



CLT Academic Enrichment Newsletter Autumn Break and Term 2 2026-27

Dear Students (and Colleagues and Parents/Carers),

Welcome to the first issue of the Academic Enrichment Newsletter for the school year 2026/27. As with previous issues, most items that have been previously promoted have been moved to pages on the Academic Enrichment Blog of the King Alfred's Academy website, and there is a link to each of those pages given instead. The only items that have been published previously but are still included are those with a submission deadline coming up soon (competitions, challenges, etc.) or those that require registration for a forthcoming event(s).

Posts that are totally NEW to this issue will continue to be printed in light blue, and posts that are still current but have already been published in previous issues will remain in black. This should make it easier for you to navigate the Newsletter.

- (a) [Events and Exhibitions](#) organised by Institutions such as Museums and Academic Bodies
- (b) [Websites to explore](#)
- (c) [Courses and Workshops](#)
- (d) [The Competition Corner](#)

For this issue, I would like to draw your attention to our two forthcoming AEP talks (FREE and open to all of our students!). You will find this on p.2. And do look up the programmes for two fantastic festivals taking place predominantly over the October Break – our very own [Wantage Literary Festival](#) (see box below) and the stunning [IF Oxford Science and Ideas Festival](#) (see box at top of p.3). The aim of this Newsletter is to share with Secondary schools in the Trust some of the various opportunities on offer in our immediate locality that students can pursue independently. We would like to develop an ever-stronger partnership with our parents in promoting the intellectual development and curiosity of all our students.

Pam Stokell
Academic Enrichment Lead

THE WANTAGE LITERARY FESTIVAL



The Wantage Literary Festival 2026
Assorted Locations in Wantage
26th October – 7th November 2026
(Right through our Half Term Break!)

Once again, the amazing Wantage Literary Festival Team have pulled together a superb selection of speakers and events starting during the October half-term break. Don't be fooled into thinking that "Literary" means this is just for students taking English Lit – in this case, "literary" refers to books in general, and you can write a book on any subject! From the World Cup to the colour palettes used by great artists, and from Politics to Astrophysics, you are bound to find something of interest. Do take a look at the whole programme here: [Wantage Literary Festival | Wantage Oxfordshire](#)



Two upcoming KAAEP Talks for Term 2

We have two KAAEP Talks coming up for Term 2, both of them starting at 5pm in the Sixth Form Auditorium.

To book your seats, please follow the links below:

- [CLT AEP Talk - The Day the Dinosaurs Died – Fill out form](#)
- [CLT AEP Talk - Hieroglyphs for All – Fill out form](#)

King Alfred's Academic Enrichment Programme presents:

THE DAY THE DINOSAURS DIED

Dr Victoria Robinson

Wednesday 11th November 2026
17:00 – 18:15
Sixth-Form Auditorium



Dr Victoria Robinson is an Environmental Consultant with an interest in the deep history of our planet, and a particular passion for all things Dinosaur. Dinosaurs were the most successful group of vertebrate animals to have walked the planet, thriving for 165 million years... Until one day, they didn't. This talk explores what happened on that day: the causes of the mass extinction, the local and global impacts, and what it reveals about Life on Earth today.



BOOKING ESSENTIAL
Please email pstokell@ka.vale-academy.org to reserve your tickets

King Alfred's Academic Enrichment Programme presents:

HIEROGLYPHS FOR ALL!

Dr Pablo Barba Garcia
University of Reading

Tuesday 1st December 2026
17:00 – 18:15
Sixth-Form Auditorium



Pablo Barba is an Egyptologist with the University of Reading, and he has been mad about hieroglyphs since he was a boy. This talk will be a highly interactive workshop—bring a pen and notebook, because you will be writing in hieroglyphs as part of this talk, and learning about the most unusual aspects of deciphering them!



BOOKING ESSENTIAL
Please email pstokell@ka.vale-academy.org to reserve your tickets

Section 1. In person and/or Livestreamed events from Museums and other Academic Bodies – includes webinars, talks, courses



The Oxford Science and Ideas Festival is back!
27th September – 7th November 2026

The science and ideas Festival is ready for you again, with **exciting, intriguing and unexpected events and activities** for adults, children and teenagers across **dozens of venues** in and around the city, and beyond. You will find performances, talks, exhibitions, activities and tours. Take a look at the programme and pick a few events to attend, over weekends or the Half-term October break. Inspiration guaranteed!

For more information about the festival, visit: [About - IF Oxford](#)

This year marks the 35th science and ideas Festival in Oxford, with most events still Pay What You Decide (PWYD).

You can find the full programme at: [Programme-2026-IF-Oxford 27-Aug.pdf](#)



Calling students of A Level Economics - The Royal Economic Society 2026 Annual Public Lecture – Is Economics Broken?

Tuesday 3rd November 2026, 14:00 – 15:30

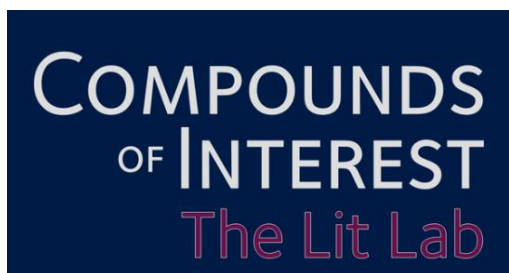
If you happen to have a free study period during Lesson 5 on the first Tuesday back, then you should definitely register for this.

Dharshini David explores what recent economic turbulence and squeezed living standards mean for the future of economics and whether it can keep up with a rapidly changing world.

This talk is livestreamed - **register for a link to the live stream** and engage

from anywhere.

Sign up here: [RES Annual Public Lecture 2026 | Discover Economics](#)



For Students of A Level Chemistry - New Compounds of Interest: The Lit Lab series

Monthly Online Sessions, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 17:00-17:45

Chemistry students and teachers are invited to engage with adapted research papers as well as join researchers to discuss the research via an interactive online webinar. For 2026-27, live sessions will be held

monthly on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 17:00-17:45 to minimise disruption to the school day.

You can find out more and register for FREE [HERE](#). Students can sign up and attend on their own, but will need a teacher contact and will need to sign up with their school email.



The London Mathematical Society

The London Mathematical Society runs a series of talks - the LMS Popular Lectures - which are free public lectures that present exciting topics in mathematics and its applications to a wide audience. They are for anyone with an interest in mathematics, including those without high-level maths training.

There is a real treasury of past talks to be found at [the LMS YouTube channel](#) - click 'subscribe' to be alerted when new videos are added.

You can watch previous LMS Popular Lectures [here](#).



Oriel College
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

The Crescendo Programme – for Year 10-13 students interested in studying Music at University
Curious about Music? Want to learn what a university degree in the subject could include? Introducing the

Crescendo Programme!

The Crescendo Programme, run by Oriel College and supported by the University of Oxford's Music Faculty, is a programme for UK Year 10-13 students at state schools who are interested in studying Music at university. The programme consists of five online sessions introducing new topics of Music scholarship and study skills, presented by academics and researchers at the university. Each of these sessions will run 5-6pm, on Thursdays across September, October and November. Students are not expected to have prior knowledge in the topics – curiosity about the study of Music is all they need!

There is also a tutorial component that is open just to Year 12 students.

The next online session take place 5-6pm on **the 22 October** (Listening to Lost Voices),

5th November (20th Century Authoritarianism and Classical Music),

12 November (Study Skills: researching and writing a university essay).

All Year 12 tutorials will take place between 5-8pm week commencing 7th December.

Where Online

For more information go to [Crescendo Programme - Oriel College](#) or contact

outreach@oriel.ox.ac.uk

Registration Deadlines: Sign-up for each online session closes at 9am the day before.

Applications for the essay-writing component closes at 9am on 2 November.

The Linnean Society Online Talks



The Linnean Society of London is the world's oldest active biological society, dating back to 1788. It has a wide and varied programme of talks, and you can also arrange to visit their library at Burlington House, London.

[The Linnean Society | Communicating Nature Since 1788](#)

FREE Online talks from the Linnean Society

Many of the talks from the Linnean Society are recorded and available through their youtube channel: [\(3\) Linnean Society - YouTube](#). Below are some recommendations to whet your appetite and hopefully prompt you to look for other talks!

Three new recorded talks for you to explore:

[**Where Spirit Meets the Wild | John Rust**](#)

[**Herbarium | Plants in a New Light | Lena Granefelt**](#)

[**The Remarkable Breadfruit | Botany, Culture and Politics | Russell Fielding - YouTube**](#)

Sixth Formers, if you have a study period during the day, it might be worth checking whether you can catch one of their lunch-time talks. Check out the events page online at: [Upcoming Events | The Linnean Society](#)



The Royal Institution
Science Lives Here



Yes, the Royal Institution was set up for the dissemination of scientific ideas, but they are careful to appeal to a very broad range of interests,

and their talks are an excellent place to start looking out for those priceless links between subjects that make learning so exciting. (And which will make you stand out from the crowd if you choose to apply to a top-level university.)



The Royal Institution YouTube Channel holds an archive of their lectures (about an hour long each), but if you are running short of time, you can also find a series of “Ri Shorts” at [\(181\) Ri Shorts - YouTube](#) which are short video talks about 10 minutes long,

And there is also the Royal Institution Animations selection at [\(181\) Ri Animations - YouTube](#) which are typically 5 minutes or less.



And below you will find this term's recommended selection of three of the longer talks:



Recorded Talk: Can Astronomers see the Universe without light?

The light visible to the human eye is only a fraction of what exists out there. A myriad of hidden phenomena exist in our universe, beyond our sight and senses. How do we know this? Astronomers have been uncovering their secrets for all to see! Astronomer and author Alfredo Carpineti will lead you on a

journey to explore the phenomenal objects and events beyond the visible in this fascinating talk. Filled with demonstrations and even a many-billion year old meteorite, this is not to be missed. [Can astronomers see the universe without light? | with Alfredo Carpineti](#)



Recorded Talk: The Problems with De-Extinction

Historian of science Sadiya Qureshi traces how we came to believe in extinction at all (a surprisingly recent idea) and asks what happens to that idea now that biotechnology promises to reverse it. Until the late 18th century, most European naturalists thought species simply could not vanish. In this talk, Sadiya follows that history to the present day. And

if revival becomes possible, will we still feel compelled to save species before they die? [The problem with de-extinction | with Sadiya Qureshi](#)



Recorded Talk: Do Cells have goals? What does it mean to be “alive”?

Three thinkers take on one of science's oldest unresolved questions: what does it mean to be alive? Author Melanie Challenger is joined by biochemist Nick Lane and science writer Philip Ball for a live inquiry that begins with Richard Dawkins's claim that nature exists without purpose, and asks whether recent biology points somewhere different. [Do cells have goals? | with](#)

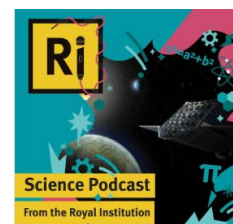
[Melanie Challenger, Nick Lane & Philip Ball](#)

And did you know – the Ri has a Podcast!

Most of those amazing talks which you can watch anytime on the Ri's Youtube channel are also available as podcasts, so you can listen in wherever you are. The link below will take you to a great talk about the PLATO mission from the European Space Agency, which is due to launch next year and is hoping to identify thousands of exoplanets.

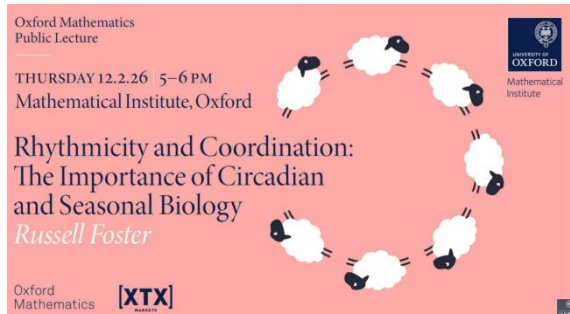
[The PLATO mission: Discovering other planets fit for life - with Ana Heras and Alistair Winton - Ri Science Podcast | Acast](#)

And there is lots more at: [Browse our science online | Royal Institution \(rigb.org\)](#)





**The Oxford Mathematical Institute – Public Lecture:
Rhythmicity and Coordination: the importance of Circadian
and Seasonal Biology with Professor Russell Foster**



I was delighted to find this recent talk from the Mathematical Institute with Professor Russell Foster, our 2025 Sir Christopher Ricks Speaker. Those of you who came along to that talk will know that this one will be definitely worth listening to.

In this talk, Professor Russell Foster propose that Biology is not constant but highly rhythmic. This includes the fast rhythms of action potentials in the nervous system and the

pulsatile release of hormones. At a longer timescale are the daily (circadian) rhythms and annual rhythms observed across much of the biological world. This talk considers the mechanisms and importance of circadian rhythms to human health and the role of seasonal timing in reproduction and other phenomena in birds, mammals and humans. In science, timing is everything.

[Rhythmicity and Coordination: The Importance of Circadian and Seasonal Biology - Russell Foster](#)

There are some fabulous museums almost on our doorstep – why not take a look around the University Museums of Oxford?

We are lucky to have some world-class museums just a short bus ride away. However, do check on their websites as many of the exhibitions still require you to book a timed ticket in order to reduce congestion in the galleries.

Take a look at:

The Ashmolean Museum

The Weston (Bodleian) Library

The Pitt Rivers Museum

The History of Science Museum and

The Natural History Museum.

Please note that there are other museums in Oxford, but these five are the University Museums and all are centrally situated within walking distance of one another. For example, you might like to visit the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum in Woodstock, and our Vale and Downland Museum in Wantage. And don't miss out on Modern Art Oxford!

And calling all students interested in stories, reading and books: the [Story Museum](#) is on the lookout for **Youth Collection Ambassadors** – a great opportunity to volunteer at the Museum and gain behind-the-scenes experience at a truly magical place! Click on the link above to find out more!



The Ashmolean Museum

The Ashmolean is the University of Oxford's museum of art and archaeology, founded in 1683. The Museum's world-famous collections range from Egyptian mummies to contemporary art,

telling human stories across cultures and across time.

Explore in Person

The Main Exhibition at the Ashmolean - Aphrodite – the making of a Goddess

Available until 11th April 2027

Step into the world of Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, beauty, and desire – later worshipped by the Romans as Venus.

Today she is thought of as a symbol of passion and beauty, but her story is far older and more complex.

This major exhibition explores Aphrodite's beginnings on the island of Cyprus, where she was worshipped as an all-powerful goddess over 3,000 years ago, and will trace her journey through the Greek and into the Roman world, where she became Venus.

The exhibition reveals how, over the centuries, Aphrodite evolved into an iconic figure symbolising love and beauty as her myths and images flourished – inspiring art, literature, and imagination from the Renaissance to the present day.

For more information, please refer to: [APHRODITE EXHIBITION | Ashmolean Museum](#)

Please note: this exhibition has timed tickets, priced at £16.80, with concessions down to £8.40 for a 12-17-year-old child, and free entry for children under 12.



New FREE Exhibitions at the Ashmolean Museum:



Exhibition: Sisters, Brothers, Others: Nationality and 20th Century Chinese Art

Open until 7th March 2027

This exhibition explores modern art depictions of national identity and ethnic differences in the People's Republic of China. Gallery 11.



Exhibition: Garry Fabian Miller

Open until 13th June 2027

This contemporary Exhibition presents work from Photographer Garry Fabian Miller, one of the most progressive figures working today in art photography. It is set against the work of 19th Century painter Samuel Palmer. Gallery 8.



Story from the Ashmolean: Frightful Stories

In this story (there is one for every month), especially for Hallowe'en, the Ashmolean have drawn together some ghostly tales and the creepiest objects in their collection.

[FRIGHTFUL STORIES | Ashmolean Museum](#)

You can find past stories at [STORIES | Ashmolean Museum](#). All are short articles, about 5-6 minutes to read, and feature a range of topics, from the History of the Olympics to the Changing face of Money.

You can find out more about current exhibitions and events at: [King Alfred's Academy - At the Ashmolean Museum](#)

The History of Science Museum

This Museum is based in the oldest museum building of the country, and it has a breath-taking collection of scientific artefacts through the ages and from across the world.



Celebrating Black History Month

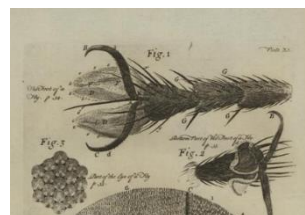
Thursday 29th October 2026, 13:00 – 15:00

If you are in Oxford on the afternoon of 29th October, pop into the History of Science Museum to find out more about the achievements of Nigerian Scientist Professor Francisca Okeke, who has the rare honour of having an asteroid named after her.

The Museum will also be sharing the stories of other black scientists through gallery trails, object handling and other activities. Just drop in, there is no need to book.

Blog: A History of the Microscope in Ten Objects

Emily Whittingham, an intern at the museum and PhD student in the history of Microscopy, explores the history of the microscope in England from the 1600s to the present day.



You will find a listing of the current exhibitions and displays already promoted in previous issues by visiting: [King Alfred's Academy - At the History of science museum](#)

The Pitt Rivers Museum – a wonderfully eclectic museum.

Stepping into the Pitt Rivers Museum is like stepping back in time into the world of the 18th Century. With its wonderful architecture and its labyrinth of glass case displays, this museum inspires the wonder of ages past.



on the Ground Floor.

Geography of the Mind

Available until 6th December 2026

Geography of the Mind brings together architectural and landscape forms inspired by the Pitt Rivers Museum's ethnographic collections. Familiar yet strange, they form an imagined place that exists somewhere and nowhere, exploring how fragments of different histories and cultures are reshaped through memory and imagination. This Artwork is on display



El Día de los Muertos Celebration

Friday 30th October 2026, 18:30 – 21:00

Celebrate El Día de los Muertos (The Day of the Dead, an Hispanic tradition) at the Pitt Rivers Museum, after dark. Perfect to get you in the mood for Hallowe'en.

Please note that this is a ticketed event, and you can book your tickets here [Día de los Muertos | Pitt Rivers Museum](#). Hurry as this one will get booked up! Tickets are £5 (free to members of the Oxford Mexican Society!).



Kenneth Kirkwood Study Day: Creative Interventions in Museum Spaces

Saturday 5th December 2026, 10:00 – 16:00

This Study Day may be of interest to A Level students of Art and/or interested in exploring the use of Art within Museum spaces. Please note that this is a ticketed event, and you can book your tickets here [Kenneth Kirkwood Study Day: Creative Interventions in Museum Spaces | Pitt Rivers Museum](#)

For a list of some of their current exhibitions and events already published in previous issues, please visit [King Alfred's Academy - At the Pitt Rivers Museum](#)

And from the Natural History Museum of Oxford:

Oxford University Museum of Natural History holds an internationally-significant collection of natural history specimens and archives in a stunning example of neo-Gothic architecture. It is home to a lively programme of research, teaching and events focused on the sciences of the natural environment.



[Museum of Natural History](#)

Main Exhibition; 34 Critical Raw Materials

Available until 13th April 2027

We use raw materials extracted from the earth in almost all of our technology, from smartphones to jet engines. These technologies, and the materials that make them, are critical to our ability to survive and thrive as societies. Find out more at: [34: The critical raw materials shaping our future | Oxford University](#)



Presenting Case: The Geology of Star Trek

Available until 8th November 2026

Sixty years ago, Star Trek changed the face of science fiction, bringing television viewers alien species, unfamiliar worlds and a bold vision of future science and technology. For Star Trek's 60th anniversary, we explore some of the real geology and palaeontology behind the franchise. Could Kirk's sulphur cannon actually work? Would a tyrannosaur chew up Starfleet personnel? What were communicators made of and what is dilithium? Using the Museum's collections, here we investigate the geology of Star Trek, and help separate science fact from science fiction.



Megalith Immersive Experience by MECHANIMAL

Saturday 24th – Sunday 31st October 2026

Megalith is a fascinating new immersive experience that invites audiences into a participatory, interactive, hands-on encounter with rocks. Mine stone with antlers like a Neolithic miner, lie back and listen to the slow geological rumble of rocks, or wander with magic stones within a giant stone circle, enjoying the lights dance and flow around you as you move.

This is a FREE event but numbers are limited. Just go to the Welcome Desk when you arrive to discover the day's timings and book your free session.

There are also two live performances on 30th and 31st October, but these are ticketed, with tickets at £12/£10. You can find out more at [All Events | Oxford University Museum of Natural History](#)



Talk: Darwin's Queer Theory

Friday 6th November, 2026 18:00 – 19:30

Queer ecology is a vibrant and rapidly evolving field, exploring the astonishing diversity of sexes and sexual repertoires found among plants and animals. In this talk, Dr Ross Brooks looks beyond the prejudices and stereotypes that later came to cloud our view of the life sciences. Discover how gynandromorphs, sex-limited polymorphism, and a hen-feathered cockerel named Hector long ago made ecology queer — and continue to transform how we think about the nature of sex today.

This talk is FREE, but you must book in advance as numbers are limited: [Darwin's Queer Theory | Oxford University Museum of Natural History](#)



Talk: Dog genes tell surprising tales

Wednesday 8th November 2026, 18:30 – 19:30

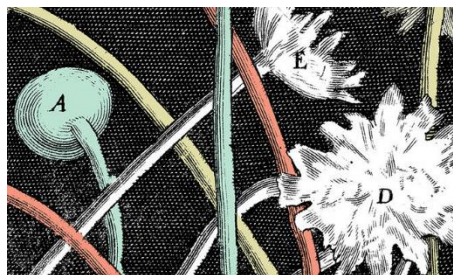
Dogs were domesticated from wolves nearly 20,000 years ago. Due to extensive human selection, modern breeds are characterized by distinct shapes, sizes and behaviours, reflecting canine progression from domestication through early functional dogs to modern breeds.

The Ostrander lab is interested in understanding the role that genomic variation plays in canine morphology, behaviour and disease susceptibility. Come and find out more! This talk is FREE, but you must book in advance as numbers are limited: [Dog Genes Tell Surprising Tales | Oxford University Museum of Natural History](#)

You can find some of their current exhibitions and events at: [King Alfred's Academy - At the oxford natural history museum](#)

From the Bodleian Libraries

If you find yourself in the city of Oxford, why not take a walk down Broad Street and pop into the Bodleian Library to see one or more of the four Exhibitions listed below. All are FREE to enter, and you do not need to book beforehand.



Exhibition: Plain Things Wonders

Coming soon! 5th November 2026 – 29th August 2027

Plain Things Wonders tells the story of how paying attention to nature can make plain things into wonders. Marking 400 years since the publication of Francis Bacon's *Sylva Sylvarum* (1626), the exhibition unfolds histories of citizen science, lay participation in natural observation, and how projects like Robert Hooke's *Micrographia* (1665) and Gilbert White's *Natural History of Selbourne* (1789)

discover wonder in plain things.

The exhibition connects the science of natural history with the art of illustration, attention and visualisation. It asks how book art makes the ordinary stuff of nature beautiful, and how the long history of observation links with modern ecological challenges.

ST Lee Gallery at the Weston Library, Broad Street. FREE entry, just drop in.



TALK: Soundscaping the "Wonder of Birds"

Friday 23rd October 2026, 12:00 – 13:00

For anyone interested in soundscapes! Join Jason Singh, sound artist, composer and nature beatboxer, for an exploration of the soundscapes created for the current exhibition "Wonder of Birds". Discover how a fascination with bird song, diverse habitats and the interconnectedness of birds, plants and place shaped the work.

Booking is required and tickets are £5. The talk is available both in person and livestreamed.

[Soundscaping the 'Wonder of Birds' | Visit the Bodleian Libraries](#)



Special Event: The Hevelius Project 2026

Monday 26th October 2026, 10:30 - 16:00.

This Event is a celebration of the Johannes Hevelius, one of the great scientists of the 17th Century, who drew the first detailed map of the moon. A pioneering astronomer from Gdansk, Poland, Hevelius built his own instruments and observatory, and his lunar atlas was unrivalled for generations. There are FREE talks and craft activities for younger children. Find out more, including timings, at: [Hevelius Project 2026 | Visit](#)

[the Bodleian Libraries](#)

You can find more of their Exhibitions and events (published in previous issues) at: [King Alfred's Academy - At The Bodleian Library](#)

From the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum

A small but excellent museum based in Woodstock! Well worth a visit, and there is much to explore online at its website: [Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum – Conflict & County](https://www.soldiersofoxfordshiremuseum.co.uk/)



TALK: The Origins of the Schlieffen Plan, with Ross Beadle

Saturday 7th November, 2026 14:00 – 15:00

If you make a false premise at the very start, it really doesn't matter how relentlessly logical you are thereafter, the whole edifice is built on sand. That, according to Ross Beadle, Sums up the story of German war planning immediately before the First World War.

This talk is FREE, but places are limited and you must book in advance. You can book at [The Origins of the Schlieffen Plan | Talk with Ross Beadle | 2pm Saturday 7 November 2026 – Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum](https://www.soldiersofoxfordshiremuseum.co.uk/events/talk-the-origins-of-the-schlieffen-plan-with-ross-beadle-2pm-saturday-7-november-2026)



Exhibition: Arnhem – Before the Bridge

Available until 8th November 2026

On 17 September 1944, the British 1st Airborne Division landed near the Dutch town of Arnhem. Their task was simple: capture the bridge over the Lower Rhine and hold it until relieved by advancing ground forces. That relief never arrived. This Exhibition seeks to tell the tale of the men who made Arnhem.

The Landing Gallery (First Floor)



Exhibition: Postcards from the Front Line 1900 – 1945

Available until 6th November 2026

You can find this display in the Briefing Room Gallery, on the Ground Floor.

You can find a listing of the permanent exhibitions and other events at: [King Alfred's Academy - At the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum](https://www.kingalfredacademy.co.uk/)

Modern Art Oxford

Autumn Exhibitions and Events at Modern Art Oxford

Modern Art Oxford is one of the UK's leading contemporary art spaces. Their programmes offer opportunities for all for inspirational exchange and creative participation, both in person and online. Well worth a visit.

Take a look at their range of workshops, exhibitions, performances and other activities at: [What's On | Modern Art Oxford](https://www.modernartoxford.org.uk/whats-on)

Section 2. Sites to explore online

Historia Lectures – Livestreams and an Archive of recorded talks

This is a super curricular lecture series designed to introduce students to new and engaging historical topics and periods. An archive of over 40 lectures and reading lists is available on the website and you can sign up to attend live lectures after the Christmas Break. Find out more here: [Historia Lectures | Faculty of History](#)



Recorded Workshops from the Oxford Online Maths Club

This has now finished, but there are loads of recorded workshops and worksheets for you to work through. The Oxford Online Maths Club is a weekly livestream that is free, interactive, casual, and relaxed, and the recorded sessions are great so that you can watch back afterwards and work through at your own pace. Our regular host is Dr James Munro, and we often have current Oxford students answering questions in chat and appearing on the livestream to talk about maths. The club is mostly aimed at people about to apply to university or about to start a Maths course, but everyone's welcome. [Oxford Online Maths Club | Mathematical Institute](#)

The Ig Nobel Prize 2026

The Ig Nobel Prizes honor achievements so surprising that they make people LAUGH, then THINK. The prizes are [intended](#) to celebrate the unusual, honour the imaginative — and spur people's interest in science, medicine, and technology.

This website contains details of the latest Ig Nobel Prizes and those of previous years, as well as publications, podcasts and videos.

The winners this year included an economics prize for research showing that wealthier individuals take more from a bowl of sweets meant for children than did less-wealthy people; a physics prize for a splash-proof urinal; and a peace prize for evidence that people value friends who are mean to those that they dislike.

Find out more at [About the Igs – Improbable Research](#)



Springpod Subject Spotlight: Computer Science – Space Exploration, AI and Beyond

In this captivating Subject Spotlight, Paul Sant explains what Computer Science at University is, how it differs from Information Technology, as well as some of the fundamental skills for a computer scientist and how

computer science has revolutionised industry. This free course comes to you from the University of Law, the largest Law School in the UK. [Computer Science University Taster | Springpod | Springpod](#)

Podcast: Curious Cases

A great podcast for curious minds. Mathematician Hannah Fry and Comedian/Presenter Dara Ó Briain seek to answer listeners' conundrums with the power of science. There are over 150 episodes dealing with questions from the weirdness of water to the phenomenon of phantom pain. [BBC Radio 4 - Curious Cases](#)





The Oxford Martin School Events

As ever, there are some fantastic talks and events coming up at the Oxford Martin School. All are FREE, but require booking in advance (whether to attend in person or online). The talks are multi-disciplinary and range across

most subjects.

Here are some examples:

Are healthier diets always better for the environment? With Dr Yuanchao Hu

Monday 26th October at 12:30 – 13:30

['Are healthier diets always better for the... | Oxford Martin School](#)

Book Talk: Climate Realism: Facing the Facts about Energy, with Professor Sir Dieter Helm (online only as fully booked in person)

Tuesday 27th October at 17:00 – 18:00

[Book Talk - 'Climate Realism: Facing the Facts... | Oxford Martin School](#)

Economic Analysis of global and local policies for respecting planetary boundaries, with Professor Thomas Hertel

Monday 9th November, 17:00 – 18:15

['Economic analysis of global and local... | Oxford Martin School,](#)

Find other talks coming up at: [Events | Oxford Martin School](#)

Two new projects from Zooniverse

For all those citizen science enthusiasts, here are two projects to whet your appetite. If neither of these grab your attention, then head over to [Projects — Zooniverse](#) where you will find hundreds of other projects, on all sorts of topics, from languages to astrophysics, and from medicine to the Arts. **And did you know that working on Zooniverse projects can count towards the volunteering bit of your D of E qualification?**



Notes from Nature – putting biodiversity on the map

Help georeference museum specimen records by matching locality descriptions to places on a map. Your contributions will help create high-quality geographic data that support biodiversity research, conservation planning, ecological modeling, and our understanding of life on Earth. For more information and to get started, visit [Notes from Nature - Putting Biodiversity on the Map | Zooniverse - People-powered research](#)



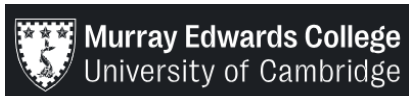
Kelp Quest – Seattle Aquarium

Help to explore the kelp forests of coastal Washington and so directly impact the conservation and restoration of these critical habitats.

For more information and to get started, visit [Kelp Quest \(Seattle Aquarium\) | Zooniverse - People-powered research](#)

Top Tip to practise your Languages: For an extra challenge, why not attempt to work on a project in either Spanish or French? Zooniverse has translated several of its projects into other languages. Whatever your chosen project, look for the Language button on the top right of the project's home page.

If you are thinking ahead to Higher Education and know that you want to apply to some of the country's top universities... but not sure what subject to choose for your degree, then attending subject taster webinars is a great way to explore your options and find out what you really like.



Subject Taster Webinars

This series offers online taster lectures followed by a Q&A that are delivered by some of the University of Cambridge's most prestigious fellows. The aim of these webinars is to give students who are considering applying to the University of Cambridge (and, if you are female, Murray Edwards College) an insight into the breadth of the degree programmes on offer; the content and research that is involved; and the teaching style that is used (the teaching style at Murray Edwards will be the same as that offered by other colleges).

The series spans a huge range of subjects across arts, humanities, social sciences and STEM. If you want to learn what it would be like to study at Cambridge, explore the webinars on offer at the link below and sign up to register your interest in attending. Do check back again as they will be adding more webinars over the term.

And worry not if a webinar you wanted to watch has already taken place: you can catch up with them at the Murray Edwards College [YouTube](#) channel .

The webinars are carrying on until the end of April, so there are plenty left!

To view up and coming Webinars and to register to attend, please go to:

<https://www.murrayedwards.cam.ac.uk/study-us/outreach/webinars>

Especially for Y10s – Y13s looking to broaden their super curriculum in preparation for University Applications (also great for EPQ ideas!):

Super-curricular activities are not mandatory. However, they can help you make a competitive application, and prepare you for a challenging academic environment, so we strongly recommend them. Super-curricular participation can enhance your personal statement, give you greater confidence in your subject choice, show that you are serious about your area of study, and give you a wealth of ideas to draw upon in discussions if you're invited to interview.

It's likely that you'll develop new ideas and opinions, critical thinking and analytical skills, and an ability to understand new information from different sources – this is all great preparation for succeeding at university or on a L5-7 Apprenticeship. [King Alfred's Academy - Super](#)

[Curricular exploration](#)

Courses, Taster Days and Workshops

This section is set aside for courses and workshops, both in person and/or online, which students are able to access independently. They are almost always offered by academic bodies with a mission to develop the intellectual potential of curious young minds.



UniFrog Opportunity: Virtual Study Skills Academy

Tuesday 27th October 2026, 12:30 – 16:30

This is a Study Skills Academy like no other I have found! There are twelve sessions to choose from, and you can pick three to create your own schedule for learning. What

makes this different is that they are university-led sessions, and they are very subject-specific. For example.

- "Case Closed" is about problem-solving in the police;
- "Making Life-Saving Decisions" is about identifying and treating diseases
- "Analysing global Events" is about making sense of geopolitics
- "Reading between the lines" is about understanding Shakespeare.

And there are eight more to choose from! Find out more and sign up here: [Skills Academy](#). Plus you are in with a chance of winning £100 just for turning up. These sessions are intended for Sixth Form students, but there is nothing to stop you signing up as a younger student if you see a workshop that really appeals to you. And there is no obligation to turn up to three sessions if you cannot make the full afternoon.



Apprenticeship in Economics - Open Evening. What is a degree apprenticeship and could it be for you?

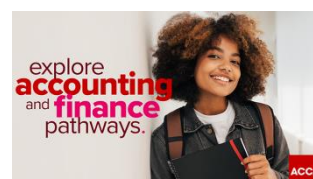
A degree apprenticeship is an alternative to university. It means you will get a chance to work while studying towards your Economics degree.

Frontier Economics are hosting an open evening where you can hear from current apprentice analysts and ask questions about the programme. Find out more and sign up at the link below:

[Economic apprenticeships at Frontier - open evening | Discover Economics](#)

ACCA Accounting and Finance Pathways

Whether you're exploring your options or already considering a career in accounting and finance, ACCA has a range of resources to help you discover the opportunities available and the different routes you can take. Find out more at: [Webinar Calendar 26/27 — Book your place](#)



Previously published courses that are still current may be found at: [King Alfred's Academy - Courses and Workshops](#)

Competition Corner

“Why bother entering competitions? I am probably not going to win anything.”

And this is very true. But entering academic/educational competitions is an excellent way of stretching your brain and your abilities, and you will learn and hone many skills along the way. They develop independent thinking and resilience, and build confidence through structured challenge. Once you are in Year 10+, entering academic competitions and being able to reflect on your experiences is something that will make you stand out in university and high-level apprenticeship applications. So *do* get into the habit of checking the **Competition Corner** of the *KAAEP Bulletin*, or looking online for other competitions. (If you find something, do please let me know so I can share it with others!)

Year 12 is an important year for this as the most competitive universities seek out those students with the motivation and enthusiasm to enter academic competitions.

- (a) They make you stand out from the crowd - you can talk about your research in your personal statement.
- (b) They help you to explore and discover new interests.
- (c) They are a good way of testing whether studying the subject at university is really for you.
- (d) They improve and develop your critical thinking and essay writing skills in readiness for stepping up to university.

“It is a great idea to enter a competition in an area that you enjoy or are good at whilst you are still at school. If you win or are placed, that is excellent, but even if you don’t, it demonstrates commitment, interest, drive and immediately differentiates you from others. It looks good on your UCAS Form.” Student Ladder – Steps to Success.



Art Competition for Years 7 – 9 from the Centre for Personalised Medicine

The Oxford Centre for Personalised Medicine is asking young people in Years 7-9 to create art about talking to family about health and genetics. It's about sharing information about genetic risks with family.

Entrants can make a drawing, a painting, a collage, a sculpture – anything goes as long as it's something you can take a photo of. Every entrant gets a certificate, and there are cash prizes for the best artworks. Group entries as well as individual entries welcomed.

For more information, please visit [Art Competition 2026-27 - cpm](#)

Please email a photo of the artwork to cpm@well.ox.ac.uk with subject line 'CPM competition' by **29th January 2027 at 5pm** together with this [Art-competition-form-.pdf](#) completed by your parent/guardian/teacher.

Winner and finalists will be announced on 24th March 2027



Poster Competition for Years 11 and 12 – Disrupt it! Reimagining Industries through Technology and Innovation

The aim of this competition is to encourage reflection, creativity, and bold thinking about the industries that shape our everyday lives. You are encouraged to look at how things are done now, ask why they have to be that way, and imagine how technology and fresh ideas could change them for the better.

As well as potentially coming up with an idea for a new venture you would be adding strength to future university applications by exploring an area of interest outside of school, developing your own thoughts on a chosen topic, and communicating these to an expert audience.

What does the competition involve?

Choose any industry that interests you, such as fashion, travel, education, finance, healthcare, food, sport, music, or something else entirely, and reimagine how it could be transformed for the better. Your idea might make an industry fairer, more sustainable, more accessible, or simply work better for the people who rely on it.

Deadline for submission of entries: 09:00 on 5th January 2027

Find out more, including guidance on what to include in your poster and how to submit your entry, at: [Disrupt It! Reimagining Industries through Technology and Innovation Poster Competition | Christ Church, University of Oxford](#)



Film of the Month Competition – any film, any genre, any time of year

This is an ongoing competition for young people aged between 5 and 19. Although it does say “any film”, there are some guidelines that you need to follow. You can submit at any time. The website has guides and resources to support your film-making as well. If you are interested in the

idea, take a look at: [Details of our active competitions. - Film of the Month - Into Film](#)



Ghost Stories – a Writing Competition for 12-18-year-olds

Few stories are as much fun to write as a good, spine-tingling ghost story. Those that get your readers on the edge of their seats!

This competition is open all year round, and is free to enter.

For more information and details of how to enter, please visit: [Fright Club \(12-18 Year-Olds\) | Young Writers](#)

