the cruel goddess Juno.

**2.1**  
conticuere omnes intentique ora tenebant;  
inde toro pater Aeneas sic orsus ab alto:  
infandum, regina, iubes renouare dolorem...

Everyone fell silent, and focused attention upon him. Then from his couch on high spoke as follows father Aeneas:  
'Unspeakable, o queen, is the grief which you bid me renew...

**10.833**  
interea genitor Tiberini ad fluminis undam

uulnera siccat lymphis corpusque leuabat

arboris acclinis trunco. procul aerea ramis  
dependet galea et prato grauius arma quiescunt.

stant lecti circum iuuenes; ipse aeger anhelans

colla fouet fusus propexam in pectore barbam;

multa super Lauso rogitat, multumque remittit

qui reuocent maestique ferant mandata parentis.  
at Lausum socii exanimem super arma ferebant

flentes, ingentem atque ingenti uulnere uictum.

agnouit longe gemitum praesaga mali mens.

canitiem multo deformat puluere et ambas

ad caelum tendit palmas et corpore inhaeret.

Meanwhile, leaning against a tree by the waves of the Tiber, his father, resting his body, staunched his wounds in the waters. Far off, his heavy weapons rest in the meadow. His helmet of bronze hangs down from the branches. Hand-picked young warriors stand all around him. Unwell and gasping, he eases his neck. His beard, combed forward, pours down over his chest. Repeatedly he asks after Lausus, and keeps sending back men to recall him, bearing a sad parent's instructions. But comrades in tears were now bringing back on his shield the lifeless body of Lausus, a mighty man by a mighty wound laid low. Far away his mind, anticipating disaster, acknowledged the groaning. Fouling his grey hair with quantities of dust, clinging to the body, he stretched his hands up towards the heavens and thus spoke:...

**Bob Bass**  
**Orwell Park**  
**[bobbass@orwellpark.org](mailto:bobbass@orwellpark.org)**