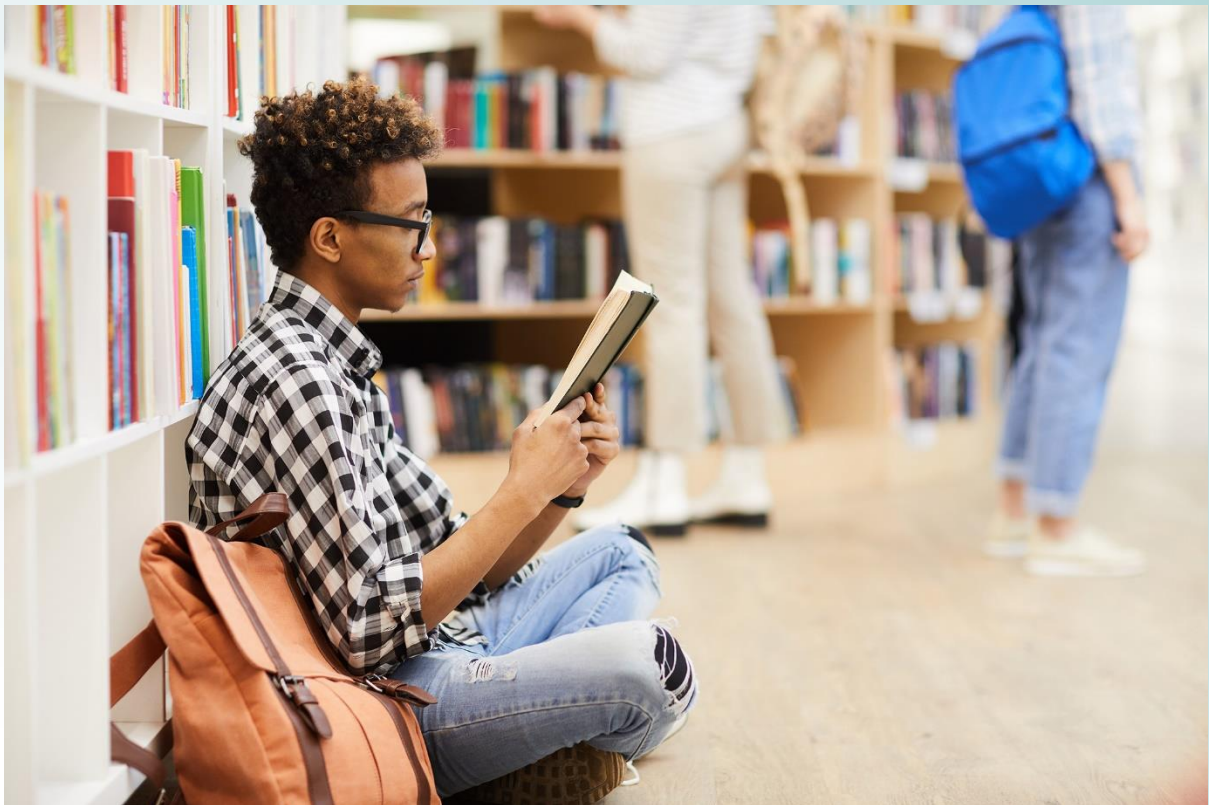


PIXL Reading

Wider reading guide for Key Stage 5 students



*‘Excellence in almost any academic subject
requires strong reading.’* DOUG LEMOV

Wider Reading: what it is and how to get started

What is wider reading and why should I do it?

Wider reading is when students, like yourself, independently read different types of texts about certain topics to build their knowledge and understanding. For example, you could read books, magazines, newspapers or online articles.

You chose the subjects you are studying, presumably, because you enjoy them and/or you know they will support your application to pursue a specific pathway when you move on from sixth form/college. Wider reading should therefore be enjoyable; it'll allow you to really explore each of your subjects in a personal way as you select different topics and texts that are of interest to you.

As well as being enjoyable, wider reading should also help you with your studies as it can deepen your awareness and understanding of different areas of your course. It can also be used to expose you to different viewpoints and perspectives on topics and issues, which is important for many subjects. Doing this can therefore set you up well for continuing to study or work in a particular subject area. Wider reading, and the knowledge you acquire from it, will help you to think critically about different issues. Admissions tutors, for example, are often impressed by evidence of wider reading as it demonstrates the passion and dedication you have for your chosen subject.

How can I use this guide?

Although wider reading should be enjoyable and useful for you, students embarking upon Key Stage 5 study are not always used to doing this and so don't always know how to get started: this guide aims to help. It has been created with the aim of providing you with a range of ideas for reading widely around different subjects. It is not recommended that you try to read all the books listed, or that you research every topic mentioned – instead, you should select what you think might be interesting to explore, or topics you don't know much about, and start your wider reading there. That's the point of wider reading – to dip in, see what takes your interest and explore further. Hopefully some of the texts or websites listed here will inspire your interest even more. Equally, the suggestions here are by no means exhaustive, you could find your own suggestions or speak to your teachers too. Exam boards also usually provide suggested wider reading lists which you may wish to peruse.

Following up on the advice in this guide will allow you to evidence several key skills to admissions tutors or employers: independent learning, research skills, critical thinking and ability to develop ideas, and therefore an ability to contribute to discussions and debates around different topics in your subject. As well as this, it should show you whether your interest in a particular subject is great enough to want to pursue it after college, as well as allowing you to immerse yourself in something you are passionate about.

Contents

The list below is hyperlinked so you can easily click on a subject you're currently studying (or that you'd like to study) and read the suggestions and advice for the specific subject/s relevant to you.

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Anthropology

Anthropology is divided between: social or cultural anthropology, and physical or biological anthropology. There are courses specifically in the former and some which overlap with human geography. The latter overlaps with human biology and genetics. If you are unsure which aspect you're most interested in, read widely and explore each one.

- *Who We Are and How We Got Here* (Reich)
- *The Third Chimpanzee* (Diamond)
- *Tribe* (Bruce Parry)
- *A Beginner's Guide to Anthropology* (Hendy)
- *The Book of Peoples* (National Geographic)
- *The Innocent Anthropologist* (Nigel Barley)
- *The Naked Ape* (Morris)
- *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (Harari)
- *The World Until Yesterday: What Can We Learn from Traditional Societies?* (Diamond)
- *Think Like an Anthropologist* (Engelke)
- *The Origin of Our Species* (Stringer)
- *Treasured Possessions: Indigenous Interventions into Cultural and Intellectual Property* (Geismar)
- *Photography and Anthropology* (Pinney)
- *The Cell Phone: An Anthropology of Communication* (Horst et al.)
- *Dancing Skeletons: Life and Death in West Africa* (Dettwyler)
- *The Woman in the Body* (Martin)
- *Humankind: A Hopeful History* (Bregman)
- *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity* (Braeber & Wengrow)

Podcasts

- The University of Oxford Anthropology – [Anthropology | University of Oxford Podcasts](#)
- AnthroPod podcast of the Society for Cultural Anthropology [AnthroPod | Society for Cultural Anthropology \(culanth.org\)](#)

As part of your reading, you could do a study of the primates – considering questions such as: what are prosimians, simians and apes? What makes man different and why/how did he develop physical differences? Why are witchcraft and magic important in many tribal cultures?

If you are interested in exploring archaeology alongside this, follow up on areas you are particularly interested in, whether that be British Roman and Anglo-Saxon, Egyptian, Central American etc. It would be a good idea to get in touch with a local archaeological society (or a Department of Archaeology at a nearby university, if it has one) and arrange to spend some time on a dig. There is more science to it than you might think and it would be very useful to familiarise yourself with this.

Architecture

As you embark upon your journey through the world of architecture, your reading should be guided by your own interests and preferences. Consider which buildings fascinate you and why. Dive into the history of these structures and learn about the architects behind them. Exploring the engineering and artistic challenges faced by architects through the ages can be very enlightening. English cathedrals, for instance, provide a rich source of study in terms of architectural evolution and the innovative solutions applied by early builders. Additionally, visiting local National Trust properties can offer insights into architectural conservation, the history behind historical buildings and the intricacies of restoration work.

- *A History of Architecture in 100 Buildings* (Cruikshank)
- *The Future of Architecture in 100 Buildings* (Kushner)
- *Modern Architecture Since 1900* (Curtis)
- *Why We Build* (Moore)
- *The Story of Art* (Gombrich)
- *The Classical Language of Architecture* (Summerson)
- *The Poetics of Space* (Bachelard)
- *Space, Time and Architecture* (Giedon)
- *Structures – or Why Things Don't Fall Down* (Gordon)
- *How Buildings Learn: What Happens After They're Built* (Brand)
- *The Meaning of Modern Art, A Philosophical Interpretation* (Harries)
- *Towards a New Architecture* (Le Corbusier)
- *Cambridge Architecture, A Concise Guide* (Ray)
- *The Ethical Architect* (Spector)
- *Experiencing Architecture* (Rasmussen)
- *There is no Planet B: A Handbook for the Make or Break Years* (Berners-Lee)
- *Stuff Matters* (Miodownik)
- *Sustainable Design: A Critical Guide* (Bergman)
- *Invisible Cities* (Calvino)

Explore digital tools to engage with architecture interactively; you could explore platforms like SketchUp or Autodesk Revit, which offer hands-on experience with designing and visualising architectural concepts. With sustainability being crucial in today's architectural design, it would be beneficial to familiarise yourself with green building techniques and materials. Follow developments in smart building technologies which feature self-regulating systems. This cutting-edge area promises to be at the forefront of future architectural practices in the future.

Useful websites to consider include www.ted.com, RIBA's website (the Royal Institute of British Architects), www.architecture.com for resources, professional guidance, and updates on the Stirling Prize, which celebrates excellence in architecture. Also look at ArchDaily and The Architectural Review for news on contemporary projects and trends.

Art and Design

Art and Design encompasses a wide range of disciplines, from traditional painting and sculpture to modern digital design. It includes Fine Art, Arts and Crafts, Graphic Communication, Textiles, Photography and more. Whether you are passionate about creating expressive paintings, intricate textile designs, visually captivating graphic designs, or thought-provoking photographic compositions, this section aims to provide a comprehensive array of reading resources. From exploring the rich history of artistic movements to understanding contemporary trends and innovative techniques, you will find valuable insights and inspiration to fuel your creativity.

- *The Art Book* (Phaidon)
- *Art & Fear: Observations on the Perils (and Rewards) of Artmaking* (Bayles and Orland)
- *Ways of Seeing* (Berger)
- *Women, Art and Society* (Chadwick)
- *Figure Drawing: Design and Invention* (Hampton)
- *Sketchbooks: The Hidden Art of Designers, Illustrators and Creatives* (Brereton)
- *The Urban Sketcher: Techniques for Seeing and Drawing on Location* (Holmes)
- *Colour and Light: A Guide for the Realist Painter* (Gurney)
- *The Secret Lives of Colour* (St. Clair)
- *Steal Like an Artist: 10 Things Nobody Told You About Being Creative* (Kleon)
- *Typography Essentials: 100 Design Principles for Working with Type* (Saltz)
- *The Elements of Typographic Style* (Bringhurst)
- *The Fundamentals of Photography* (Ang)
- *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain* (Edwards)
- *The Design of Everyday Things* (Don Norman)
- *How Design Makes Us Think* (Adams)
- *Graphic Design: The New Basics* (Lupton and Cole Phillips)

For further reading, such as online articles and journals, you could try: Tate Papers, an online research journal published by Tate galleries. Artforum, a leading contemporary art magazine offering in-depth reviews, interviews and critical essays on the latest developments in the art world. JSTOR Arts & Sciences, a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary sources covering a wide range of disciplines, including art history, visual culture, and design. There are also inspirational websites you should look at, such as IllustrationX, Artsy.net, It's Nice That, Hyperallergic and Design Milk.

Biology

Biology covers all of human biology, zoology and botany. You need to decide whether you want to explore all aspects or just some. You might also wish to find out about specialist areas such as virology, microbiology, marine biology and/or genetics to see whether you'd like to specialise from the beginning or study more generally, before deciding on any more specialist options.

- *Ancestors: A Prehistory of Britain in Seven Burials* (Roberts)
- *The Chemistry of Life* (Steven Rose)
- Anything by the geneticist Steve Jones or the biologist Richard Dawkins
- *Genome* (Matt Ridley)
- *The Wisdom of the Genes* (Wills)
- *Life on the Edge: Quantum Biology* (Al-Khalili and MacFadden)
- *Hacking The Code of Life* (Carey)
- *Life Ascending* (Nick Lane)
- *The Revenge of Gaia* (Lovelock)
- *50 Genetic Ideas You Really Need to Know* (Henderson)
- *Zoobiquity* (Horowitz and Bowers)
- *Creation: The Origin of Life* (Rutherford)
- *The Sixth Extinction* (Kolbert)
- *Great Myths of the Brain* (Jarrett)
- *The Gene – an Intimate History* (Mukherjee)
- *How We Live and Why We Die* (Wolpert)
- *Honeybee Democracy* (Seeley)
- *A Short History of Everything* (Bryson)

For websites, you could consider www.arkive.org, www.ted.com and www.thenakedscientists.com. You could also explore journals such as Nature and New Scientist in particular. Be aware that all scientific journals will have biological items in them that you may need to research. For biochemistry, a good Handbook of Biochemistry/Principles of Biochemistry textbook is useful for back-up reading as you do topics at A Level. For genetics, familiarise yourself with sex-linked conditions, genetic ratios, gene editing and, for population genetics, the Hardy-Weinberg equilibrium and find out about case studies. For zoology, look at taxonomy (the science of classification – what do 'species' and 'genus' mean?) and at such things as the place of primates within it. Explore articles from newspapers on medical advances and also look at the medical bulletins that PiXL has produced for schools.

Business and Marketing

It is useful to keep up to date with current issues and how they impact businesses; this not only helps your understanding but may also shed light on areas that are of particular interest to you.

Newspapers, and their accompanying websites, such as The Times (www.thetimes.co.uk) and the Financial Times (www.ft.com) are interesting sources to read and explore regularly. The Week is another useful source as it provides a balanced and well-considered commentary on a range of political, social and economic factors linked to events from the past week. The business section of the BBC website (www.bbc.co.uk/news/business) and Business Insider (www.businessinsider.com) are also useful websites you can briefly look at every day.

As you explore the variety of sources available, you should consider how the news of the day/week might impact upon local, national and international business.

In addition to this reading, the following books may be of interest, as a starting point in your reading around this subject:

- *Brilliant Marketing* (Hall)
- *The Advertising Concept Book* (Barry)
- *Guerrilla Marketing* (Levinson)
- *The Strategy Book* (McKeown)
- *Strategy* (Harvard Business Essentials)
- *Adventures of a Global Entrepreneur* (Branson)
- *Anyone Can Do It* (Bannatyne)
- *Life After Steve?!*
- *No Rules Rules: Netflix and the Culture of Reinvention* (Hastings and Meyer)
- *Shoe Dog* (Knight)
- *The Diary of a CEO* (Bartlett)
- *The Happy Index: Lessons in Upside Down Management* (Timpson)
- *The Infinite Game* (Sinek)
- *Good to Great* (Collins)
- *Accomplishment: How to Achieve Ambitious and Challenging Things* (Barber)
- *After Steve: How Apple Became a Trillion-Dollar Company and Lost Its Soul* (Mickle)

Chemistry

There are specialist variations on the theme – from biochemistry and chemical engineering, through to very niche specialisms such as colour chemistry. You may wish to research these and consider which aspects you are most interested in.

- *Oxygen: The Molecule That Made the World* (Lane)
- *It's Elemental: The Hidden Chemistry in Everything* (Biberdorf)
- *Chemistry of Life* (Steven Rose)
- *Chemistry* (Brock)
- *Principles of Biochemistry* (White, Handler and Smith)
- *Chemistry for Changing Times* (Hill, McCreary and Kolb)
- *Materials Science* (Ramsden)
- *The Periodic Kingdom* (Atkins)
- *Mendeleev's Dream – The Search for the Elements* (Strathern)
- *Periodic Tables – The Curious Life of the Elements* (Aldersty and Williams)
- *The Disappearing Spoon* (Kean)
- *50 Ideas You Really Need to Know About Chemistry* (Birch)
- *The Periodic Table – A Field Guide to the Elements* (Parsons and Dixon)
- *A Short History of Everything* (Bryson)

As part of your reading, you could consider exploring the periodicals New Scientist, Nature, Chemistry World and Education in Chemistry. For websites, look at www.ted.com, www.thenakedscientists.com, www.isaacchemistry.org; you could also search 'chemistry websites' as there are several on different areas of chemistry and from a number of UK and US universities. You may also wish to read other sites about biology and material sciences. For more information about potential jobs in the field of chemistry, and more ideas about study options, try the Royal Society of Chemistry's, 'A Future in Chemistry' website, <https://edu.rsc.org/future-in-chemistry>.

Classics

Classics can be studied without having learned Latin or Greek (or any of the classical languages) beforehand, but you need to think about whether you want to take any of these up at university as part of your course. You could, therefore, read around these languages to help you decide.

If you have already explored Classics, consider how many whole texts you have read, in addition to extracts – it would be useful for you to make an effort to read the entire text wherever possible.

- Recent histories such as Mary Beard's *SPQR* are interesting (indeed, anything by her)
- Tom Holland's *Rubicon*, but you could also go back to some of the translated originals – histories such as *The Histories* (Tacitus) or *The 12 Caesars* (Suetonius)
- *Marcus Aurelius – the Stoic Emperor* (Robertson)
- Any of the Greek plays of Sophocles, Euripides, Aeschylus and Aristophanes, Virgil's *Aeneid* (the translation of *Book VI* by Seamus Heaney is particularly good) and *Lucretius De Rerum Natura*, which is an astonishing early treatise on the natural world. You could also read Homer's *Iliad* or *Odyssey*, as well as texts by Ovid.

In addition to reading widely amongst the classics, you may benefit from exploring other resources as well, such as:

- *Brutus: The Noble Conspirator* (Tempest)
- *Greek History: The Basics* (Osborne)
- *Archaic and Classical Greek Art* (Osborne)
- *Linguistics: A Very Short Introduction* (Matthews)
- *The Classical World: An Epic History from Homer to Hadrian* (Lane Fox)
- *Roman Social History* (Terggiari)
- *Who We Are and How We Got Here* (David Reich)

You could also discover more about the wider world of Classics by reading the journal *Omnibus* which is produced twice a year by the Classical Association; it contains a range of free short articles on aspects of Classics.

Other useful resources include The Perseus Project, a website featuring many Greek and Latin texts in original as well as English translation, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/> or listening to the podcast series *Ancient Greece Declassified*. The YouTube channel *Kinds and Generals* may also be of interest to you.

Computing

A lot of what you could read depends on whether your interest is in computer science, computer studies or, within that, specialist areas such as web design, networking, computer animation etc. Reading around these areas will be beneficial to you. Computer science is more about designing the next generation of computer hardware, quantum computing etc. so the emphasis is very much upon prowess in physics and maths (and preferably further maths). Whereas software is more relevant, the emphasis is a little less directly scientific, but you will still be expected to have a lot of computer experience.

- *Life 3.0* (Tegmark) – this discusses what being human will be like in the age of AI.
- *Artificial Unintelligence: How Computers Misunderstand the World* (Broussard)
- *Computational Fairy Tales* (Kubica)
- *Once Upon an Algorithm: How Stories Explain Computing* (Erwig)
- *Hackers: Heroes of the Computer Revolution* (Levy)
- *Algorithms to Live By: The Computer Science of Human Decisions* (Christian and Griffiths)
- *The Soul of a New Machine* (Kidder)
- *Computer Science: An Overview* (Brookshear)
- *The Phoenix Project: A Novel about IT, DevOps, and Helping Your Business Win* (Kim, Behr and Spafford)
- *Code: The Hidden Language of Computer Hardware and Software* (Petzold)
- *The Pattern on the Stone: The Simple Ideas That Make Computers Work* (Hillis)
- *Outnumbered: From Facebook and Google to Fake News and Filter-bubbles – the algorithms that control our lives* (Sumpter)
- *The Code Book* (Singh)
- *Algorithmic Puzzles* (Levitin and Levitin)
- *Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid* (Hofstadter)
- *Quantum Supremacy* (Michio Kaku)
- *The Chat GPT Revolution* (Bill Brown)
- *The Coming Wave* (Mustafa Suleyman)

You could also look at websites such as Webopaedia and the IEEE. Additionally, technical blogs and forums such as <https://stackoverflow.com> offer valuable insights and discussions on programming languages, algorithms and software development. You can also dive into research papers and journals through platforms like <https://scholar.google.com> to stay updated on the latest advancements in computer science research. For multimedia content, podcasts like <https://softwareengineeringdaily.com> provide accessible explanations of complex concepts.

Computing courses are also mathematical, so you may also like to explore this area too. You could explore problem solving through websites such as www.ukmt.org.uk, or <https://artofproblemsolving.com/resources>, or you may wish to read the Chalk Dust magazine available here: <https://chalkdustmagazine.com>.

Drama

There are a range of courses and opportunities that you can explore, depending on whether you are more interested in a more academic, practical or vocational course. Courses currently include acting, musical theatre, theatre management, lighting/sound/set design, film/media studies and writing/directing for stage and/or film. You may find Freeman's book *So You Want To Go To Drama School* helpful if you are thinking of continuing your study of drama after sixth form. Reading around different aspects of drama and theatre will help you to decide where your skills and interests lie.

Wider reading could include exploring a range of practitioners such as Artaud, Berkoff, Boal, Brecht, Brook, DV8, Frantic Assembly, Godber, Gecko Theatre and Stanislavski. It is likely that you will be studying some of these practitioners as part of your current course, so you may wish to start by reading more widely around these. For example, if you are studying Stanislavski, you could read his books *An Actor Prepares*, *Creating A Role*, or *Building a Character*. You could then move on to researching other established practitioners to broaden your knowledge further.

Reading as many published plays as possible will also be of benefit. Start with playwrights you are already studying in class, or plays written in a similar genre or period, and then expand from there. You could also research different types of theatre and look at the National Theatre Podcasts.

In addition to the suggestions above, you may wish to consider exploring the following texts:

- *Theatre and Nation* (Holdsworth)
- *Introduction to Production: Creating Theatre Onstage, Backstage and Offstage* (Sutherland-Cohen)
- *The Empty Space* (Brook)
- *Performance Studies: An Introduction* (Schechner)
- *Theatre and Ethics* (Ridout)
- *Do It Yourself Theatre* (Daniels)
- *How Plays Work* (Edgar)
- *Theory/Theatre: An Introduction* (Fortier)
- *The Frantic Assembly Book of Devising Theatre* (Graham and Hogget)
- *The Drama, Theatre and Performance Companion* (Mangan)
- *A Director Prepares: Seven Essays on Art and Theatre* (Bogart)
- *Improvisation and the Theatre* (Johnstone)
- *Balancing Acts* (Hytner)
- *The Director's Craft* (Mitchell)
- *Theatre of Cruelty* (Artaud)
- *Year of the King* (Sher)
- *The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht* (Willett)
- *Steve Berkoff and the Theatre of Self-performance* (Cross)
- *Modern Theories of Performance* (Milling/Ley)
- *Cinema Speculation* (Quentin Tarantino)

Economics

The Victorian historian Thomas Carlyle, called economics ‘the dismal science’ and that led to the debate as to whether it is a science or a discipline. The further economics is taken, the more mathematical it becomes. You should keep up to date with current economic issues and debates; this is not difficult at the current time, in terms of problems with the global economy. Your reading around this will overlap with politics and debates on taxation, welfare, borrowing, public spending, currency crises etc. Pick two or three topics from your A Level course (a combination of macro- and micro-economics) and study them in depth. You may find the following list useful to get you started:

- *Freakonomics* (Levitt and Dubner)
- *The Lexus and The Olive Tree – A Study of Globalisation* (Friedman)
- *Should Rich Nations Help the Poor?* (Hulme)
- *Crashed: How a Decade of Financial Crises Changed the World* (Tooze)
- *Grave New World – The End of Globalisation* (King)
- *Hard Times* (Clark and Heath)
- *Winner Takes All* (Moyo)
- *The Ascent of Money* (Ferguson)
- *The Price of Inequality and The Great Divide* (Stiglitz)
- *End This Depression Now* (Krugman)
- *How the West Was Lost* (Mayo)
- *22 Things They Didn't tell You About Capitalism* (Chang)
- *The Undercover Economist* (Harford)
- *The End of Poverty* (Sachs)
- *What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of the Market* (Sandel)
- *The Very Short Introduction to Marx* (Singer)
- *WTF: What have we done? Why did it happen? How do we take back control?* (Peston)
- *The Art of Statistics* (Spiegelhalter)
- *Doughnut Economics, Seven Ways to Think like a 21st-Century Economist* (Raworth)
- *Econocracy: The Perils of Leaving Economics to the Experts* (Joe Earle, Cahal Moran and Zach Ward-Perkins)
- *Innovation + Equality: How to Create a Future that is More Star Trek than Terminator* (Joshua Gans and Andrew Leigh)
- *7 Ways to Change the World* (Gordon Brown)
- *Economics and the Good Society* (Joseph Stiglitz)
- *Economics, from the Degree in a Book series* (Elaine Schwartz)

Look at websites such as www.ted.com, www.economist.com, www.CNNMoney.com, and www.ft.com (Financial Times site). You could also look at the ideas of current leading thinkers in economics such as Amartya Sen (his theories on foreign aid creating dependency).

An interactive way to read widely for this subject would be to ‘give’ yourself a notional £20,000 each year and see how you would invest it and (hopefully) make a profit – best to make this ‘notional’, just in case! You would need to research different investment types from various sources, making this a really interesting challenge.

Engineering

Exploring the diverse field of engineering through reading can help you identify which specific areas interest you the most, such as civil, mechanical, electrical or aeronautical engineering. You might start with a general approach, to understand the basics, before deciding on a specialism. The following texts will help you to gain an understanding of the various areas of engineering, as well as giving you a general overview of the subject:

- *Sustainable Energy – Without the Hot Air* (MacKay) – available: <http://www.inference.org.uk/sustainable/book/tex/sewtha.pdf>
- *Engineering in Society* – (ed. Rob Lawlor) – available: <https://www.raeng.org.uk/publications/reports/engineering-in-society>
- *Engineering: A Beginner’s Guide* (McCarthy)
- *The New Science of Strong Materials – or Why You Don’t Fall Through the Floor* (Gordon)
- *The Gecko’s Foot: How Scientists are Taking a Leaf from Nature’s Book* (Forbes)
- *Bebop to the Boolean Boogie: An Unconventional Guide to Electronics* (Maxfield)
- *Invention by Design – How Engineers get from Thought to Thinking* (Petroski)
- *To Engineer is Human: The Role of Failure in Successful Design* (Petroski)
- *Pushing the Limits: New Adventures in Engineering* (Petroski)
- *Why Buildings Fall Down* (Levy and Salvadori)
- *The Science of Formula 1 Design* (Tremayne)
- *The Simple Science of Flight* (Tennekes)
- *Seven Wonders of the Industrial World* (Cadbury)
- *The Existential Pleasures of Engineering* (Florman)
- *How Things Work – The Physics of Everyday Life* (Bloomfield)
- *Advanced Design and Technology* (Norman, et al.)
- *The Fourth Industrial Revolution* (Schwab)
- *Materials for Sustainable Sites* (Calkins)
- *Digital Twin Technologies and Smart Cities* (Farsi)
- *Sustainable Energy Systems and Applications* (Dincer and Zamfirescu)
- *Electrical and Mechanical Engineering – everything you need to know* (Baker)

For further research, you could explore the following websites: The Royal Academy of Engineering www.raeng.org.uk, www.ted.com, www.discoverengineering.org and Engineering.com.

Additionally, you could research major engineering projects like airport expansions, the High Speed 2 (HS2) railway and new infrastructure developments to see engineering principles in action. By engaging with these resources, you will gain a deeper understanding of the engineering field and its numerous disciplines, helping you make a more informed decision about your future specialism.

English Language

Through wider reading, you will soon realise that English Language at A Level is very different from the subject at GCSE. There are a number of discrete topic areas which you may find particular interest in, whether these be how English has changed over time, how technology impacts on language today, or even how children first acquire language. To get started, you might choose one or two titles from the list below:

- *Doing English Language: A Guide for Success* (Goddard)
- *The Mother Tongue* (Bryson)
- *A Little Book of Language* (Crystal)
- *How Language Works* (Crystal)
- *Rediscover Grammar* (Crystal)
- *The Stories of English* (Crystal)
- *Don't Believe a Word: The Surprising Truth About Language* (Shariatmadari)
- *Language and Sexuality* (Cameron)
- *The Myth of Mars and Venus* (Cameron)
- *Language and Gender* (Titjen)
- *Language and Power* (Ives and Rana)
- *Because Internet: Understanding How Language Is Changing* (McCulloch)
- *The Language Wars: A History of Proper English* (Hitchings)
- *Language Change* (Cushing)
- *Text Analysis and Representation* (Cushing)
- *The Language Web* (Aitchison)
- *Global Englishes: A Resource Book for Students* (Jenkins)
- *Language and Power* (Fairclough)
- *Linguistics: A Very Short Introduction* (Matthews)
- *Mastering Advanced English Language* (Thorne)

You could read the English Language and Linguistics journal or the English Language Research journal for up-to-date scholarship in the subject, become a junior member of The English Association and consult https://www.ted.com/playlists/228/how_language_changes_over_time for a number of inspiring video-talks on the development of languages.

You can get other ideas from <http://englishlangsfx.blogspot.com/> and <https://debuk.wordpress.com/>. Through your reading, you should also keep up to date with changes in language, especially up-to-date articles on the impact of technology and gender.

English Literature

For English Literature, there is abundant wider reading to be done related to the genres, periods and literary movements that you might be studying. Similarly, other works by the authors you are studying will be a rich avenue for investigation. In addition to this, there is a wide selection of reading that you might look into, pertaining more to the nature of the study of literature itself. Below is an array of texts which consider a variety of literary forms, as well as different ways of readings and modes of interpretation:

- *The World Between Two Covers: Reading the Globe* (Morgan)
- *The Art of Fiction* (Lodge)
- *Orientalism* (Said)
- *Contemporary Marxist Literary Criticism* (Mulhern)
- *The Western Canon: The Books and School of the Ages* (Bloom)
- *Off The Books: On Literature and Culture* (Peder Zane)
- *The Bible and Literature: A Reader* (Jasper and Prickett)
- *How Novels Work* (Mullan)
- *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (Culler)
- *Communism: A Very Short Introduction* (Holmes)
- *Feminist Literary Criticism: A Reader* (Eagleton)
- *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (Wollstonecraft)
- *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* (Barry)
- *The Death of The Author* (Barthes)
- *The Madwoman in the Attic* (Gilbert)
- *The Second Sex* (De Beauvoir)
- *The Ode Less Travelled* (Fry)
- *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Eagleton)
- *Where I'm Reading From* (Parks)
- *A Room of One's Own* (Woolf)

You could sign up to *emagazine* from the English and Media Centre for regular literary articles, become a junior member of *The English Association* and consult *the Royal Society of Literature website* for podcasts, videos and articles all related to writers and texts.

You can get other ideas from <https://massolit.io/> (student accounts are available to access scholarship from university lecturers aimed at A Level students), and <https://www.ted.com/topics/literature> (a range of video-talks on literature). You could also sign up for a free student account at <https://www.jstor.org/> to access a wide range of academic articles on literature.

French

Reading in French not only allows you to immerse yourself in the French language, widening your vocabulary and knowledge of grammar, but it also allows you to deepen your understanding of its fascinating history and rich culture. At university, you will study, in-depth, the wider culture of Francophonie in the many countries across the globe where French is spoken. You will also study the varied history, literature and cinema in which the language is embedded.

Get into a routine of reading anything that interests you: online blogs, adverts, newspapers, poetry and literary works. Keep a notebook handy to jot down any new vocabulary you learn and remember that you do not have to look up every unknown word. Use your ability to decode and derive meaning of unfamiliar language. Do not just limit your reading to France: find out about other French-speaking countries too, as this will be a big part of your further French studies. Watching French films, with French subtitles on, is a great way to improve your knowledge of new language, grammar and phonics as you are watching, listening and reading at the same time.

Invest in a good a grammar book and bilingual dictionary (such as Collins/Robert Bilingual Dictionary) so that you can keep strengthening your knowledge of grammar with practice. *A Comprehensive French Grammar*, G.Price 2007 is useful, along with the workbook that goes with it: *A French Grammar Workbook*, D. Engel, G. Evans and V. Howells 1998

Newspapers and Magazines

- [French Newspapers: Newspapers from France: French News: Journaux Français : Europe \(onlinenewspapers.com\)](http://onlinenewspapers.com)
- [L'Obs - Actualités du jour en direct \(nouvelobs.com\)](http://nouvelobs.com)
- [Le Point – Actualité Politique, Monde, France, Économie, High-Tech, Culture](http://lepoint.fr)
- [Télérama.fr: programme TV, séries TV, films de la semaine, sorties sur Paris et toute l'actualité culturelle \(telerama.fr\)](http://telerama.fr)
- [5 Types of French Magazines for Entertaining Language Learning | FluentU French](http://entertaininglanguagelearning.com)
- [Science & Vie: premier magazine européen de l'actualité scientifique - Science & Vie \(science-et-vie.com\)](http://science-et-vie.com)
- [Conservatoire Numérique des Arts et Métiers \(cnam.fr\)](http://cnam.fr)
- [Auto Journal - Essais de voitures, voiture neuve - Tous les plaisirs de l'automobile](http://autojournal.fr)
- [Santé Magazine, le féminin qui fait du bien! | Santé Magazine \(santemagazine.fr\)](http://santemagazine.fr)
- [Canard PC – Le magazine en ligne des jeux vidéo, hardware et jeux de plateau](http://canardpc.com)
- [Paris Match](http://parismatch.com)

Literature: Here are some of the classics that you may want to dip into:

- *The New Oxford Companion to Literature in French*, P. France ed. 1995
- *L'Être et Le Néant*, Jean-Paul Sartre 1943
- *L'Étranger*, Albert Camus 1942
- *La Porte Étroite*, André Gide 1909
- *Le Deuxième Sexe*, Simone de Beauvoir 1949
- *Poèmes Saturniens*, Paul Verlaine 1867
- *Les Petits Enfants du Siècle*, Christiane Rochefort 1961
- *L'École des Femmes*, Molière 173

Geography

Wider reading is an academic exploration of the subject, building your detailed knowledge and understanding. It is both important for your university applications as well as ensuring that you are better prepared with the peripheral knowledge needed for your exams. The knowledge you gain from wider reading means you can show your examiners that you can think and write like a geographer.

Feedback from A Level examiner reports have highlighted the fact that many candidates were presenting out-dated and stereotypical views of people and places. Reading contemporary literature helps you to understand a wide range of cultures, voices and perspectives.

If you have your own copy of any of the books listed below, use coloured tabs or post-its to keep track of passages that are useful for your A Level course so you can revisit them easily when you are revising. This helps to develop your synoptic thinking in geography, where you can draw in your own examples to exam questions that offers a richness to your answers beyond what is seen in the course textbook.

This list has not been divided by physical and human geography, as many of the books discuss how physical events have wide ranging socioeconomic impacts:

- *Ghost of the Tsunami: Death and Life in Japan* (Parry)
- *When Rivers Run Dry: The Global Water Crisis and How to Solve it* (Pearce)
- *Fundamentals of the Physical Environment* (Smithson et al.)
- *The Ice Age: A very short introduction* (Woodward et al.)
- *Coastal Landscapes* (Stiff)
- *Close to the Edge: Tales from the Holderness Coast* (Williams)
- *Adventures in the Anthropocene* (Vince)
- *Factfulness* (Rosling)
- *Undesirable Immigrants – Why racism persists in international migration* (Rosenberg)
- *Disaster by Choice* (Kelman)
- *Place: An Introduction* (Cresswell)
- *Slums: The History of a Global Injustice* (Mayne)
- *The Sustainable City* (Cohen)
- *Arrival City: How the Largest Migration in History is Reshaping our World* (Saunders)
- *Moving Up and Getting On: Migration, Integration and Social Cohesion in the UK* (Rutter)
- *Deep Sea and Foreign Going* (George)
- *Prisoners of Geography* (Marshall)
- *Powerful Geography* (Marshall)
- *The Looting Machine* (Burgis)
- *The Almighty Dollar* (David)
- *Poverty Safari* (McGarvey)
- *Empireland* (Sanghera)

- *Global Goliaths: Multinational Corporations in the 21st Century Economy* (Foley)
- *Unravelling Europe's 'Migration Crisis'* (Crawley et al.)
- *Africa is Not a Country* (Faloyin)

Magazines containing a range of wider reading materials are also available:

Geography Review, published by Hodder Education has a wide range of articles written by geographers specifically to support the A Level and GCSE courses:

<https://www.hoddereducation.com/subjects/geography/products/16-18/geography-review>

Your geography department might have access to Geofactsheets by Curriculum Press which create summaries of important case studies. An example of the Türkiye earthquake is available on their website: <https://curriculum-press.co.uk/subscriptions/a-level-geography>

The Geographical Association publish a termly journal called *Geography* which contains wider reading on both important concepts, subject knowledge updates and case studies. They aim to bridge the gap between research at higher education level and post-16 A Level studies. Most notable, is a recent article updating the theories around tectonic plate movement by Alistair Hamil. Ask your geography department if they have membership: <https://geography.org.uk/journals-research/journals/geography/>

The Geographical is another excellent magazine. It has plenty of freely available reading material on their website too. They also have book reviews beyond the books listed above.

<https://geographical.co.uk/>

Videos are available from the team at Time for Geography: <https://timeforgeography.co.uk/>

German

Studying German is very rarely about just learning the language itself. Learning about the culture, including art, music and films, gives you a breadth of knowledge about all things German.

Getting into the habit of reading for perhaps 20-30 minutes a day will work wonders for your reading skills, so look up topics you are interested in. Keep a notebook handy to jot down any new vocabulary you learn and remember that you do not have to look up every unknown word. Use your ability to decode and derive meaning of unfamiliar language. This site is useful to bookmark if you want something short and sharp or you want to boost your confidence: <https://german.net/reading/>

Reading parallel texts is a great way to work through short stories. You can search for these online, or you could download an audio book in German at websites such as: <https://www.vorleser.net/>.

Watching German films, with German subtitles on, is also a great way to improve your knowledge of new language, grammar and phonics as you are watching, listening and reading at the same time.

There are many German magazines online which you can access freely. Here are some themed suggestions:

- German news <https://www.dw.com/de/themen/s-9077>
- All things sport <https://www.kicker.de/>
- News and entertainment <https://www.bunte.de/>
- Lifestyle <https://www.jolie.de/>
- History <https://www.wissenschaft.de/damals/>
- National Geographic <https://www.nationalgeographic.de/>
- Film <https://www.cinema.de/>
- Germany <https://www.deutschland.de/de>
- German culture and language <https://www.goethe.de/de/index.html>
- Lyrics Training – a fun way to improve your German through music and lyrics <https://lingoclip.com/de>
- German political topics <https://fluter.de/>

You will, of course, be reading at least one text for A Level, but if you want to spread your wings (and impress an admissions tutor!), read one of the less commonly-studied texts on the list of prescribed texts, such as: *Der kaukasische Kreidekreis* by Bertoldt Brecht, *Die neuen Leiden des jungen W.* by Ulrich Plenzdorf or *Der Wald vor lauter Bäumen* by Maren Ade.

And if you fancy something more modern you can try *Antoinette kehrt zurück* by Olivia Vierweg which is a graphic novel, or *Tschick* by Wolfgang Herrndorf. You can even buy popular English language books such as *Heartstopper* by Alice Oseman in German translation. There is bound to be something you will really enjoy!

Viel Spaß!

Health and Social Care

The field of health and social care covers a wide range of roles and responsibilities, from public health administration and planning, to clinical practice such as physiotherapy and occupational therapy. It is helpful to contact your local health services, especially primary care providers, for work experience, shadowing and advice to help you determine which field/s you may like to pursue.

Reading can also be of great use in exposing you to different areas, including topics and issues you may not have considered before. Whatever area/s of health and social care you're interested in, read around these but also endeavour to keep up to date with current affairs and developments via the news and publications produced specifically for these fields.

In this guide, we have a dedicated section to medicine and veterinary science, but the following book recommendations may also be of use, if you're considering pursuing other aspects of health and social care:

- *The Language of Kindness: a nurse's story* (Watson)
- *Against the Flow* (Jacobson) – this reviews public health campaigns of recent times and the lessons to be learnt from the pandemic
- Very short introduction books on Public Health, Clinical Psychology and Social World

You may also find the following journals and publications to be of interest:

- *Care and Health Magazine*
- *Community Care Magazine*
- *Disability Now*
- *Nursing Times*
- *Biological Science Review*

There are also podcasts and TED Talks which you may like to explore. For example, Anna Scheyette's *Social Workers are Super Heroes* and Julian Treasure's *5 Ways to Listen Better*.

History

History is perfect for wider reading because there is so much available. However, because of the wide range of texts available, it may be difficult to know where to start! The best reading is what interests you. Choose a couple of key events/people or overviews/themes (this could be from what you are studying at A Level or what you wish you were studying). You can also investigate different countries and time periods to the one you are studying. For example, if you are studying American History, you may wish to read about the history of Russia or China at the same time. If you are studying 16th century Britain, you may wish to find out what happens in the 12th or 20th centuries. You can also base your reading on other subjects; for example, there are books on the history of music, media, politics, sociology, languages, science and more. If you are interested in feminism, fighting racism, LGBTQ+ community or food – all have books about their history.

Reading reviews can help you choose whether to invest your time in those books. There are also lots of excellent history magazines which can be subscribed to digitally, such as *BBC History Magazine* or *History Today*. And don't forget historical fiction (alternative or otherwise): Ken Follett, Philippa Gregory, Hilary Mantel and Robert Harris, for example. Reading novels from specific times and places can also be a window into the culture and views of the time, e.g. Christopher Isherwood's novels about Weimar Germany, or *Gone With the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell. There are also some great history podcasts: *You're Dead to Me*, *History Hit* and *The Rest is History* will help you explore new ideas.

Here are just a few suggestions from the wide variety of books that are available:

- **General history:** *The History Book: Big Ideas Simply Explained* by DK is a good starting point. It also has specific books on history, such as WWI and II, Black History and Feminism which can then lead you onto other things.
- **Books about specific countries:** *The Story of China* (Wood); *America - A Narrative History* (G B Tindall, D E Shi); *The Time Traveller's Guide to Medieval England* - there are a series of these (Mortimer).
- **Books that are useful for common topics at A Level:** *The 'Hitler Myth': Image and Reality in the Third Reich* (Kershaw); *The Winter King – Henry VII* (Penn); *Silk Roads* (Frankopan); *The Romanovs* (Montefiore); *The Celts* (Roberts); *The Norman Conquest* (Green)
- **Books on different themes:** *Normal Women* (Gregory); *Fear: An Alternative History of the World* (Peckham); *The History of Racism in United States and the World* (Anversa).

Your teacher is likely to have detailed reading lists which complement your course. Exam boards usually have comprehensive reading and resource lists too, with some additional reading material for every topic in their specification. As you explore, ensure you're reading different research, different types of evidence and documents and discussing what you discover. Your reading will expand your knowledge of the past, give you confidence to make reasoned arguments and help you to understand the complex ideas/interpretations that exist in history.

Law

There is a wide range of options for wider reading around the law. You could start by dipping into different areas of law to get an overview of the various fields. You could also look at general introductions to different areas of law such as human rights law, contract law, tort, criminal, land law etc. Exploring introductions in this way may help you to see which areas you find more interesting. Some recommendations for this would include the Very Short Introduction to... series, e.g. ...to Human Rights (Clapham), ... to the Philosophy of Law (Wacks) and the New Penguin Guide to the Law. Constitutional Law and Land Law are particularly technical!

Most law books can be a bit intimidating, as they are full of complex terminology, so go easy to start with.

- *The Justice Game* (Robertson) - this is an excellent and very readable book by someone who has been involved in some of the leading human rights trials of the last 50 years.
- *Getting into Law* (ed. Lygo)
- *The Search for Justice* (Rozenburg)
- *Understanding Law* (Adams and Brownsword)
- *Law and Modern Society* (Atiyah)
- *On Evidence* (Murphy – just dip into this)
- *The Rule of Law* (Bingham)
- *Bonfire of the Liberties: New Labour, Human Rights* (Ewing)
- *The Power in the People* (Mansfield)
- *Bringing Down Goliath* (Maugham)
- *The Devil's Advocate* (Morley)

There are two radio programmes that are very good and there are podcasts of them on iPlayer; these are *Law in Action* and *Unreliable Evidence*.

Useful websites are www.ted.com, www.lawstudent.tv, www.lawcom.gov.uk (for Law Commission reports). You could also research campaign groups, such as Liberty and the Howard League for penal reform.

Mathematics

Maths departments at universities are interested in the maths you've done, so the more you do the better – further maths, further maths STEP level papers, etc. They also want to know you are interested in the subject beyond what has been taught in the classroom, so reading around mathematics is a great way to see how it is connected to every area of our lives.

To support your wider reading, you could explore the following books which may be of interest to you if you are a keen mathematician!

- *Fermat's Last Theorem* (Singh)
- *Does God Play Dice? and Nature's Numbers* (Stewart)
- *Easy as Pi* (Ivanov)
- *The Music of the Primes* (du Sautoy)
- *Just Six Numbers* (Rees)
- *In Code* (Flannery)
- *Numbers, Sets and Axioms* (Hamilton)
- *The Universe and the Teacup – the Maths of Truth and Beauty* (K.C. Cole)
- *Algebra and Geometry* (Beardon)
- *Hidden Connections, Double Meanings* (Wells)
- *Elastic Fishponds. The Maths that governs our World* (Elwes)
- *The Norm Chronicles* (Blastland and Spitgethaltes)
- *Our Mathematical Universe* (Tegmark)
- *Beyond Infinity* (Cheng)
- *Weapons of Math Destruction* (O'Neill)
- *Ian Stewart's 17 Equations that Changed the World and Thinking in Numbers* (Temmet)
- *Humble Pi* (Matt Parker)
- *The Mathematics of Love* (Hannah Fry)
- *Change is the Only Constant* (Ben Orlin)
- *The Hidden Half* (Michael Blastland)
- *Things to Make and Do in the Fourth Dimension* (Matt Parker)

Media Studies

Media studies is a fascinating subject which has been the focus of much debate for over a century. Whilst that is a relatively short period of time when it comes to academic study, the profound impact the media has had on society is undeniable. The texts below offer the opportunity to find out more about the theoretical framework which forms the basis of media study. The first text offers a basic overview of the theories and the remainder are aimed at deepening your academic understanding.

- ***Media Theory for A Level: The Essential Revision Guide*, by Mark Dixon:** If you are simply looking for an overview of each of the theories in the theoretical framework, then this is the book for you. The remainder of the books on the list are for students who would like to read around their subject and deepen their understanding.
- ***Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, by Marshall McLuhan:** This seminal work explores the impact of media on society, culture and human consciousness. McLuhan's theories on media effects and the concept of the global village are foundational to the study of media.
- ***Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords*, edited by Meenakshi Gigi Durham and Douglas M. Kellner:** This anthology provides a comprehensive overview of key concepts, theories and debates in media and cultural studies. It covers topics such as media representations, ideology, power and audience reception.
- ***The Media Student's Book*, by Gill Branston and Roy Stafford:** This textbook covers a wide range of topics relevant to media studies, including media institutions, media texts and media audiences. It provides a solid foundation for understanding key theories and concepts.
- ***Media, Gender and Identity: An Introduction*, by David Gauntlett:** Focusing on gender and identity in media, this book examines how media representations shape our understanding of gender roles, identities and relationships. It explores issues such as stereotypes, representation and identity construction.

Online Articles and Resources:

- **The Guardian's Media Section:** The Guardian's media section offers a wealth of articles, opinion pieces and analysis on current issues and trends in the media industry. Topics covered include journalism, broadcasting, digital media and media regulation.
- **BBC News Media and Arts Section:** BBC News provides in-depth coverage of media-related news and events, including interviews with industry professionals, analysis of media trends and reports on media policy and regulation.
- **Media Studies Resources (www.mediastudies.com):** This website offers a range of resources for media studies students and teachers, including articles, study guides and lesson plans, covering various aspects of media analysis, theory and research methods.
- **The Conversation - Media and Communication Section:** The Conversation provides accessible and insightful articles written by academics and experts on a wide range of topics, including media and communication. It offers analysis and commentary on current events, trends and debates in the media landscape.

Medicine

There is a wide range of topics and issues that you can read around, if you're keen to study medicine. Firstly, it is important to keep up to date with news items on new medical discoveries and breakthroughs. You could join the junior BMA, read the BMJ (British Medical Journal) and look at the GMC's Tomorrow's Doctors. By watching medical related videos on www.ted.com, you may find other areas that you'd like to read about. You could also ask to have access to PiXL Gateway materials and the PiXL Medics bulletins, which are available to PiXL schools and colleges, so that you can read widely around different medical topics. In addition to reading around new discoveries and current affairs related to healthcare, the following texts may also be of interest:

- *Do No Harm* (Marsh)
- *When Breath Becomes Air* (Kalanithi)
- *Fall Down Seven times, Get Up Eight* (Higashida)
- *A Very Short Introduction to Medical Ethics* (a short introductory series)
- *The Rise and Fall of Modern Medicine* (Le Fanu)
- *War Doctor* (Nott)
- *The Language of Kindness: A Nurse's Story* (Watson)
- *The Emperor of All Maladies – a biog. of cancer* (Mukherjee)
- *NHS SOS* (Davis and Tullis)
- *The Political Economy of Health Care* (Tudor Hart)
- *Being Mortal* (Gawande)
- *Causing Death and Saving Lives* (Glover)
- *How Doctors Think* (Groopman)
- *Diagnosis: Dispatches from the Frontlines of Medical Mysteries* (Sanders)
- *Bad Pharma* (Goldacre)
- *So you want to be a Doctor* (Dev and Metcalfe)
- *Ultra-processed People* (Chris van Tulleken)
- *How Not to be a Doctor* (Launer)
- *The Language of Kindness: A Nurse's Story* (Watson)
- *Does it Hurt When I Press Here?* (Black)

For pharmacy, you could read anything by Ben Goldacre and check out his website.

For optometry, you could read *A Very Short Introduction to the Eye* (Lund) or *The Eye Book* (Grierson) and *The Ophthobook* (Tim Root).

Regardless of what field you're interested in, it will be important to show that you have the personal and academic qualities admissions tutors are looking for. That means getting as much experience as you can with working with others who are in some way or other requiring help. Your teachers will be able to advise you on this.

Music

What you read about will very much depend upon what drives you as a musician and what you wish to study further, so it is important to have a clear idea about what you want to focus on. It may be that you'd like to follow a more general route, or you may wish to specialise in performing, composing or in certain genres of music such as film music, classical music, jazz or even music therapy. Reading around these areas, as well as exploring the practical elements, will help you decide what interests you.

Some examples, to help get you started, are listed below:

- *Oxford History of Western Music* (Taruskin)
- *The Rest is Noise* (Ross)
- *Musicology: The Key Concepts* (Beard and Gloag)
- *Interpreting Popular Music* (Brackett)
- *Music: A Very Short Introduction* (Cook)
- *Music Therapy: Understanding the Science of Sound* (Fauble)
- *What's That Sound? An Introduction to Rock and Its History* (Covach)

Aside from reading around the subject, it is crucial that you listen to a wide range of music across different styles and genres.

If you are interested in a particular style or genre of music, it is important that you read about, and listen to, a wide range of compositions from that time period and in a similar style. For example, if you wish to talk about the Baroque period, then an understanding of conventions of the time is important, as well as the differing musical characteristics of composers of the time, as Handel, Bach, Vivaldi, Purcell and more all had their own compositional identities.

Likewise, if you wish to continue to study jazz, then an understanding of the evolution of jazz and its origins is obviously important, as well as how various artists contributed to the development of the genre in different ways.

Physical Education

There are lots of different pathways to suit individual interests in this subject. Specialist areas come from four main routes: the science behind sport, the psychology behind sport, the performance of sport and the development of sport. Widen your knowledge by reading sports autobiographies, sports, health, or nutrition magazines, read websites such as teachpe.com, governing bodies or Sport England etc. Read around these areas and consider which may be of most interest to you.

Sport Science and Sport Psychology:

- *Sport Science: A Complete Introduction* (Rea)
- *The Body* (Bryson)
- *Bounce* (Syed)
- *The Secret Race* (Coyle and Hamilton)
- *Sport and Exercise Science: An Introduction* (Dean, Sewell, Murray, Griffin and Philip Watkins)
- *Biomechanics of Sport and Exercise* (McGinnis)
- *The Complete Guide to Sports Nutrition* (Bean)
- *Essentials of Performance Analysis in Sport* (Hughes and Franks)
- *An Introduction to the Physics of Sports* (McInees Spathopoulos)
- *Peak: The New Science of Athletic Performance That is Revolutionising Sports* (Bubbs)
- *Sports Gene: Inside the Science of Extraordinary Athletic Performance* (Epstein)
- *Applied Anatomy and Biomechanics in Sport* (Ackland and Elliott)
- *Clinical Sports Medicine* (Brukner and Khan)
- *The Champion's Mind: How Great Athletes Think, Train and Thrive* (Afrenow)
- *Sport, Exercise and Performance Psychology* (Robbins and Madrigal)
- *Performance Psychology: A Practitioner's Guide* (Abbott and Richards)
- *Sport Psychology: A Complete Introduction* (Perry)
- *Applied Sport Psychology: A Case-based Approach* (Hemmings and Holder)
- *Advancements in Mental Skills Training* (Maurizio)

Sports Development and Physical Education

- *Sport Development: Policy, Process and Practice* (Hylton)
- *Sport for Development. What game are we playing?* (Coalter)
- *Foundations of Sport Development* (Mackintosh)
- *The Politics of Sports Development: Development of Sport or Development Through Sport?* (White and Houlihan)
- *Sport Pedagogy: An Introduction to Teaching and Coaching* (Armour)

You could also explore scientific and psychological experiments, such as that by Malm (2019), Evans (2020) and other research. You could consider key questions such as: How does anxiety affect sports performance? Or how do we aid performance using energy-based products?

There are also podcasts and TED talks you may like to explore about the world of sport and how performance is affected. The Sports Psychology Podcast: *Get Psyched for Sport* provides an insight into the world of sport and how we use mental toughness to provide top level performances.

Physics

Physics can be explored as a general subject, but there are also specialist areas such as astrophysics, nuclear physics, astronomy etc. that can be studied straightaway or specialised in, during years two and three of some courses. It would be beneficial to read around these areas and consider which may be of most interest to you.

The following texts may help get you started:

- *The Elegant Universe* (Greene)
- *The Physics of the Impossible and Parallel Worlds* (Kaku)
- *Hyperspace* (Khan)
- *Smashing Physics: Inside the World's Biggest Experiment* (Butterworth)
- *Seven Brief Lessons on Physics* (Rovelli)
- *Chaos* (Gleich)
- *Quantum* (Kumar)
- *How to Teach Quantum Physics to your Dog* (Orzel)
- *50 Physics Ideas You Really Need to Know* (Baker)
- *Just Six Numbers* (Rees)
- *About Time* (Frank)
- *The Wonders of the Solar System* (Brian Cox - anything by him is good)
- *An Astronaut's Guide to Life on Earth* (Hadfield)
- *A Space Traveller's Guide to the Solar System* (Thompson)
- *Ripples in Spacetime* (Schilling)
- *Calculating the Cosmos* (Stewart)
- *The Ascent of Gravity* (Chown)
- *A Short History of Everything* (Bryson)

During your reading, you could look at New Scientist and Scientific American, if you can get hold of it. For websites look at www.ted.com, www.thenakedscientists.com, www.galaxyzoo.com, Google physics websites such as *The Physics Classroom*, *The Student Room* etc. and the website of the Institute of Physics or sites such as Isaac Physics: www.isaacphysics.org.

Politics or Politics, Philosophy and Economics

You should aim to use your reading to keep up to date with current political issues. You should know who the key members of the cabinet and opposition are and what they are proposing. The main party websites are useful for this: [Labour](#), [Conservatives](#), [Liberal Democrats](#). The [UK parliament](#) website is useful for reading around UK constitutional and structural politics; it also contains recent and current debates from the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

For foreign political awareness, magazines such as the *New Statesman* and *The Economist* provide an excellent overview; newspapers such as the [New York Times](#) and the [Washington Post](#) are useful.

The following book recommendations have also been collated to help get you started:

- *Why We Get the Wrong Politicians* (Hardman)
- *How to be a Politician* (Cable)
- *Developments in American Politics* (Peele et al.)
- *British General Election Campaigns 1830-2019: The 50 General Election Campaigns that Shaped Our Modern Politics* (Dale)
- *Political Ideologies* (Haywood)
- *Political Ideas for A Level* (Kelly et al.)
- *The Communist Manifesto* (Engels and Marx)
- *The Origins of Political Order* (Fukuyama)
- *The Spectre at the Feast* (Gamble)
- *The Establishment and How They Get Away With It* (Owen Jones)
- *British Politics* (Madgwick)
- *Mind The Gap* (Mount)
- *The Politics Book* (Kelly)
- *The Politics and Economics of Brexit* (Bongardt et al.)
- *Brexit and Beyond* (Martill et al.)
- *Freedom and Equality* (Chandler)
- Political autobiographies are interesting, though biased, with some recent British ones being *Politics on the Edge* (Rory Stewart) and *A Woman's Word* (Harriet Harman).

Social media provides further reading opportunities – e.g. X (formerly Twitter): political party and country leaders can be followed to explore a diverse range of opinions. The [BBC feed](#) is informative on breaking news and can provide a relatively objective approach to key issues. Others, such as [Laura Kuenssberg](#), also share debated political viewpoints.

Philosophy

In terms of philosophy, Plato's *Gorgias* examines two key themes: 'oratory is deceit' and 'might is right'. It is a good introduction to the 'Socratic method'. You could take a theme such as 'truth' and look at how different philosophers have viewed it – *What is Good?* by A.C. Grayling is a good starting point. You might be interested in taking a look at such 'isms' as Fascism, Communism, Totalitarianism, etc. – this would particularly link with an interest in history. Peter Cave has produced *How to Outwit Aristotle*. Julian Baggini's *Do You Think What You Think You Think?* is interesting and other books to consider include:

- *The Philosophical Life* (Miller)
- *What do we really know?* (Blackburn)
- *Philosophy and Life* (A.C. Grayling)
- *Philosophy*, from the *Degree in a Book* series (Gibson)

Psychology

There are lots of specialist areas within psychology, so you may wish to read around these to explore which you find most interesting and therefore which areas you might like to pursue further. For example: clinical, cognitive, developmental, forensic and social.

A good place to start is by looking at the original research papers of key studies covered in your course, for example those by Milgram. These are usually available through JSTOR or Google Scholar. These are challenging texts, but reading original research papers (or the abstracts of them) will give you a better sense of how psychologists write, which will help your further study.

Use the resources below to get started on your wider reading. There is a mixture of academic and fictional texts, as well as articles and blogs to help you keep up to date with the most recent psychological research.

Academic books

- *The Psychology Book* (Benson)
- *Classic Case Studied in Psychology* (Rolls)
- *The Gendered Brain* (Rippon)
- *Understand Psychology* (Hayes)
- *Foundations of Psychology* (Hayes)
- *A First Course in Psychology* (Hayes)
- *Psychology: The science of mind and behaviour* (Gross)
- *Key Studies in Psychology* (Gross)
- *The Three Faces of Eve* (Thigpin)
- *50 Psychology Ideas You Really Need to Know* (Furnham)
- *The Skeleton Cupboard - The Making of a Clinical Psychologist* (Byron)
- *The Man Who Mistook His Wife For a Hat* (Sacks)
- *The Mind's Eye* (Sacks)
- *Hidden Valley Road: Inside the mind of an American family* (Kolker)
- *The Selfish Gene* (Dawkins)
- *Introducing Freud: A graphic guide* (Appignanesi)
- *Behind the Shock Machine* (Perry)
- *Patient HM* (Dittrich)
- *Opening of Skinner's box: Great psychological experiments of the twentieth century* (Slater)
- *The Lucifer Effect: How good people turn evil* (Zimbardo)
- *Obedience to Authority: An experimental view* (Milgram)
- *Genie: A scientific tragedy* (Rymer)
- *Memory: A very short introduction* (Foster)

Popular Psychology

These books are less academic, but enjoyable and accessible. They will help you to explore the role of Psychology in the world today:

- *50 Great myths of popular psychology: shattering widespread misconceptions about human behaviour* (Scott)
- *Games People Play* (Berne)
- *Happy: Finding joy in everyday life and letting go of perfect* (Cotton)
- *I'm OK, You're OK* (Harris)
- *Tricks of the Mind* (Brown)
- *Mindsight* (Siegel)
- *Predictably Irrational* (Anely)
- *Bounce* (Syed)
- *The Element* (Robinson)
- *The Psychopath Test* (Ronson)
- *Blink* (Gladwell)

Fiction books related to Psychology

- *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (Kesey)
- *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* (Haddon)
- *We Need to Talk About Kevin* (Shriver)
- *Mad Girl* (Gordon)
- *The Bell Jar* (Plath)
- *The Jigsaw Man* (Britton)

Articles, journals and magazines

- Psychology Review
- Psychology Today magazine
- Psychologies magazine
- British Journal of Psychology (published by the British Psychological society)

Useful websites

- The British Psychological Society posts frequent blogs on a wide range of Psychology topics. They write about aspects found on your course and the most recent research in the field of psychology. These can be found at <https://www.bps.org.uk/blogs>.
- The British Psychological Society also publishes a weekly email newsletter with the latest research. You can sign up here <https://bps.us11.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=ef6b58887f03b7e6e6ae5b2b9&id=b626c035bb> and get it delivered directly to your email inbox.

Religious Studies

Religious Studies can encompass a range of subjects within it, such as philosophy (either philosophy of religion or a broader scope), logic and critical thinking. Ethics can include ethical theories as well as applied ethics, which considers a range of different contemporary issues. Most university courses involving an element of research will require you to consider ethical implications and some courses, such as social studies or medicine, will involve a deeper consideration. Courses focusing on religion can include theology, applied theology, or theology for ministry, as well as those with an even narrower focus on particular issues, such as divinity, theology and counselling or worship.

Philosophy:

- *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion* (Davies)
- *The Blind Watchmaker* (Dawkins)
- *Sophie's World* (Gaarder)
- *The Sage Train* (Hansell)
- *An Introduction to Plato's Republic* (Annas)
- *A Little History of Philosophy* (Warburton)

Ethics:

- *The Puzzle of Ethics* (Vardy)
- *Ethics Matters* (Vardy and Vardy)
- *The Moral Philosophers* (Norman)
- *Ethics for Life: Making sense of the morals of everyday living* (Thompson)

Religious Thought:

- *Christianity: An Introduction* (McGrath)
- *History of Christianity* (Page)
- *The Puzzle of God* (Vardy)
- *The Meaning of Belief* (Crane)
- *Buddhism: Teach Yourself* (Erricker)
- *Contemporary Issues in Islam* (Afsaruddin)
- *Hinduism: an introduction* (Cole)

Further Listening:

- BBC programmes such as *The Moral Maze*, *Thinking Allowed*, *Beyond Belief*
- Podcasts such as [https://philosophynow.org/podcasts/Free Will and the Brain](https://philosophynow.org/podcasts/Free_Will_and_the_Brain), or *Philosophize This* (available on most streaming networks). For religious and ethical dilemmas in action, you could also explore <http://www.philosophyexperiments.com/fatman/>.

The following journals may also be useful:

- The Philosophers' Magazine
- [Philosophy Now](#)
- Think
- [Dialogue](#): for Philosophy of Religion and Ethics

Sociology

Sociology is a fascinating subject which explores a wide range of topics. At sixth form, topics tend to be focused on a few key areas, whereas at university a much wider range of topic areas are explored. Research in sociology often focuses upon inequalities and social phenomena; this means that sociology looks at what is happening in the world around us.

The non-fiction texts below will give you an insight into the modern history, politics and inequalities which are associated with ethnicity, gender and social class. The podcasts explore issues around identity and key studies in sociology. *Shreds* explains a significant event in the relationship between the Black-Caribbean community and the police. The websites are focused on knowledge and topics that you will study at A Level.

Non-fiction texts

- *Chavs: The Demonization of the Working Class* (Jones)
- *A History of Modern Britain* (Marr)
- *Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps That Tell You Everything You Need to Know About Global Politics* (Marshall)
- *Everyday Sexism* (Bates)
- *Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People about Race* (Eddo-Lodge)

Podcasts

- The Sociology Show Podcast [The Sociology Show | Spreaker](#)
- Thinking Allowed Podcast [BBC Radio 4 - Thinking Allowed - Downloads](#)
- Shreds: Murder in the Docks [BBC Sounds - Shreds: Murder in the dock](#)
- [Thanks for Typing - The Sociological Review](#)

Websites

- [Sociology Central: links](#)
- [The Sociology Guy – Helping students understand society](#)
- [Hectic Teacher Resources \(hectic-teacher.co.uk\)](#)
- [ReviseSociology – A level sociology revision – education, families, research methods, crime and deviance and more!](#)

Spanish

Wider reading can make a substantial difference to your knowledge of the Spanish language, but also what you know about the culture of Spanish-speaking countries. As you explore more texts, you'll experience new words and grammar, as well as different ways of using the language you already know. The good news is that there are endless resources which can help develop your knowledge of language and culture, so you can select the ones that fit your interests. The study of music, for example, can provide a close look into society, as well as language trends. If you enjoy cinema, watching films or series in Spanish can help you gain insight into a wide range of topics, ranging from history to science, popular culture or art. You could add support by using Spanish or English subtitles, or even by watching in English first and then re-watching in Spanish.

Whilst you are doing this, continue annotating new words and expressions and keep a glossary. You can do this on paper or online. You will maximise recall if you test yourself on these words regularly – it will take a number of uses of each word for them to become part of your active vocabulary.

Refine your knowledge of the language structure by continuing to learn and practise your grammar. There are a number of resources that you can use to do this. Find one that works for you and make it your own by using the study skills that you have learnt so far.

Language learning:

- J. Butt and C. Benjamin, *A New Reference Grammar of Modern Spanish*
- Luis Aragonés, Ramón Palencia, *Gramática De Uso Del Español C1-C2 Teoría Y Práctica, Con Solucionario*

Texts:

- Raymond Carr, *Spain: A History*.
- Edwin Williamson, *A Penguin History of Latin America*.
- Isabel Allende, *Cuentos de Eva Luna*
- Ramón J. Sender, *Réquiem por un campesino español*.
- Vargas Llosa, *La tía Julia y el escribidor*
- Gabriel García Márquez, *Crónica de una muerte anunciada*.
- Anonymous, *El Lazarillo de Tormes*.
- García Lorca, *Romancero Gitano*.
- Pablo Neruda, *Veinte poemas de amor y una canción desesperada*.
- Calderón de la Barca, *La vida es sueño*.

Online resources:

- *Diccionario de la Real Academia de la Lengua* www.rae.es/
- Spanish newspapers: www.allyoucanread.com/spanish-newspapers/
- Spanish radio stations: [Spanish radio stations | Listen live & for free](#)
- Spanish YouTube: www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLA5Uloabh_eFMo9oB_AF7JftV34ecOalvM
- Instituto Cervantes: <https://londres.cervantes.es/en/default.shtm>
- Profedele: <https://www.profedelee.es/>
- Open University free advanced Spanish courses: www.open.edu/openlearn/languages/freecourses?filter=date/grid/603/all/Advanced/all

Veterinary Science

Veterinary Science demands the learning of a large range of animal anatomy and physiology, as well as possessing a range of personal skills. In practical terms, the advice for students wishing to study in this field is to try and gain as much practical experience as possible. Often, this is more easily said than done, as opportunities can be hard to find. You could contact local veterinary practices, farms, wildlife centres, animal sanctuaries, zoos etc. that are within travelling distance from you. There are also some virtual work experience opportunities available online, which you can find out more about via Future Learn, as well as exploring the websites of individual veterinary schools.

Wider reading is really useful for building your knowledge and demonstrating your commitment and passion as well. Veterinary texts tend to be expensive so you may wish to utilise libraries or Google books, where possible:

- *How to Become a Veterinarian* (Lee)
- *Applying to Veterinary Medicine: the ultimate guide* (Medic Mind)
- *So you want to be a vet?* (Paton)
- *The Accidental Veterinarian: Tales from a Pet Practice* (Schott)
- *Tell Me Where It Hurts: A Day of Humour, Healing and Hope in My Life as an Animal Surgeon* (Trout)
- *Zoobiquity: The Astonishing Connection Between Human and Animal Health* (Natterson-Horowitz)
- *Never Turn Your Back on an Angus Cow: My Life as a Country Vet* (Pol and Fisher)
- Very short introduction books on Veterinary Science, Animal Behaviour and Animal Rights

Some university courses also recommend the following texts for incoming students:

- *Textbook of Veterinary Anatomy* (Dyce, Sack and Wensing)
- *Miller's Anatomy of the Dog or Guide to the Dissection of the Dog* (Evans and Lahunta)
- *The Dog Anatomy Workbook: A Guide to the Canine Body* (Allen)
- *Wheater's Functional Histology: A Text and Colour Atlas* (Young et al.)
- *Essential Cell Biology* (Alberts et al.)
- *Management and Welfare of Farm Animals* (Webster)

In addition to exploring books, you could keep up to date with developments, research and issues via <https://www.vettimes.co.uk> and <https://www.veterinary-practice.com>.

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