

History, Philosophy & Literature

Syllabus Guide
For Ages 16 – 18



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Programme Overview

In 399 BC, Socrates told the citizens of Athens that ‘the unexamined life is not worth living’. This programme seeks to provide you with a solid foundation in three inextricably interlinked disciplines, each of which offers a different way in which to understand human life in a different way: logically (Philosophy), chronologically (History), and evocatively (Literature).

Over the course of two weeks, you'll be immersed in some of the most pivotal and intellectually productive periods in human history, including the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and the Post-War period, through exposure to a variety of written and visual sources.

You'll explore major schools of philosophical thought, learn to critically dissect poetry and prose, and evaluate the impact and influence of literary and contemplative works on modern history. All the while, you'll engage in structured debates and essay-writing, sharpening your rhetorical skills and persuasive writing to perfection.

Who It's For

This programme offers students a flavour of what it is like to study any combination of these key humanities subjects - or a related discipline - at university level, as well as providing grounding in the critical thinking and academic skills required to succeed at such a degree.

Regardless of your future plans, however, it offers an exciting intellectual challenge for anybody who is curious about the individuals and works that have cumulatively shaped who and where we are today, and interested in honing their powers of argumentation. In order to take this programme, you should have a good grasp of English, since the course has as its basis the analysis and discussion of texts, sources, and philosophical arguments.



*Upon completion of this programme
at Oxford Royale, you will:*

1. Gain insight into key historical turning points from the Reformation to the Cold War and beyond.
2. Develop a broad understanding of core philosophical topics, including logic, ethics, and metaphysics.
3. Explore major literary movements of the past two centuries, from Romanticism to Postmodernism.
4. Strengthen critical skills in logical reasoning, text analysis, and historical interpretation.
5. Improve public speaking and debate skills through presentations and workshops.

During the programme you will also develop a number of core skills:

- 1. Collaborate with international peers:**
Work with global peers and hone your communication and teamwork skills through workshops and group projects.
- 2. Develop problem-solving skills:**
Enhance your critical thinking and problem-solving abilities with daily lessons and workshops.
- 3. Build confidence:**
Thrive in a supportive environment, think creatively, share ideas, and discover your strengths.
- 4. Showcase your success:**
Showcase achievements, explore peer projects, and engage in critical discourse during subject challenges and Exhibition Days.
- 5. Gain a taste of independence:**
Manage your assignments and schedule while exploring a new location with new friends and staff support.





How You'll Learn

This course transcends traditional classroom learning, offering a blend of seminars, workshops, debating activities and active engagement with sources.

You will be encouraged to develop independence of mind and of study, reading and researching topics in your own time as preparation for seminars. You'll be assessed by your ability to think critically about the materials provided, and reflect this by constructing cohesive, original arguments.



Teaching methods include:

1. Teaching from esteemed academics in the fields of History, Philosophy, and Literature.
2. Seminars.
3. Academic workshops.
4. Classroom discussions of key concepts and materials.
5. Debating and public speaking workshops.
6. Source analysis.
7. Independent research and essay writing.
8. Individual and group presentations.
9. Reading lists and other academic materials.



Module 1:

Key Questions in Philosophy, Literature, and History

The introduction to the course will equip you with the theoretical and analytical foundations for engaging with Philosophy, Modern History, and Literature. Beginning with source analysis, you'll study the basics of textual criticism, before moving onto the interpretation of other forms of historical sources, such as visual media. Then, you'll progress to definitions of History, Philosophy, and Literature as areas of knowledge. Finally, you'll investigate the question of what has driven people to write over the centuries, focusing on the relationship between literature and aesthetics.



Module 2:

Turning Points in History

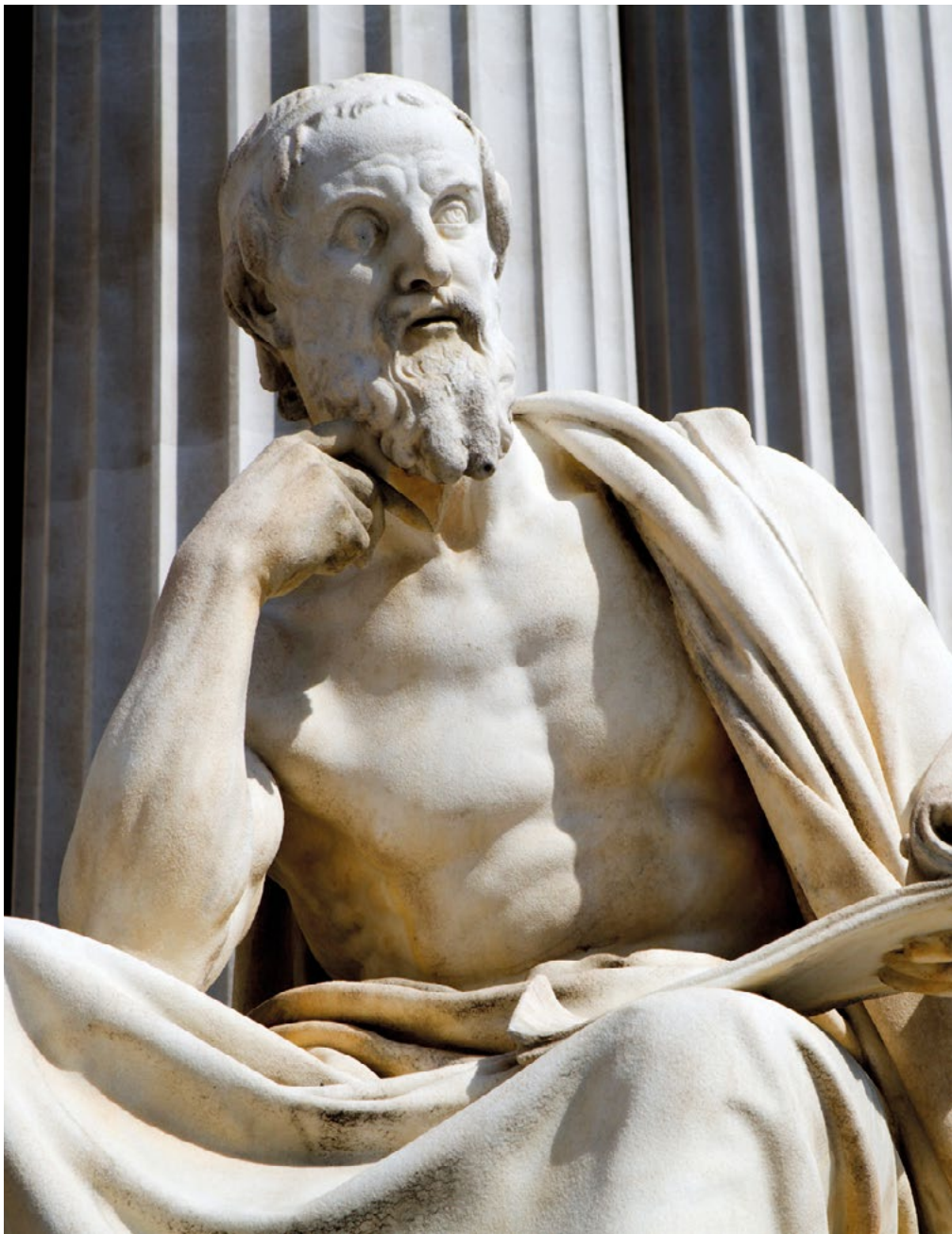
Prepare for a whistlestop tour through the cultural history of the Western world, from the early modern period through to present-day. You'll analyse different disciplines within historical study and the rationale behind their development, as well as some of the earliest works of historical writing, before considering the four major branches of philosophy: ethics, metaphysics, logic, and epistemology. Focussing on the ideas and writings of prominent thinkers, authors, and intellectual movements, you'll study the defining events and consequences of the Renaissance, Reformation, Enlightenment, American and French Revolutions, Industrial Revolution, Second World War, Cold War, and contemporary period. You'll scrutinise the critical concept of 'modernity', the impact of ideology on geopolitical organisation, and the shifting situation of global power.



Module 3:

Developments and Movements in Literature

Explore key literary movements, from the emotion-driven works of Romanticism to the sharp social critiques of Realism, the experimental forms of Modernism, the philosophical depths of Existentialism, and the fragmented, boundary-pushing narratives of Postmodernism. Through close reading of texts, you will learn to interpret sources critically, uncovering layers of meaning in relation to their historical and cultural contexts. By examining how literature responds to and shapes historical events you will develop the ability to analyse works not only as artistic expressions but also as reflections of the world in which they were created. Engaging in discussions, writing analytical essays, and comparing texts across different movements, they will refine their skills in argumentation, textual analysis, and contextual interpretation, gaining a deeper appreciation of literature as a window into human experience.



Module 4:

Key Philosophical Concepts

Students will explore key philosophical concepts—logic, epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, metaethics, and ontology—and examine how they interact with literature and history. Discussions on ethics and metaethics will help students engage with moral dilemmas presented in historical events and literary narratives, while ontology will encourage them to reflect on concepts of being and identity across different periods. By applying these theories to texts and historical contexts, students will refine their critical thinking and interpretative skills, gaining a deeper understanding of how philosophy underpins both literature and history.



Module 5:

Academic Skills

Drawing upon the finest examples of persuasive writing and speech from throughout modern history, you'll master the art of argumentation. Studying the rules of competitive debating, you'll learn the difference between propositional arguing and oppositional rebuttal, before participating in a British Parliamentary-style debate. Partaking in further debates about some of the historical and philosophical controversies you've examined throughout the course of the programme, you'll incorporate techniques of speechwriting and delivery from the great political speakers to persuade your classmates of the validity of your interpretations. Finally, you'll refine your academic writing skills as you write an essay on a subject from Literature, History, or Philosophy (or all of these) that interests you, receiving feedback in a tutorial focussed on your individual work and a peer-review workshop explaining and implementing best practices for writing essays.



www.oxford-royale.com

All information correct at the time of publication.