

## 8. Year 11 Subjects 2011 (Humanities)

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### VCE Classical Studies

#### Unit 1: Mythical Worlds

This unit explores the myths of ancient Greece (predominantly) and ancient Rome. Mythic narratives were used to explain the physical world, the foundation of institutions and aspects of daily life. The deeds of Theseus, the wrath of Achilles, the epic voyages of Odysseus and Aeneas are tales that have entranced countless generations. As archaeological methods developed over time, sites such as Troy and Knossos were explored by pioneers of archaeology for evidence to explain the possible historical basis of particular myths. Myths were commonly represented in a range of forms including epic, sculpture, tragedy, vase and wall painting and mosaics. They were transmitted through festivals, religious rituals, art and architecture.

#### *Areas of Study:*

- **Heroes and monsters** - In this area of study, students explore myth in ancient Greece and/or ancient Rome. Myths are traditional narratives which examine ideas that were of central importance to these societies. Myth was one way in which the Greeks explained the physical world and the part that humans play in it. Thus there are myths about the way the world was created, and how it is governed by the Olympian gods under the leadership of Zeus. Myth addressed key aspects of everyday life such as rites of passage, family and gender relationships
- **Myth and archaeology** - What have archaeological discoveries meant for the study of myth? Do myths have any basis in historical events? This area of study traces the search for evidence related to selected myths from the classical world. Students follow the history of archaeology in the Mediterranean Basin, from the early period of treasure hunting to the beginnings of modern archaeology in the nineteenth century, to the archaeological record that is accepted today. They learn about the development of archaeological methods in the work of pioneers such as Schliemann and Evans. They learn of the triumphs and failures of these romantic figures and the excavations at such sites as Troy, Knossos and Pompeii. They may speculate about an answer to the enduring question: Did the Trojan War really take place?
- **Myths in art and literature** - Myth was a common element in the artistic worlds of Greece and Rome. Students explore the ways in which myths are represented in classical works. These works may include the forms of epic, sculpture, tragedy, vase and wall painting, and mosaics. Representation varied according to historical period and form. Students also investigate the social and artistic contexts of these works. They examine ways in which myths were perpetuated in ancient Greece and Rome such as through festivals, religious rituals, art and architecture.

#### *Assessment:*

There are three outcomes for this unit:

- Outcome 1 - Students should be able to explain the nature of myth in ancient Greece.
- Outcome 2 – Students should be able to explain the relationship between myth and archaeology.
- Outcome 3 - Students should be able to recognise and discuss the representation of a Greek myth.

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#### Unit 2: Classical Imaginations

This unit examines classical works across time. It begins with the study of classical Greek and/or Roman society through an exploration of intellectual and material culture. Classical works offer a means of exploring social and political life in classical antiquity. What does Homer reveal about the heroic code? How does Thucydides portray Athens during the Peloponnesian War? What do works of architecture such as the Parthenon reveal about the societies in which they were produced?

#### *Areas of Study:*

- Society through culture - In this area of study, students examine classical Greece and/or Rome through the exploration of a classical work or works. Societies changed from palace to polis in Greece and from agricultural to urban community in Rome. Classical writers and artists moved from mythological to historical explanations of their world. Significant changes in the urban environment, social life, political structures and religious beliefs continued to take place as each society developed.
- Classics through time - In this area of study, students explore the ways in which classical works are reference points for later ages to aspire to or react against. Elements of classical Greek and Roman culture have endured to the present day. They have exerted a powerful influence on the art, literature, philosophy and science of Western society. This legacy has been mediated by artists, writers, philosophers and scientists who throughout the centuries have emulated, adapted or rejected exemplars from classical culture. In this way, classical culture is reinterpreted in different periods. This shapes the transmission of the classical heritage with the result that classical studies itself has been reinvented in different times.

#### *Assessment:*

There are two outcomes for this unit:

- Outcome 1 - Students should be able to analyse the ways in which a classical work or classical works present aspects of classical Greek and/or Roman society.
- Outcome 2 - Students should be able to discuss the relationship between classical works and a work from a later period.

#### *Assessment Break-Down (Units 1 & 2):*

Assessment tasks for this unit will include some or all of the following:

- an essay; an annotated catalogue; a research report; a written analysis; short-answer responses; a test; a written reflection; an oral presentation; a multimedia presentation.

There is an end-of-Semester Examination.