CLT Academic Enrichment Newsletter
Christmas and Term 3, 2025-26

Dear Students (and Parents/Carers),

Welcome to the second Academic Enrichment Newsletter of the school year 2025/26.
There are so many opportunities for our students to continue to nurture their intellectual curiosity and independent learning!
Posts that are NEW to this issue will 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 – in-person events and online events will be clearly signposted.
(b) Websites to explore
(c) Courses and Workshops
(d) The Competition Corner

For this issue, I would especially like to recommend this year's Reith Lectures, which you can catch up on as BBC Radio Podcast. The Academic Enrichment Newsletter is part of the work of the Academic Enrichment Programme (AEP) at King Alfred's, and its aim 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
Head of Academic Enrichment

Date for your Diary

KAAEP Series of Talks 2025/26

Fear in the City: the Media's role in the stigmatisation of places
With Dr Alice Butler-Warke
Department of Politics and International Relations
University of Reading
Tuesday 13th January, 2026
5:00 – 6:15pm
King Alfred's Sixth Form Auditorium

Dr Alice Butler-Warke is a social scientist with a particular interest in the way a place can be perceived as dangerous or negative due to its portrayal by the media. How often do we find ourselves influenced by it? How are our opinions formed when we may never have visited a place in person? How does this affect the communities within that place?

Do set aside the evening of Tuesday 13th January to find out more about Social Science in general, the areas that it covers, and some fascinating research that we can all relate to. You can reserve your seats by submitting this form: **CLT AEP Talk - Fear in the City: the Media's role in the stigmatisation of Place – Fill out form** or by emailing **pstokell@kas.cambrianlt.org**

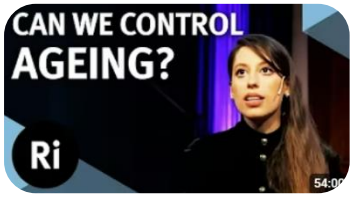
1. **In person and/or Livestreamed events from Museums and other Academic Bodies – includes webinars, talks, courses**

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: The fight against time – can we control ageing?
In this talk, Dr Carina Kern unpacks the latest research and challenges the way we think about ageing, resilience, and longevity - both on Earth and in Space exploration, where degeneration is accelerated in astronauts. It also explores how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can help tackle the complexities of aging - from the challenges we face to how AI could uncover new "system-wide" drugs and treatments that protect the whole body - ushering in the next era of medicine. The fight against time: can we slow down ageing? - with Carina Kern

Recorded Talk: The Science of Serendipity
Martin Reeves explores how scientific and technological innovation truly unfolds, challenging traditional narratives. Research reveals unexpected discoveries and collaborative efforts, defying the lone-genius myth. The lecture examines the "like" button's origins and the mathematics of serendipity in scientific breakthroughs.
The mathematical signature that drives serendipity and invention

Recorded Talk: Forensic Chemistry
Join Baljit for an exploration into real-world cases and the role of techniques including chromatography and spectroscopy, proving just how vital chemistry is in delivery justice. She will discuss how research is ever evolving to answer crucial questions to draw conclusions from a crime scene, including how even small traces of tyre marks at a scene could lead to valuable information of what vehicle was used in a hit and run. Can chemistry help to catch a killer? - with Baljit Thatti

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 the great talk by Lucy Cooke, who will take you on a journey through an array of different animal examples as she explores evolution:
Podcast: How did females evolve? - with Lucy Cooke | Royal Institution (rigb.org)
And there is lots more at: Browse our science online | Royal Institution (rigb.org)

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:

Busy 'bout the Tree of Life: genome sequencing of biodiversity

The Lost Orchid | Hunting An Icon in the Linnean Society Archives

Bat Foraging | Where and How They Do It

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 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**.

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!

ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM OXFORD

Explore in Person
The Main Exhibition at the Ashmolean - This is What you Get
Stanley Donwood/ Radiohead/ Thom York

Available until 18th January 2026
This major exhibition will explore the visual art of Stanley Donwood and Thom Yorke and the iconic images of Radiohead.
More than 180 objects will be on display from the artists' 30-year collaboration, including original paintings for album covers, digital compositions, etchings, unpublished drawings, and lyrics in their sketchbooks. This Is What You Get will reveal how the artists experimented with early technology, and explore the evolution of the images for Radiohead's legendary albums and Yorke's later projects. To date the band, which was formed in Oxfordshire in the mid-1980s, has sold 30 million records worldwide.
Please note some artworks and labels in the exhibition include strong language.
For more information, please refer to: THIS IS WHAT YOU GET EXHIBITION | Ashmolean Museum
Please note: this exhibition has timed tickets, priced at £15.30, with concessions down to £7.65 for a 12-17-year-old child, and free entry for children under 12.

At the Ashmolean - Explore in Person:

A few of the Free Exhibitions and displays at the Ashmolean:

(Please note: although entry to all of these exhibitions is FREE, it is advisable to book a free general admission ticket in advance. Please book your tickets at**: EXHIBITIONS | Ashmolean Museum**)

Ashmolean Now: Daphne Wright
Available until 8th February 2026
This is the fourth exhibition in the Ashmolean Now series, featuring sculptures by Irish artist Daphne Wright's and her response to the Ashmolean Museum's collections.
Gallery 8

Images of Authority
Available until 15th March 2026
As we grapple with the possibilities and excesses of our image-obsessed culture, this free exhibition looks back at the way in which a specific kind of image – portraits – dominated the lives of three contemporaneous rulers: **Fath Ali Shah Qajar** (1797–1834), **King George III** (1760–1820), and **Napoleon Bonaparte** (1799–1814)
Gallery 29

Pat Suet-Bik Hui and the three Perfections
Available until 28th June 2026
Pat Suet-Bik Hui (b. 1943) is a US-based Hong Kong artist. This exhibition showcases her work alongside others who engage with the tradition of the 'three perfections', which brings together the three art forms of poetry, calligraphy, and painting.
The exhibition includes works by Hui, her contemporaries, her teacher Lui Shou-Kwan and others of his generation, as well as earlier examples.
Gallery 11.

Restoring Rome: Roman Oxfordshire Coins Display
Available until 29th November 2026
This collection of Roman coins is not usually on display and so it is a rare opportunity to see these Roman coins, all of which have been found in Oxford or the surrounding area.
Money Gallery

Explore at Home

Dive into the Ashmolean's Collection of Short Story Videos
This is a great collection of *short* snippets that reveal more about some of the recent exhibitions, as well as some of the hidden stories behind some of the items in the Collections. Stimulating and thought-provoking. Do take a look! STORIES | Ashmolean Museum

Have you looked at the Home Learning Section?
Ideal for KS3 exploration on a rainy day! Here you will find videos, short articles, photographs and things to make and do, on topics from Ancient Egypt to the Anglo Saxons, as well as jigsaw puzzles, Animal Crossing characters, and art and craft activities to do at home. HOME LEARNING | Ashmolean Museum

And if you are inspired to see more, then browse through the Ashmolean's Treasures
You might retort that the whole of the Ashmolean Museum is filled with Treasures, so these items that are especially selected as the Museum's Treasures must have great significance indeed, possibly because of their rarity, or the place they held at the time. Do take a look, and then maybe head over to the Museum to see them for real!
COLLECTION HIGHLIGHTS | Ashmolean Museum

Explore online:
The Ashmolean for Young People
This is a great section to explore, with advice on the sorts of careers that you find within a museum (you might be surprised!!), as well as challenges and other activities to try out at home.
YOUNG PEOPLE | Ashmolean Museum

From the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum

Recorded Online Talks
The Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum has a fantastic collection of recorded talks, with titles including *The Secret Life of Ian Fleming; The Pegasus Bridge Story* and *T.E. Lawrence: the Unconventional Warrior.* You can find all three series of talks here: Online Talks – Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum

The Museum's permanent displays include:

- Winston Churchill and the Queen's Own Oxfordshire Hussars
- Secret Spies, Secret Armies
- Prisoners of War, at home and abroad
- The liberation of Bergen Belsen by the Oxfordshire Yeomanry
- Bloody Battles and Dangerous Diseases
- Global Army: from the Age of Empire to the Modern Day
- Battles: the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light infantry during the Second World War
- A Woman's War: domestic and fighting fronts
- Our Country, Our War – remembering the Great War

You can find out more about this museum at Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum – Conflict & County

Step into the Pitt Rivers Museum

Step into the Pitt Rivers and it is like stepping back in time, into a Museum ages past, where exhibits from all over the world crowd in on you from all sides. But the Pitt Rivers is totally modern in its outlook and seeks to represent the world in all its wonder and diversity. Booking is now only needed if you are attending a special event with limited numbers.

Explore in Person

In addition to the permanent Exhibitions, do take a look at some of the current temporary exhibitions and displays at the Pitt Rivers:

Exhibition – Hawaii: Ma Uka to Ma Kai
Journey through the Hawaiian landscape in this special exhibition, a unique collaboration showcasing the contemporary works of various artists and artist groups. With displays across the Museum linked to the Exhibition.

For more information, see Exhibitions and Displays | Pitt Rivers Museum

Exhibition: In this Place we Breathe, by Khadija Saye
This exhibition presents a series of nine silkscreen prints by artist Khadija Saye (1992-2017) exploring her fascination with the 'migration of traditional Gambian spiritual practices' that formed a part of her childhood experience growing up in London with Gambian parents.
Upper Gallery

Display: Wandering other Worlds
Explore Evenki Cosmology and Shamanic traditions through this display, but also the 360° video which you can watch online here: Wandering in Other Worlds PRM 2. You can find out more about this at: Wandering in Other Worlds: Evenki Cosmology and Shamanic Traditions
Display Case C.22.A (Main Court)

His Dark Materials – Trail around the Museum
If you are a fan of Phillip Pullman's *His Dark Materials,* and you watched the BBC HBO TV series, then do pop along to the Pitt Rivers as, dotted all around the galleries, you will find props from the series. To find out more, visit: His Dark Materials | Pitt Rivers Museum (ox.ac.uk)

Winter Wonder Trail within the museum
Available until 30th January 2026
Who ever said that museum trails are just for small children? Sometimes, like this one, they provide a relaxed way of focusing a visit to the museum. Pop in next time you are in Oxford, pick up a trail, and enjoy wondering around the museum looking for the snowflakes that mark the chosen exhibits – all about winter living across time and cultures.

Online Archive: Curious about some of the Past Pitt Rivers Exhibitions that you may have missed?
You will find many of the past exhibitions here: Past exhibitions | Pitt Rivers Museum (ox.ac.uk)

Pitt Youth Action Team

Are you wondering what goes on behind the scenes at a vibrant Museum such as the Pitt Rivers? The Pitt Youth Action Team are a group of like-minded young people – typically aged between 16 and 19 – who meet at the Museum once a month. They are offered opportunities to have a real impact on the way the Museum interprets its collections, usually going behind the scenes to advise and consult with staff over exhibition materials, run activities at public events and plan projects.
If you would like to know more, please **contact** the young people's co-ordinator at the Museum.

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At The History of Science Museum of Oxford:

The Museum is open between 12:00 and 5:00pm Tuesday to Sunday.
Please note that the top Gallery of the Museum is currently closed for essential maintenance, and that the lift is also out of action so there is no disabled access.

Exhibition: A healthy future for all? – Explore the science behind the pandemic headlines

To save lives during the COVID-19 pandemic, scientists took innovative approaches to produce rigorously tested, clinical-grade vaccines and drugs at speed.
But how can these new techniques deliver wider healthcare benefits for all of us?
A Healthy Future for All? empowers you to discover the science for yourself. Find out how the immune system works, and explore how researchers are using the pandemic experiences to prepare for the next pandemic outbreak.
A Healthy Future for All? | History of Science Museum (ox.ac.uk)

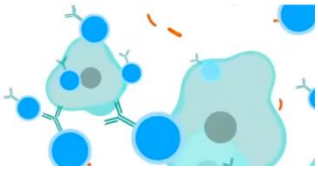
Exhibition: One Passion – A World of Histories

Why did a businessman like Lewis Evans build one of the finest collections of timekeepers from Europe and the Islamic World?
It started with a gift: a sundial, given to a 16-year-old Lewis by his eccentric father.
As he explored this ingenious instrument, Lewis discovered a world of histories: from the ancient science of time-telling to the bustling workshops of late 1600s Paris.
And he was inspired to learn more.
Over 50 years, Lewis built a collection to rival any museum, then or now.
From Persian astrolabes and German sundials to first edition books by Europe's most influential mathematicians, he collected and researched them all.
Step into Lewis' study and discover how to hold time in your hand.
To find out more, please go to: About Time | History of Science Museum

Exhibition: Step into Lyra's Worlds – props and costumes from the BBC HBO series *His Dark Materials*

The History of Science Museum influenced the design of the Alethiometer. Come and discover your Daemon and journey through the Museum with your daemon guide to discover stories of creative leaders, resourceful adventurers, daring visionaries and ingenious scholars.
There are objects and stories to find as a family in each gallery before you enter the world of Philip Pullman's international best-selling trilogy, *His Dark Materials*. Step into Lyra's study, under a canopy of stars and Dust, to discover props and costumes from the BBC HBO production, including Lyra's alethiometer from the series.
Explore the Museum's intriguing dials and devices that inspired Philip Pullman to create the alethiometer. *Basement Gallery.*

Alice in Typhoidland: The Past and Present of Typhoid



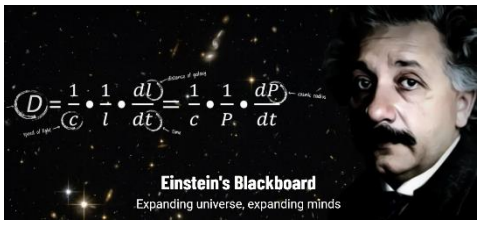
Discover the long history and cutting-edge research behind the typhoid vaccination and its roll-out.
Discover how Victorian doctors and scientists helped make typhoid visible and developed the first typhoid vaccines, and **Learn** about the current challenges of typhoid across the world and what researchers in Oxford are doing to tackle it.
To find out more about the Exhibition, visit: Alice in Typhoidland | History of Science Museum (ox.ac.uk)
You will find the Exhibition in the *Basement Gallery.*

Display: The Disease of Greed – Fake, falsified and substandard medicine

Fake objects in museums may seem harmless, but fake medicines and misinformation have real consequences for all of us.
Come and investigate hoaxes, forgeries and fakes in the world of public health in Southeast Asia. Bear in mind that, although this display explores the problem in one area of the world, the issues arising are not confined to that area. Take a closer look online before visiting the display: 2024 Fakes Display (FINAL) (genial.ly)

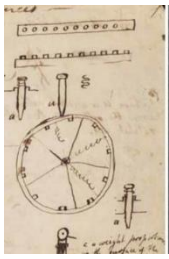
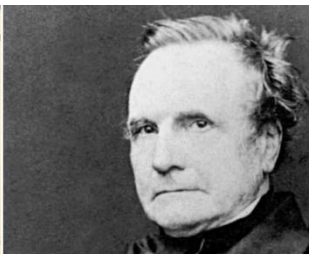
Meet Guglielmo Marconi – one of the minds who made the modern world

Through the work and experiments of Marconi, Radio was born.
This exhibition explains some of Marconi's journey of discovery and its legacy in the terms of radio and microwave physics. Explore how Marconi's science experiments revolutionised the way that the whole world stays connected.
*Basement Gallery (*You can also explore some the exhibition at home: Making Waves | History of Science Museum (ox.ac.uk))



Display and Online Story Blog

One of the most famous artefacts on display at the History of Science Museum is Einstein's blackboard, hanging high on the wall of the Basement Gallery. Visit This blackboard is more than a glimpse into the mind of a genius, however: it is a key moment in our understanding of the Cosmos. To find out more, visit the online story here: Einstein in Oxford | History of Science Museum and, next time you're in Oxford, pop into the museum to see the blackboard for yourself.

Blog: The Babbage Archive Project
The History of Science Museum holds important material associated with Charles Babbage (1791 – 1871) comprising: components of Babbage's first (unfinished) mechanical computing machine; and an archive of his personal notes about his machines.
This project revolves around conserving and digitising this material. To find out more, please visit: The Babbage Archive Project | History of Science Museum

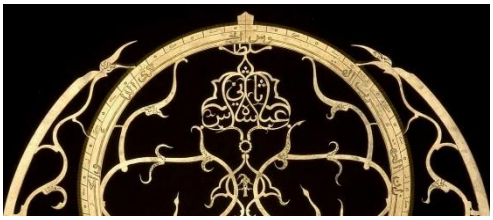
Step back into online version of previous Exhibitions, dating back to the 1995!
The History of Science Museum has been creating virtual versions of their past Exhibitions for over 25 years – a real treasure trove of learning. Do take a look at:
Past exhibitions and displays | History of Science Museum (ox.ac.uk)

Online Exhibition: Mirror of the Stars

"Pick up an Astrolabe, and you hold the Universe in your hands." Join Museum curators Dr Federica Gigante and Mathilde Daussy-Renaudin to explore how astrolabes mirrored the traditional view of the Earth at the centre of our moving universe. This step-by-step tour of the Exhibition takes you through what astrolabes were and how they were used in so many aspects of everyday life. Visit:
Mirror of the Stars | History of Science Museum (ox.ac.uk)

Read the Blog: Why our History Matters – a look at the decolonisation project that will explore the origins of the founding collection
Consider the role of museums in general and then explore the origins of some of the key collection artefacts, learn about the way the items were procured and discover some of the hidden voices and stories within them.
Finding and Founding Blog One Our History Matters | History of Science Museum (ox.ac.uk)

Discover the Collection: Science in the Islamic World



The History of Science Museum houses one the world's most comprehensive collection of astronomical instruments from the Islamic World.
Ranging from the 800s CE to the present day, these scientific objects were created and used by people living in *lands where the majority religion was — or is — Islam*.
While the artisans who made them came from different regions — Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia — the objects themselves still share many similar, distinctive characteristics. And though the instrument makers all lived and worked in the Islamic World, they were not all themselves Muslim. The result is a fascinatingly rich and diverse collection. For more information, please go to: Science in the Islamic World | History of Science Museum (ox.ac.uk)

Watch again: the collection of recent past talks

Scroll down the page to reach the Museum's Youtube collection of recent past events, which include a talk on Board Games and Mediaeval Medicine, and a discussion on whether science can always be considered "fact".
What's on | History of Science Museum (ox.ac.uk)
You can also go on to take a virtual tour of the galleries at:
Current Displays and Exhibitions | History of Science Museum (ox.ac.uk)

And from the Natural History Museum of Oxford:

Special Exhibition: Breaking Ground

Available until April 2026
The Breaking Ground Exhibition explores the age of 19th Century discovery as, through fossils and new methods of study, our understanding of prehistory came alive. The exhibition focuses on the work of William Buckland, geologist and palaeontologist, and Mary Buckland (née Morland), a scientific illustrator. They both helped to establish new scientific methods and ideas, which led to fascinating discoveries in palaeontology, including the first ever dinosaur to be named to science.

This exhibition showcases important specimens and fossils along with drawings, prints and paintings made by Mary Buckland and others, which helped spread the understanding of extinct groups of animals and plants among the 19th-century scientific community. It is a marvellous journey not just of discovery, but of the developing scientific methodology of the time. Find out more at Breaking Ground | Oxford University Museum of Natural History

Explore in Person: New Displays now open

What connects prairie dogs to blister beetles? How do spiders communicate with each other? And why are cockatoos considered pioneers? Check out the new displays to find out. To get an online taste, please visit: Life, As We Know It | Oxford University Museum of Natural History

In addition, the museum has a number of events (talks, panel discussions, tours, workshops) over the coming months. Below is a selection, but do take a look at their WHAT'S ON | Oxford University Museum of Natural History to find a full listing. Many of their events are free, but most need to be booked in advance.

Display: Microsculpture – the photography of Levon Biss

Available until 4th January 2026
The stunning high magnification insect portraits by **British photographer Levon Biss** were first shown in the Microsculpture exhibition in this Museum in 2016. Since then, the show has toured to 44 cities in 22 countries around the world. This is a chance to see some photographs made after the 2016 Exhibition. You can see them interspersed among the exhibits in the six new Main Court Display Cases. Find out more at: Microsculpture | Oxford University Museum of Natural History

Talk: 30 Unmistakeable tracks and signs left by our local mammals
Monday 12th January 2026, 7:00 – 8:00pm
Local tracking expert Bob Cowley will introduce you to 30 Tracks and Signs, equipping you with the necessary skills to identify the presence of 15 of our local mammal species. Bob has carefully chosen these particular signs because they cannot be confused with anything else in our local environment, so you will be able to apply your new knowledge immediately, and every time you go for a walk. In this way, this talk will open your eyes to the endlessly intriguing world of Tracks and Signs.
No need to book. £3 entry payable at the door.

Performance: William Shakespeare's "Walking with Dinosaurs"
Friday 30th January 2026, 7:30 – 9:00pm
Celebrate the 25th anniversary of 'Walking with Dinosaurs' with a new theatrical production combining the prehistoric and the renaissance, adapting two episodes of the television series into Shakespearean drama. Witness a majestic Liopleurodon grapple with a Tempest, a royal pterosaur divide his kingdom into thirds, and a T. rex ponder "two claws, or not two claws?" There will be comedy, tragedy, heroes, villains, dinosaurs, and maybe even an asteroid—all presented before you by a group of [decidedly-human] actors.
For more information and to book (£5 entry), go to: William Shakespeare's 'Walking With Dinosaurs' | Oxford University Museum of Natural History
Main Court

Tak: Encounters in the Forest
Monday 9th February 2026, 7:00 – 8:00pm
Dr Claire Cardinal conducts interdisciplinary research that integrates ecological and ethnographic methods to explore relationships between humans and other animals. Her recent work focuses on the interactions between people who live at the forest frontier in rural Madagascar and the wild mammals with whom they share the landscape. In this talk she will discuss the impacts of conservation initiatives on three groups of Malagasy mammal – subsistence farmers, lemurs and small carnivores – and highlight conflicts that arise from their sympatric relationships.
No need to book. £3 entry payable at the door.

A Treasure of Online Exhibitions!
From Architecture to Animals, and from Bacteria to Brains, browse through the Museum's collection of digital exhibitions and learn more about all aspects of the Natural World. Dive in at: Online exhibitions | Oxford University Museum of Natural History

The Learning Zone, from the University of Oxford's Natural History Museum
This is packed with resources and ideas for learning about the Living World, the Earth, and Fossils. Most of the materials are aimed at upper KS2 and KS3, so if you are in Years 7-9, you should find plenty of interest: games, videos, activities, and ideas for further exploration. Do take a look! Home | The Learning Zone (ox.ac.uk)

The Natural History Museum has a number of regular family-friendly events, such as *Science Saturdays, Autism-Friendly Openings* and *Family Friendly Sundays*. Do take a look at their website to check out the whole programme of events: WHAT'S ON | Oxford University Museum of Natural History

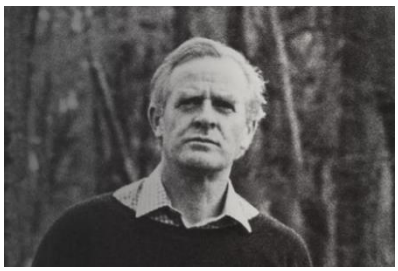
The museum also holds regular sessions on object handling. To find out more, head to WHAT'S ON | Oxford University Museum of Natural History where you will find several pages' worth of events.

Young People at the University of Oxford's Museum of Natural History
DO visit this section for ideas of how to get involved (e.g. the regular Youth Forum for ages 16-19) as well as online challenges and resources.
Keep an eye on this page as it is updated.
Young people | Oxford University Museum of Natural History

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.
Also, do take a look at the Events listings, as many of these are free to access as well. Please visit: Events & Exhibitions | Visit the Bodleian Libraries (ox.ac.uk)

Exhibition: Treasured
Available until 1st February 2026
What makes a treasure? Is it age, rarity, beauty – or something else?
Treasured invites you to explore the meaning of value itself through some of the world's most remarkable books and manuscripts, several of which were acquired with the help of the Friends of the Bodleian which celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2025.
ST Lee Gallery, Weston Library



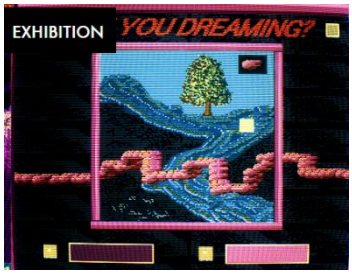
Exhibition: John Le Carré – Tradecraft
Available until 6th April 2026
Discover the enduring legacy of one of the greatest writers of the past century.
Tradecraft draws upon the vast archive of John le Carré, otherwise known as David Cornwell. Held at the Bodleian Libraries, this material – much of which is displayed for the first time – spans Cornwell's entire life and career, from his time as a student at Lincoln College, Oxford, to drafts penned in his final weeks.
This exhibition offers unique insights into the working methods of the writer who shaped the modern spy novel. For more information: John le Carré: Tradecraft | Visit the Bodleian Libraries
The Treasury, Weston Library. FREE Exhibition, no booking needed.

Display: A song of Myself
This is a wire sculpture by Tom Phillips RA, on long-term loan.
Blackwell Hall, Weston Library

You will find the full list at Events & Exhibitions | Visit the Bodleian Libraries (ox.ac.uk).

Summer Exhibitions and Events at Modern Art Oxford

Modern Art Oxford is one of the UK's leading contemporary art spaces. Our 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



Exhibition: Suzanne Treister – Prophetic Dreaming
Available until 12th April 2026
Prophetic Dreaming is the first major institutional retrospective by pioneering digital and para-disciplinary artist Suzanne Treister (b. 1958). Spanning more than forty years, the exhibition maps Treister's visionary practice and investigations into new technologies, networks of power, alternative belief systems, and the futures they prefigure. Full Price £9.50, concessions £7. No need to book in advance. Modern Art Oxford

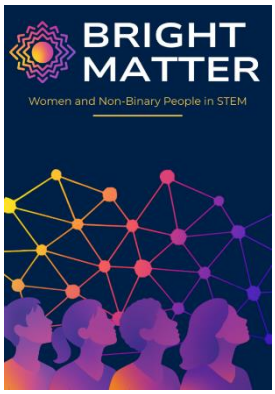
Two Exhibitions from local Museums

Wantage Vale and Downland Museum
Exhibition: The Wantage Tramway
Available until 31st January 2026
This special exhibition marks 100 years since the closure of the Wantage Tramway Passenger Line, as well as the 200th anniversary of the modern railway.
FREE admission, and no need to book.

Faringdon Museum
Exhibition: Are we nearly there yet? 4000 Years of Transport

Next time you're in Faringdon, why not pop into the Faringdon Museum which is situated within the Information Centre, Pump House, Market Place, Faringdon. Their new exhibition fits in nicely with the current Wantage Exhibition, as they both relate to transport within the two communities. The exhibition shows the effects of changing transport within the town.
There is also a permanent exhibition regarding the history of the town, which is quite quirky – come and find out why there are pink pigeons on some of the town's window sills…
Faringdon Museum – Faringdon Town Council

Section 2. Sites to explore online



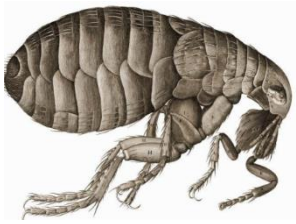
Bright Matter: Women and Non-Binary People in STEM – Taster sessions for Years 11 and 12
This is an initiative run by several of the University of Oxford Colleges, and the aim is to give you a feel for what learning STEM subjects at a highly competitive university might be like.
Bright Matter is a programme for women and non-binary students in Year 11 and 12 who are interested in studying STEM subjects at university. Bright Matter is run jointly by St Anne's, St Catherine's, St Hilda's, Magdalen, Mansfield, Oriel, and University Colleges, Oxford, and aims to broaden interested in STEM fields. What: 15 online sessions introducing each subject area. Each session will include a presentation about studying that subject at Oxford and a 20-minute academic taster session.
The series of talks opens on the 7th January, and continues until 10th February. You can pick and choose which sessions you would like to attend, but you need to register in advance. For the dates and times of the various sessions, and to register, please go to Bright Matter: Women and Non-Binary People in STEM

The BBC Reith Lectures 2025
Every year, towards the end of the year, the BBC put on their annual Reith Lectures – a short series of four talks, linked by a common theme, and delivered by significant international thinkers. For example, last year, forensic psychiatrist Gwen Adshead explored the nature of evil and violence. This year, Dutch historian Rutger Bregman is exploring the concept of a Moral Revolution.
Talk no. 1 – A time of Monsters
Talk no. 2 – How to start a Moral Revolution
Talk no. 3 – A conspiracy of decency
Talk no. 4 – Fighting for humanity in the age of the machine
You can find them all at: BBC Radio 4 - The Reith Lectures
There are, in addition, over 300 talks, going back through the years, and exploring a wide range of topics, including Politics, Law, War, Black Holes, the Climate Crisis, the Nature of Art, and much more.

Royal Economic Society Annual Public Lecture: Communicating about the Economy
Established in 2001, the RES Annual Public Lecture provides an opportunity for school students to watch internationally renowned economists present their research. Principally aimed at sixth form students, the APL has become an established part of the senior school calendar. This year, the Lecture was given by Andrew Haldane CBE, former Chief Economist of the Bank of England, on the topic of 'Communicating about the economy'. Communicating about the economy has never been more important for shaping its animal spirits, narratives and behaviours. How do we do so in a way that improves the workings of the economy and the well-being of its citizens?
RES Annual Public Lecture 2025: Communicating about the Economy with Andy Haldane

Recommended by the Oxford Department of Physics
The Quantum Channel with Dr Maria Violaris
Maria is a quantum physicist, with a PhD in the foundations of quantum information from the University of Oxford. She now works on quantum computing research and content at Oxford Quantum Circuits. Here on The Quantum Channel, she posts videos about quantum science and tech, and hosts her Quantum Foundations Podcast. If you are intrigued by Quantum Physics and Computing, this is definitely for you! (16) Dr Maria Violaris - YouTube
And if you are inspired by this, check out the "Quantum on the Clock" video competition in the Competition Corner, further down the newsletter.

Podcast: The IFS Zooms In - The Autumn Budget 2025, dissected and explained
For Students of A Level Economics, the podcast *The IFS Zooms In* will provide a range of analytical explorations on all matters relating to the Institute of Fiscal Studies. In this episode, they take a look at the economic and societal implications of the recent Autumn Budget.
The Autumn Budget 2025 explained | Institute for Fiscal Studies
You can find other episodes if you subscribe wherever you get your podcasts, or you can find them here: (13) IFS Zooms In: The Economy | Podcast - YouTube



Learning Resource: Moments in Medicine
This is a great collection of resources from the Bodleian Library, ranging from the Canon of Medicine to an exploration of some of the key moments in the history of medicine, such as the introduction of antiseptics and the rise of the NHS. And of course, Hooke's ground-breaking work *Microphagia.*
Moments in Medicine learning resource | Visit the Bodleian Libraries

Podcast: Approaching Shakespeare Series
Each lecture in this series focuses on a single play by Shakespeare, and employs a range of different approaches to try to understand a central critical question about it. Rather than providing overarching readings or interpretations, the series aims to show the variety of different ways we might understand Shakespeare, the kinds of evidence that might be used to strengthen our critical analysis, and, above all, the enjoyable and unavoidable fact that Shakespeare's plays tend to generate our questions rather than answer them.
Approaching Shakespeare | University of Oxford Podcasts

The National Museum of Computing Youtube Channel
If you are interested in Computing, then this must become a favourite channel. Here you will find many of the Museum's talks, covering all aspects of Computing, from recent developments to the contextual history of our modern systems; current applications to the role of computing in politics and warfare. Dive in! TNMOC Mate | Accessible learning at TNMOC with Version 1

The Oxford Martin School – Finding solutions to the world's most urgent challenges

The University of Oxford boasts that there is no research organisation in the world that is quite like the Oxford Martin School in that it brings researchers from across all disciplines to work together on finding solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges.

As part of sharing their work, they have a series of talks – a mixture of in-person and online – most of which are free and open to all. It's worth keeping an eye on their events page, and also to go browsing through their archive of past talks at: Past Events | Oxford Martin School. You will find something here that is relevant to almost any academic interest. Well worth scanning through if you are doing/considering an EPQ on a topic that involves a threat to the world or to society.

There are no forthcoming events over the Christmas break, but see below for three of the most recent talks. You will find many more on their events page.

Kim Darroch & Kathy Harvey in conversation: 'Navigating the chaos: Trump, Putin, the rise of populism and the end of the rules-based international order'

Kathy Harvey is in conversation with Kim Darroch, former British Ambassador to the European Union, National Security Adviser and Ambassador to the United States, about the new disorder and its consequences for governments and businesses.

'Globalisation, global change and emerging infectious diseases' with Prof John Drake

In this Pandemic Sciences Institute & Oxford Martin School talk, Professor Drake traces the historical record of major 20th and 21st Century pandemics, highlighting how global forces such as economic integration, urbanisation and climate disruption shape the emergence and spread of novel pathogens.

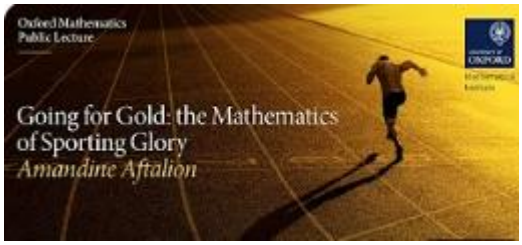
'Integrating epilepsy into maternal health systems: lessons from Nepal and global insights' with Deepesha Silpakar

Epilepsy affects over 50 million people worldwide, yet women of reproductive age, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, continue to face multiple barriers to care during pregnancy. In Nepal, these challenges highlight the urgent need to integrate epilepsy into maternal and reproductive health systems to ensure safer pregnancies and better long-term outcomes.

Podcast: What Economists Really Do

This is a fantastic podcast from the Department of Economics at the University of Oxford. Each episode explores a different area, from the economics of mental health to the political economy of trade policies, and everything in between. Strongly recommended for anyone considering Economics at A Level and University.

(9) What Economists Really Do - YouTube



Recorded Talk – Going for Gold: the Mathematics of Sporting Glory

This is one of the websites that we recommend to our mathematicians in the Super Curricular Booklet, but I thought it would be of wide enough appeal to include it here. It is a recent talk given by Professor Amandine Aftalion at the Oxford Mathematical Institute series of Public Lectures.

Going for Gold: the Mathematics of Sporting Glory - Amandine Aftalion

The Alan Turing Lecture 2025

Sandi Toksvig delivers the 2025 Alan Turing lecture at King's College, Cambridge. This insightful talk explores how biases, particularly sexist and racist ones, impact discovery and learning. The lecture connects historical prejudice with contemporary issues, using humor and personal anecdotes to illustrate complex points.

Alan Turing Lecture 2025 by Sandi Toksvig

Float Head Physics

This is a fantastic platform that provides intuitive explanations for various complex physics concepts through animated videos (through its YouTube channel). The explanatory videos really do simplify complex ideas without distorting them, making them more understandable for learners of all backgrounds. I strongly recommend this!

(13) FloatHeadPhysics - YouTube

The Great Philosophers: a Journey through Time

This is a series of nine short videos (each is under 10 mins) to introduce some of Philosophy's greatest thinkers. From Aristotle to Arendt and Foucault, philosophy has shaped how we understand truth, justice, and what it means to be human. This journey explores the lives and ideas of great thinkers whose questions continue to echo across centuries. (15) The Great Philosophers: A journey through time - YouTube

The Great Philosophers

And if the above whetted your appetite for more, this series comes recommended by Mr Bolton of our Maths Department. It is a 1987 TV series from the BBC hosted by Bryan Magee. Over the course of 15 episodes, this series explores key personages and ideas within the world of Philosophy, with each episode consisting of an in-depth interview with a modern philosopher.

The Great Philosophers Catch up, Series 1: 4. Descartes on BBC 4

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?**

Iguanas from Above!

Marine Iguanas need your help - Help researchers to count Galapagos Marine Iguanas from aerial photographs so they can save these awesome animals from extinction.

Marine iguanas are threatened by invasive species, pollution, and climate change. Researchers are collecting the first good comprehensive population size estimates for this endangered species. To do this, they use drones to collect images of the Galapagos coastlines. From these images, they count the iguanas to estimate their number in different locations. From these estimates, they can make a solid plan to protect them. And by helping them to count them, you are directly contributing to saving this awesome species!

For more information and to get started, visit Iguanas from Above | Zooniverse - People-powered research.

Radio Meteor Zoo

The Radio Meteor Zoo uses images provided by BRAMS, the Belgian Radio Meteor Stations network which uses reflection of radio waves on meteor ionized trails to detect and study the meteoroid population entering the Earth's atmosphere. The network generates a huge amount of data with tens of thousands of meteor echoes detected every day.

During meteor showers, when Earth's orbit crosses that of a comet, the meteor activity is temporarily much higher and produces a lot of complex meteor echoes in BRAMS data. To identify them, the eye remains the best detector. Researchers are after willing volunteers to manually identify meteor echoes during some specific meteor showers.

BRAMS is a project of the Royal Belgian Institute for Space Aeronomy (BISA) and funded by the Solar-Terrestrial Centre of Excellence (STCE).

For more information and to get started, visit Radio Meteor Zoo | 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 .

To view up and coming Webinars and to register to attend, please go to: Webinars | Murray Edwards College

Subject Focus Sessions – explore subjects for University

Each Subject Focus session will involve an introduction to Cambridge University and Homerton College from a member of Homerton's Admissions Team, followed by a taster session to give you an insight into the subject. To conclude, there will be Q&A with current Homerton students studying the subject. There are lots of subjects on offer, from Linguistics to Archaeology, and Law to Anglo-Saxon, Celtic and Norse. To find out more and sign up for your chosen subjects, please go to: Subject Focus Sessions

An Excellent Resouce: The Lucy Cavendish Supracurricular Exploration Guide

Lucy Cavendish College has a reputation for being one of the most inclusive and proactive of Cambridge Colleges in empowering state school students and those from under-represented backgrounds to make successful applications to study at the University of Cambridge. As part of this work, they have put together a fantastic online guide as to why academic enrichment and the super curriculum are important, and it is packed with both general and subject-specific resources. I strongly recommend that all students considering applying to our more competitive universities (not just Oxford and Cambridge, but also universities such as Durham, UCL, Imperial, Leeds, Manchester, Exeter, etc.) take a look at this website and start tapping into their recommended resources!

Looking for ways to explore your subject? | Lucy Cavendish

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. Super-Curricular Activities (cam.ac.uk)

The University of Oxford's Digital Resources Hub

The University of Oxford has compiled the best of its digital resources into a Digital Resources Hub to support learning and exploration. It is helpfully organised by age to help you find the resources that are best suited to your stage in education. They can also help parents and teachers to feed the curiosity of growing minds and inspire them to think broadly. These resources can also enable older students to explore their passions and interests further, and to discover more about Oxford. Go to: Digital resource hub | University of Oxford

HE+

This website is for anyone interested in exploring ideas and developing their own critical thinking skills. Each topic is produced by Cambridge postgraduate students and academics at the cutting edge of research in their field. The topics provide guided activities, questions to think about and suggestions for further reading.
It is aimed at older students, but there is absolutely no reason why younger students cannot take a look and start thinking ahead. The main subject pages also give you a quick guide to what it would be like to study the subject at university level and suggest some further resources to check out. Click on a subject icon or search all topics to get started!
Visit the HE+ website at https://www.myheplus.com/

Super Curricular Suggestions from the University of Cambridge:

Strong applicants to Cambridge and other competitive universities tend to have explored their chosen subject through wider reading outside the classroom, as well as doing very well in their GCSEs and A-levels. We call this sort of exploration 'super-curricular', as it builds on and enhances what you are studying in school. This selection of suggested reading lists and resources has been gathered from the Cambridge departmental and College websites, other universities and other sources on the internet. These lists provide some suggestions for places to start exploring your own interests in your chosen subject independently - you do not need to engage with any of the specific websites, books, podcasts etc mentioned and can easily find your own alternatives. The following lists are suggestions only. super-curricular_suggestions.pdf (cam.ac.uk)

Trinity College Library Quad

This is a treasure of super-curricular enrichment: a collection of resources from current Oxford Trinity College Students. The difference here is that all these resources come recommended as having been helpful in preparing for university.
Library Quad | Trinity College Oxford

Courses and Workshops

This new 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.

University of Reading Short Online Courses
The University of Reading have designed and compiled a series of Short Online Courses to support students with developing their super curriculum. The courses range from history and sustainability to health and education, and will enable students to demonstrate a passion for their subject(s) as well as the ability to research and learn beyond the classroom. The courses are all free, and designed to be flexible and to fit in around other commitments. Take a look at what is on offer at: Short online courses

Future Learn – short online courses across a range of subjects
Another great resource for exploring your subjects beyond the curriculum. Great for checking that you really enjoy a subject enough to study it at university for 3-4 years, as well as providing you with sterling material for a personal statement. FutureLearn: Online Courses and Degrees from Top Universities

Youth STEMM Award
The Youth STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics & Medicine) Award (YSA) is a flexible and personalised skills award for young people, empowering you to design your own programme of STEMM activities. Participants work towards a Bronze, Silver, or Gold Award by completing activities at school, at home, or online—choosing experiences that align with your interests.
Open to: students aged between 11 and 19
Introductory video here
Sign up here
Featured activity: choose a project and do research for NASA

Oxford Online Maths Club
Online every Thursday, but you can access recordings at any time
Oxford Online Maths Club is a livestream from the Mathematical Institute, aimed at prospective students. The level of maths is therefore at A Level standard. It's free, interactive, casual, and relaxed, and the livestreams are recorded so that you can watch back afterwards if you can't make it to the live broadcast on Thursday afternoons. To find out more, and to access past recordings, please visit Oxford Online Maths Club | Mathematical Institute

Free Courses from the Open University
There are over 900 courses to explore, most of which are 3-6 hours in length, and you can choose how you do the hours. From the evolutionary tree of mammals to the formation of exoplanets, and from understanding mental capacity to introducing public health, The range and scope of these

courses is tremendous. Do take a look! Free short courses from the Open University | OpenLearn - Open University

Wireless Philosophy – online course
If you are curious about philosophy, this course explores some of the main areas within the subject, as well as its history. This course's nuanced coverage of philosophical topics makes it an excellent companion to A Level and undergraduate psychology courses, and it can also be used by lifelong learners who are curious about modern applications of philosophy. Wireless Philosophy | Partner content | Khan Academy

Open Yale Courses
This site from the prestigious Yale University provides free and open access to a selection of introductory courses taught by distinguished teachers and scholars at Yale University. The aim of the project is to expand access to educational materials for all who wish to learn. To find out more, go to Welcome | Open Yale Courses

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. 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.

Lincoln College
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Creative Life Sciences Competition for Year 12
This is advance notice of an exciting Life Sciences Essay Competition. Students will be invited to write an essay of up to 1,500 words in answer to a question. The Judges welcome creative submissions, and entrants are welcome to approach the question in whatever way is most meaningful to them, as long as they demonstrate that they are thinking scientifically. The questions are designed to test creativity and scientific intuition rather than knowledge.

Full details about how to submit your essay, together with this year's questions, will be released in January. However, you will find more information **HERE** . Anyone interested in getting reminders sent out directly can sign up **HERE** .

Oxford
CHRIST CHURCH
500 YEARS | 1525–2025

Poster Competition for Year 11 or 12 – Solving Global Challenges
The question you are asked to answer is "What global challenge would you solve with entrepreneurship and how?" The organsiers welcome submissions in one of three strands: Medical & Physical Sciences, Social Sciences, and Arts & Humanities. For more information and details of how to enter, please go to
Solving Global Challenges Poster Competition | Christ Church, University of Oxford
The deadline for submission is Midday 5th January.

Oxford German Olympiad 2026: Spiel und Sport

What: The Oxford German Network have launched the 13th edition of its annual German Olympiad! This year's topic is "Immer unterwegs - Mobilität und Reiselust". There are a variety of different challenges aimed at different age groups. Some are for individuals to enter, others are aimed at groups. There is even a taster competition for pupils who have never studied German before!

Who: Students from any school, from Years 5 to 13
When: The closing date for all entries is Thursday 12 March 2026
Where: Online
Contact: Any questions can be directed to the Olympiad Coordinator, Eva, at: olympiad@mod-langs-ox.ac.uk
More info: More information about the Olympiad can be found on the Oxford German Network website.

Anthea Bell Prize for Young Translators 2026

What: The Anthea Bell Prize is run annually by the Queen's Translation Exchange (QTE). The Prize aims to promote language learning across the UK and to inspire creativity in the classroom. By providing teachers with the tools they need to bring translation to life, QTE hopes to motivate more pupils to study modern foreign languages throughout their time at school and beyond. The Prize currently offers French (into Welsh and English), German, Italian, Mandarin, Russian and Spanish.

Who: Pupils aged 11-18 at all schools across the UK
When: The 2025-2026 competition will run from 2 February to 27 March 2026.
Where: Online
Contact: Any questions can be directed to translation.exchange@queens.ox.ac.uk
More info: Register here to receive updates about the Prize, as well as access to our free creative translation teaching resources.

Poetry Competition for students aged 16 – 18

The Tower Poetry Competition offers the UK's most valuable prize for young poets. The poet who writes the single best poem on the theme receives £5,000. There will be a second prize of £3,000, and a third prize of £1,500. Along with these, there will be ten runners up, who will each receive £500. The top three winners will also be offered a place on the Tower Poetry Summer School.

The theme for this year's competition is "A Riddle".
For more information and details of how to enter, please visit: Enter the Tower Poetry Competition | Christ Church, University of Oxford
The deadline for submission is 12noon Thursday 19th February 2026

Year 12 Classics and Ancient History Competition

This competition is open to all students, not just those who may be studying Classics, There are four questions to choose from, each with a focus in a particular area – History, Literature, Philosophy or Art and Archaeology. The questions are brilliantly thought-provoking.

For more information and details of how to enter, please visit:
Classics Essay Competition 2026 | St John's College, Oxford
Deadline for submission is 4pm on Sunday 22nd February 2026

Year 12 Essay Prize on Colonialism and its Legacies

The prize is intended to encourage students to engage with the legacies of colonialism in all its forms – historical, political, economic, social, cultural. Colonialism is a major theme in British history. Its legacies are all around us. By writing an essay for the prize, a student has an opportunity to uncover the enduring influence of colonialism in our society and culture and to address some of the difficult and uncomfortable questions that it poses.

There are four questions to choose from – all of them thought-provoking and exploring different areas of study. For more information and details of how to enter, please visit:

Rex Nettleford Essay Prizes: Colonialism and its Legacies - Oriel College

Deadline for submission is 12noon Monday 23rd February 2026.

Essay competition: The Holodomor

The Foundation for the History of Totalitarianism are looking for students who will be in Year 12/13 in 2025-26 to **submit essays** about the Holodomor genocide/man-made famine as part of **an essay competition. The deadline for entries is noon on Sunday, 25th January 2026.**

Quantum on the Clock Video Competition – there is still time to enter!

In celebration of the International Year of Quantum 025, Year 12 and 13 students are invited to take part in Quantum on the Clock—an exciting online video competition that challenges students to explain a quantum concept in just three minutes.

This is a fantastic opportunity for students in Sixth Form to:

- 🎓 Deepen their understanding of A-level (or equivalent) quantum physics
- 💡 Spark curiosity and creativity
- 🎬 Create a standout project for future education or career applications

Why take part?

- 💷 Over £2,000 in cash prizes
- 🌟 Winning videos featured on the Institute of Physics' YouTube channel
- 🏆 Invitations to an exclusive prize-giving event
- 📚 Contribute to a growing library of classroom resources
- ✅ A valuable addition to university, college, or apprenticeship applications
- 🔍 Learn more about the rapidly growing field of quantum science

Students will also gain valuable experience by reviewing other entries, and winners will be selected by a panel of expert judges, including leading quantum researchers and science communicators. Find out more, including details of how to enter, at: Quantum on the Clock Competition | Institute of Physics

The deadline for entries is Monday 12th January 2026 at 5pm.

Centre for Personalised Medicine Art Competition

The Oxford Centre for Personalised Medicine is inviting students in Years 7–9 to get creative and share their thoughts on the meaning of 'personalised medicine' through art. Personalised medicine means different things to different people – from using genetic information to tailor treatment, to understanding a person's story and what matters most to them. This competition is a chance for young people to express what they think it means. Students can submit any form of visual art – a drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, or more –

as long as it can be photographed. All entrants receive a certificate, and cash prizes will be awarded to standout submissions. Group entries are welcome too! Winning artworks will be considered for display at prestigious locations across Oxford, including the John Radcliffe Hospital, Churchill Hospital, Centre for Human Genetics, and St Anne's College. More details, including a short video about the competition, and downloadable information for teachers available at Art Competition 2025-26 - cpm
Deadline for entries – 30th January 2026

Practical Ethics and Responsibility Competition, Years 11-13
"How am I responsible for the environment? Should there be limits on how we can punish people who do wrong? If very ill patients want to die, should doctors be held responsible if they help them? Who is responsible for the global spread of infectious diseases?"
If these and other questions about our responsibilities towards each other, our planet and our future make you think, then this competition is for you!
The Uehiro Oxford Institute focuses on how to tackle some of the biggest ethical problems facing us today. This is called Practical Ethics.
Who can enter: Anyone in Years 11, 12 or 13, in teams of three to five people.
What do you need to do: Make a 3-4 minute video to inform about an ethical problem and how you think responsibility is involved.
Deadline: 5th January 2026 at 4pm.
Full details of the competition plus the terms and conditions are available on the How to take part page and you can see video entries of previous years on the Past winners pages or on the Uehiro YouTube Channel. More information can be found at Practical Ethics and Responsibility Competition | The Uehiro Oxford Institute

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