

## Past Pedagogies, Present Perspectives, and Future Directions: Reading Classics Online Workshop.

### Roundtable 3: Perspectives from secondary school contexts.

#### Introduction

Michael Wuk:

I think we'll start off with our final session of the day. I think the one that I'm, to be frank, most looking forward to actually, because I think there's a lot of stuff in this... I've looked over the slides already, which is very very cool and some things I'm definitely going to... I was going to say steal, but some things I'm definitely going to use in my own practice soon. So we're finishing off with the kind of secondary school context, everybody speaking is to some extent involved in teaching Latin, or Greek, or Classics generally to secondary school students. We are going to start off with someone who is probably very familiar to all of us here, Steven Hunt, with the University of Cambridge, responsible for a new wave of Classics teachers in the last generation or so.

Steven Hunt:

You're scaring me!

(Laughter)

Michael Wuk:

I remember you giving a talk in Nottingham actually, I was this close to being a classics teacher myself, I can't remember what swayed it... Either way, Steven is also responsible for various important books on classical pedagogy as well, so without further ado, Steven, you take it away.

## Presentation: Steven Hunt, Online parsing and dictionary tools

Steven Hunt:

Hello. I've got a lovely picture here of what we are probably all very familiar with, which I just nicked off the Google site of the standard dictionary, and one of the things I had a bit of a bee in my bonnet about is how much we try to replicate the paper based stuff digitally, and why don't we shift to using digital stuff properly and explore the full capability of it? I'm going to look specifically at what seems to be going on in schools using online parsing tools in a couple of commonly used textbooks. (technical difficulties) So having a look at a couple of resources, and then thinking about the way they're used by teachers (more technical difficulties), used by students, and then just some thoughts afterwards. Obviously none of this is research based, it's just my anecdotal... things I take from... I've probably been in hundreds of schools over the years, and digital stuff has kind of reared its head everywhere. It's in common use, digital materials and resources are in common use in pretty much every school you go to these days, and will become pretty much the only way forward, I suspect, in twenty years time. So, the commonly used resources are the CLC (Cambridge Latin Course), the fourth edition, the fifth edition has just recently been published but I suspect it's not all that different, I'm sure anybody's out there know - I know James Watson's watching so he'll probably know that this is much better now than what I'm going to talk about but there we go. Suburani, which is another course very similar to the Cambridge Latin Course in that they're both reading comprehension courses, so the preliminary way or their preliminary mode of teaching is through reading extensive texts, in Latin, in the original. There's a lot of intuition, visual support of various sorts, and lots of surrounding activities to help students comprehend the meaning of the language first, then focus on the grammar either during or a little bit after. So that's the reading comprehension method, and some of the practices that are common to both those courses have fed through into resources provided by the CSCP, that's the Cambridge School of Classics Project, for their GCSE set texts. So these are the common ways in which students are learning how to read, and comprehend, and eventually translate Latin in schools, from probably about age eleven to fourteen, something like that. So first of all, this little nice summary of a fairly straightforward text that you might get in CLC Book 3, so a student then will have been doing Latin for a couple of years, that's the aim, and you can see what we can do with this, what we should be able to do with this, is to press on a word, for example *diligentiae*, and hey presto! It will tell you down the bottom what it means, and also a little bit of parsing information, which is the essential information that you would find in a dictionary or in the word list of the book, and in this particular case, as the student has been reading Latin for a couple of years, it's pretty much the sort of information they would expect to find in a normal dictionary. Of course in a normal dictionary you don't get the extra parsing information specific to that form of the word. But a lot students will only look at the first bit, the general entry for the word, and not the specifics below, and that is cause for concern for many teachers. However, the point of this thing, how it was designed, a long time ago as Bob Lister says, it was designed for the use of Cambridge University students, undergraduates who needed to read lots and lots of texts, and they found out that they were spending about sixty percent of their time not reading texts at all, but actually looking things up in dictionaries. I have just invented an idea called 'Latin and Un-Latin', and sixty percent of one's time spent doing Un-Latin seems to not be a very productive thing. Bob Patrick, who's an American, talks about learning about Latin as opposed to learning Latin, and I think what this programme, and the materials here, and what I think Sam's going to talk about a bit later on, is trying to get students to spend more time in Latin than in English. And I think if we want

our students to be reading productively and fluently, that we need to be keeping them more in Latin, than in talking about Latin, or doing what I refer to as Un-Latin. So although this particular task here gives a lot of information, that bit down there kids don't tend to look at, and we do know that even students who are good at knowing their grammar don't really find that very useful, because they see each word as a separate little word all on its own, they don't make connections. We know, as fluent leaders, that *diligentiae* clearly goes with *magnae*, and it's part of a package with *vir magnae diligentiae*, and it's part of a second package with *sed minimae prudentiae*. We know, as expert readers, that that little group goes together, and is forming two individual little bits. Do you know what I've just done there? I framed the words on the page with my hands. I don't see very much of that happening at all. What I do see happening is students sitting over there, looking somewhere in this direction, and listening to me talk about *magnae diligentiae*, and I hope they're looking at it on this page. Well, they're just seeing *diligentiae* as the word being highlighted. And it seems to me that though this tool is really helpful about individual words, it is not helpful for talking about and improving students' understanding of how the words are related to each other. Not just related from the fact that this is one big sentence, but the fact that there's a relative clause in there, and that there's a balanced phrase between those two sorts of genitive, and that they're in opposition to each other, and all that sort of stuff. Cressida talked a little bit earlier on today about discourse markers, and this tool, though great in itself, because it is a good thing, needs a lot of teacher thought about how to use it effectively. I always say, I saw a trainee of mine earlier this week, and I said "You know, the most useful tool that a teacher has is this: the finger, alright, because you can point." And I also think these two things are really handy (raises hands), because you can show what you mean. If you don't do that when they're looking at the text on the screen, you haven't a clue what they're looking at. So I think if anyone's using a tool like this, you've got to think, not just about it being on the screen, but about how it is representing the thought process, the ideas, the connectivity between words, so that's one thought I've had. Yes, you can make the tool nice colours as well, you can also switch off the parsing, so you can just have the dictionary definition down at the bottom, that's another form. The thing I just wanted to finish off with this, with the CLC bit, is that's what it looks like in the book. The good thing about CLC and Subarani is that the text on the screen is exactly the same as it looks in the book, which is essential as we talked about multimodality and trying to make things as easy to transfer from one form to the other as possible, and this does that. But, did you know this? All this down here, the glossing, there isn't any of that, it's all been turned into individual entries at the bottom of the digital version. Again, I think that's an error on the part of the book, I think if you're going to use the glossing, it is intended to help students intuit the vocabulary. What this has done is take out all of the vocabulary and then put it back in in a different form, and that changes the way in which the students use the text and is different from the way the author has intended the text to be used. Anyway, so that's my thoughts on that one.

This is Subarani, you'll notice already that it's very different. Now CLC does have model sentences, so it has little cartoons at the start of each stage, and they are not available online, which is a shame. In Subarani, everything is online. It was designed as an online book with printed copies, so it was designed as two things together, and that makes a difference in how you think about the presentation. And what we have here is, I think, quite a busy picture, a graphic novel, and as you can see here is our text, some of the text is in speech bubbles and some of the text is in these bits just underneath. Can you see the difference? This one is underlined, rather than red as it was on the CLC, I don't know if that makes a difference, I

haven't though too carefully about that. The meaning of the word is floating above the text, which means that the eye is kept in the Latin rather than going to the bottom of the page and then going back to the top. We know that students have had access problems, I have really poor eyesight for many reasons, I used to have to sit right at the front in my lessons because I couldn't see from anywhere else, but this makes it easier in a sense, because your eye is drawn to the text, not away from the text, and that makes a big difference when you're wanting to make the textual connections across the sentence. Otherwise you're always going back and forth and back and forth. You also get translations to other languages if you want. Similarly, here is a kind of more blank text where you have a picture to help, and again the floating idea. I think it's another interesting thing to think about, in the CLC all that extraneous material, all the visuals and the glossing, that was all taken away in the online version. Subarani keeps it exactly as it appears on the page. Interestingly enough, one of my trainees last year did his research, and found out that the students never looked at any of the stuff on the page apart from the text, even if the picture was directly relevant. And you know what? Very few teachers make any use of any of the pictures or the extra information, they rely purely on the words in the text. When I talk to my English colleagues, they say "What the hell are you playing at? You've got all this help to learn how to read a language, and reading a language involves just as much reading of the pictures, and the page, as it does the words." And this book was designed by people who have masses of experience in writing textbooks for students. So why on earth would they put these things in, if people go and ignore them? So anyway, I think that's an interesting point that there's a lot of stuff on the texts that is not just textual material, and if you're going to design something, we need to think about materials that are FOR reading, as well as pictures that are just kind of randomly stuffed there to fill the page. Similarly, this is the OCR GCSE text, same sort of idea. Of course with the GCSE they just do the text, and you don't have the information. Now I wanted to look very quickly at teacher usage. There's a lot of idea that text is projected on the screen, but I've mentioned already that there's a problem about what the kids are looking at and what the teacher's pointing at. The teacher often annotates the text on the screen, sometimes using IWBs, but there are issues in that not every teacher will have access to the necessary resources. They don't point or use their hands, there's a lot of analysis and writing, but nothing that shows how the sentence works as a whole. I've talked about the lack of supporting images, teachers don't tend to use them and sometimes people complain that Subarani's actually quite difficult, quite busy to look at, so there's some problems that I see with teachers using them. I train teacher, I teach them how to use it, but there are heaps of things they don't always do quite as well as they expect. With students, there's massive dependency on all these things, they're very familiar with them, I'm old enough to remember when the internet was invented and it was an amazing breakthrough to be able to use it whenever you want it at school these days. But, do they pay any attention to the grammar analysis? On the whole, not, and there's a huge debate about whether they should or not. For reading fluency, advocates suggest that grammar analysis is not what you need to do, you need to be able to think about how words relate to each other, but you need to know enough about the grammar to be able to recognise it so you know which words do go with each other, so you kind of don't need to pay attention to analysis, but on the other hand you do need to be aware of it, not quite sure how we're fixing that. And then other issues, when students use it on their own, on their little laptops, or on their iPads or whatever, are they doing it for translating or are they doing it for reading? The CLC and Subarani are reading comprehension, they're not translation books. If you actually read the CLC and Subarani, you will not find the word translation except on very

few occasions, when the texts are very small, very concise, and full of vocabulary that is very well known. Everything else is reading comprehension, which means to say you get the gist, and you start to learn how to read by reading, you start to comprehend by reading, not by translating, that's a different thing. Translating is Un-Latin, in my view. It gets you out of Latin and gets you thinking more about your English. It's a good thing, but it's not learning Latin. Skimming or scanning, we've talked about that before, earlier on today, the difference between them. Vocabulary learning and acquisition, there's a difference between thinking about what the texts are for, they are generally for acquisition of vocabulary. We know that you need to be getting vocabulary in your head between seven and fifteen times depending on the word. So the more you read, the better you get. I just want to point out this final thing here, Coe and Cope, two teachers who worked with me quite extensively, and came out with a bit of research that they presented at the Classical Association conference a few weeks ago, about how much using the parsing tool, or at least the vocabulary discovery tool, the active learner, helped students read more. Who would have thought it? But it's true, say you take a CLC text of nineteen lines, everybody in the class will read nineteen lines in the time that's available. If you don't give them the parsing tool, and you just give them the dictionary, the best ones will do somewhere from seventeen to nineteen lines, and the worst ones will only do one or two lines. Now, how do you get better at reading? You read more. How do you get worse, or how do you stay the same? You don't read very much. So if this method, if using online tools like reading tools is going to be the way forward, and whether it is the way forward it's certainly the practice that seems to be happening a lot, we've got to get kids using it effectively and in a worthwhile way. So getting them to use it to read lots and lots and lots, even if they don't get every single grammar point, even if they don't get every single word, is a good thing, because everybody finishes. When everybody finishes, everybody feels good about themselves, and wants to read more. Can you imagine being a child who comes into every single lesson and never finishes? Never understands what everybody else is laughing at when they get the joke? It must be really depressing. So as a method of getting students engaged it's quite a good one, in respect of how much it actually impacts on their acquisition of vocabulary the jury is out at the moment. In terms of teacher and student practice, we need to do some serious thinking about how we use it to its fullest advantage. So I think those are my main points. Students having to look where? Where are they looking? At the screen, at their iPad, at the whiteboard? How does the teacher annotate it if there isn't enough space and it's all cluttered up with pictures? We know the pictures are important. This is like I said the most important thing, teachers need to think about developing strategies, copying and pointing, to help students see the connections between and within the sentences. And then a lot of this stuff here has been talked about by Daniël Bartelds in the *Journal of Classics Teaching* of which I'm editor, so I know about these things. He wrote an article about how students interpret grammatical knowledge and whether it's got to do with looking at things in the dictionary. The answer is that they don't, much, and we need to think carefully about how kids use that information properly. Anyway, those are just some thoughts, I'm sure you have lots more interesting things to talk about, but that's where I'm going to stop for the moment. I'm sure you have lots more questions than answers, but that's a good thing, because if we had all the answers, life would be really dull. Thank you.

(Applause)

Michael Wuk:

Great, thanks so much Steve. Thanks for also making me feel quite bad about my own teaching and their practise. So next we've got another behemoth in Latin pedagogy, we've got Sam Koon from Haileybury, who is going to be taking us through different forms of reading, in particular intensive and extensive. So whenever you're ready.

## Presentation: Sam Koon, Tools and methods for intensive and extensive reading

Sam Koon:

Thanks so much. So, as Steve mentioned in his talk, I often talk about trying to stay in Latin, but as I'm at a big school now, I thought I wouldn't talk about what I do with my little ones, and I thought I'd focus on my Sixth Formers. So with them, I had three ways of getting them to read, three expectations in my reading. The first one is individual extensive reading. I want them to read as much Latin or Greek as possible, on things that interest them and are going to keep them coming back for more. I challenge them to read at least 500 words of Latin and Greek every day, which means 3500 a week, which is roughly the size of the first Catilinarian speech. If you do that 52 weeks a year, you are getting a lot of Latin. I'm going to try and show you how to do that. The second is when they're in the class, group extensive reading, this is what I'm interested in and they just have to read it, but again the idea is that we will read as much Latin as possible, I try to read hundreds and hundreds of words per lesson. I challenge all my staff, all my teachers, to maximise the work each time. Then finally is the group intensive reading, this is the core text you want, so your A-level or your IB core text. This is the stuff they really need to know, this is the stuff they're going to be examined on, so it's a different type of reading there. The extensive, both individual and group, is to expose them to as much Latin as possible, and therefore, as Steve said, how do you get better at reading? You read more, so that's the theory. So with individual extensive reading, I've got two apps for you, which hopefully the students will find interesting, and you'll immediately download, and everyone else will immediately download. They're both free, I'm a big believer in democratising the classics, let's make things free. This is what I get my students to have on their phones, to have on their iPads, and go away and just use themselves. So the first one is Parallel Plus, it is a scriptural app, so it's the Old Testament and the New Testament, you can have parallel versions of these texts, you can have up to six if you wanted to be really creative. I'm only showing you three, but you can have six different versions of the Bible up there and you can read them side by side. So if you wanted to learn French, get the English version up and then the French and then you can learn like that, but how I do it, generally, is that none of my Greek students come to me without having Latin, so I tend to have these two up. You can have different versions of the Vulgate, this is the 2009 one, and then they're reading the two of them and when they come across a word or a phrase that they don't quite understand, then I move them over to the Latin. The Latin is generally more understandable for them, and so they're not moving from Greek into English, they're moving from Greek into another classical language, and trying to piece it together. If they need it, the English is always there for them as well, so it's a really, really cool app, its completely free. As I said, there's a huge number of languages, great for teaching Greek through Latin, so this is the first I tell them to download. They should just walk around reading the Bible, it's good. As Cressida says, particularly the New Testament, the different levels of Greek is really interesting, some of it's not even very good Greek, but you can sort of make a pathway through the New Testament of getting more complicated Greek, which is great. The second thing is going to change all of your lives. This is an app called Bellerophon and, go download it, it is amazing. So basically, you have one screen, and then you can press that button and you can split your screen, and you have two things, and then you can split both of those again, so you could have four texts up at once. I'm imagining having up here Odyssey book 11, with the English translation there, then down here the Aeneid book 6, and the English translation, so you can compare the two scenes where we meet their mother and father. It's pretty cool. Anyway, this is free, it's a

huge library of Latin, Greek and Hebrew texts, you can use it like the Loeb Classical Library, but you don't have to pay for it. It also has many more texts than the Loeb Classical Library, and I would challenge anyone not to be able to find something that interests them. And you can have the parallel English next to it. Now, I tell my students, which makes them look a bit weird on the bus, to read clause by clause, so what I want them to do is "When, O Catiline, do you mean to cease abusing our patience?" "quo usque tandem abutere Catilina, patientia nostra?", so you're going clause by clause, you're making meaning by reading the English, and you're going over the Latin in the proper Latin word order. So over a few days, over a few weeks, you can have read the whole text, in English and in Latin, you really know it, everyone at university thinks you're great. This is a tool where you can just go and have the entire classical literature app on your phone, and you can download it as well, so you don't need WIFI, you can just be on the Underground and reading as much as you can, so it's really good. That's the first success: individual extensive reading. The second thing, this is what I do in my classes to get them reading as much Latin or Greek as possible, and this is use interlinear translations. There are two types of interlinear translations, the first is this 'ye olde' type, the Hamiltonian interlinears, which are fantastic. You've got all the big names, you've got Cicero, Virgil, Sallust, Caesar, Homer. All of these are free on archives, you can get them, put them on your phone, just read them. What they do though, the Hamiltonians, is they break the word order, so it's kind of jarring the first time you get it. So "Quosque tandem abutere nostrâ patientiâ, Catalina?" should make you scream, but when you get over that jarring effect, what it means is that you can whip through reading as much as you can. The idea is that you're reading the Latin aloud to yourself, that's quite a key thing if you're a student, because if you're reading it in your head you tend to move to the English, you've got to force yourself to read the Latin, but the English is there to support you. In a class situation, it's also a form of individual differentiation, because if you don't know what abutere is, the word is just there, you don't have to show to anybody that you don't know it, everything is fully there and scaffolded, so you can just read through a lot of Latin. The point of that is exposure to these things, it allows you then to have read the first Catilinarian, which everyone should do, it's wonderful. Now I like these, I think they're very useful, but I don't like that it breaks the original word order, that annoys me. The second one of these is the scriptural interlinears. Now, the great thing about people like Cressida, there is a lot of money in scriptural studies, and therefore people have pumped money into it, and though about how we make people read the word in the order that they should be read. These are very cheap, I think this one you can get off Amazon for £23, every single word is glossed underneath it, it's in the right order, so all you do is you read aloud "Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος." And then you are reading the Greek, all the words are there to support you. When it gets more complicated, you have an English translation to the side as well to support you. So these are really good things. Now, if you're not interested in the theology of the New Testament, which is fine, this is just Greek. Just read lots and lots and lots of Greek. Lots of good things using other people's departments, the people particularly in America who put a lot of money into this kind of stuff, so let's make use of it for classicists. Some people say this isn't classical Greek, this is Koine. Fine, most of Greek is Koine, just read it and it will help you to get there. Now I find that making these works if you have something with a relatively simple syntax, so Homer, although I'm not saying Homer's easy, the difficulty of Homer is the vocabulary, not the syntax, so it does work quite nicely, as I will show you. So things like Homer, Eutropius, Augustus' *Res Gestae* do work very well, because you don't actually have to break the word order to make it make sense, as I will try to show you. So, this is something my



colleague, Patrick James, made, which is the first seven lines of the Iliad, and again, he hasn't changed the word order, so it is "μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ" and as you read it below, it makes sense and you are reading the opening lines of Western culture, as they should be, but all the support is there for you. Now, these things are so useful that my colleague teaches them to 12 year olds, so they are reading the opening of the Iliad, which some universities say is too difficult, but my 12 year olds are doing it, and engaging with it, because you just make it happen, so it's good. Once you can pronounce these letters, why not just read all of Greek? So this is one I made of *Res Gestae*, so it's *Res Gestae 1*, and again, this is a text that I try to get all of my GCSE and first year A Level students to read, especially because it links with the textbook, so its really good. All you do is you just read along, I haven't broken the word order, "Annos undeviginti natus exercitum private consilio et private impensa comparavi", so you are reading Augustus' thoughts, Augustus' ideas, and all the support is there. You don't need a teacher, I am there in the room just to go "how great is Augustus?", but you do not need me to help you do this, it's all there. So I've done the first ten chapters, I'm going to do the whole text at some point, but here, at this moment, because I know there's some people online who might be big cheeses, what we need is for more people to do this. If every one of us in the room picked a text that we loved and did that to it, suddenly we're opening up facets for everyone, which is what classics for all should be. At the moment, you have to have texts, you have to go to a library, you have to have someone like me telling you what this is. This is you, on your own, with these words. So a. let's get writing them, and b. let's find a publisher who will publish them and get them out there. So I'm trying to, as I say rather grandly, to democratise classical scholarship. Let's not just have it in a few universities. I realise Lincoln is doing a great thing with their Classical Studies course, opening it up to people, but why can't we open it up to everybody? So, that's my extensive in class reading, and then the final thing I want to, I realise I'm going on a bit, sorry, is touching on a bit about tiering, as Cressida said. So these are the texts that I'm having to do as core, and what we do is we create a tiered reader. The first tier, just like Cressida said, is very simple Latin, and then we have an ORDO, and then we have the real thing, and then we have some questions. I going to just very quickly show you how this works. This is a book that I did with my colleague on the GCSE set text. So GCSE examiners, A Level examiners, possibly you lot when you're examining, want to be thinking about content, so do they know what this thing says; word choice, why has the author picked this word rather than something else; and word position, why have they put it there; that is key to a good bit of critical analysis. So this set text fits that. The first tier is really simple Latin or Greek, the idea is that you can summarise the text or get the idea easily in simple Latin, it's practising your Latin, it's word count. So "haec est via ad fluvium Acherontem", then we have the ORDO which is the original words of Virgil but in the English prose order, "hinc via, quae fert ad undas Tartarei Acherontis". In the previous one we had "ad fluvium" now we have "ad undas" so I would ask students what's the difference? What's happening? Why's he picked that word? This makes Virgil much more readable because it's in the order that your English speaking mind works and reads it in. And then finally you have the poem itself, "hinc via Tartarei quae fert Acherontis ad undas", and you would say why? Why is "undas" at the end, what's going on? So we've looked at what it means, why has he used "undas", waves or something, is it menacing? Why has he put it at the end of line? And now we're having an interesting discussion with the text. Finally then, you have some context questions. Like you were saying earlier, you'd like some questions to frame what I'm supposed to do with this reading, and these are the things you would do. These are the things that you would do, so the questions help you understand the text. I won't go through this next slide,

but if you are interested in this approach for your students, these things are available very cheaply from Amazon. It's pretty cool, but it's a bit mad and medieval, there's Daedalus and Icarus, Pyramus and Thisbe, they're really cheap and really great ways of reading these stories. And then finally, from America, for the IB specifically, all the IB readings that you can have are made in this tiered style. There's a load of stuff out there centred on students, to help them engage with classical literature. Thank you.

(Applause)

Michael Wuk

Thank you so much Sam, that was all very fascinating stuff. I am definitely going to be downloading some of those apps. So, closing us off we have Tom Sims, who is from Nottingham High School, again another behemoth of classics in the area. Also someone I haven't seen in a few years, we did our PhDs together, so it's very nice to be reacquainted here. Tom is going to be talking to us very enigmatically and interestingly on online reading in the age of Instagram, so Tom, whenever you're ready.

Thomas Sims

Thank you. So want to, in my talk, focus on classical civilisation students and also students who might not necessarily be looking at classics as a career. I think really there is still a great value in encouraging them to engage with the classical world, and so my talk will be very much focused on that element. Now all of us in this room very much firmly believe that classical reading and reading about the classical world is something that is really important. In fact, in the words of one of the greatest 21<sup>st</sup> century philosophers, “reading is fundamental”. Now these words, taken out of context, nonetheless really espouse the values that we have as part of our teaching, which is that reading should be something that we embed in our pedagogy, and that we should inspire our students to do. But unfortunately, the theory behind that doesn’t always necessarily translate into reality, and it’s worth looking at what some of the reasons are behind why students don’t always engage with the reading, particularly those who are not focused on classics. First of all, there are multiple distractions. There’s a great book by Oliver Burkeman, ‘4000 Weeks’, that I thoroughly recommend you read, that says, amongst other things, that we have lost the ability to be bored. All of you, with the exception of myself, as Michael found out today, I do not own a mobile phone, all of you have in your pockets a device that means you are instantly stimulated. You’re wanting to move from Facebook, to Instagram, to TikTok, to Snapchat, to whatever. You do not have the ability to be bored anymore. Students are much the same. With a device in their hands, they don’t need to bother really focusing on the reading in front of them, the hard tasks in front of them, they can switch off and do something else instantly. Secondly, we see that students have this idea of a cost benefit analysis in education, while many students are really engaged with the idea of working, and doing work for the sake of doing work, there are others that really look at the sort of balance sheet, so to speak, and focus on how does it benefit me? How does the reading that you’ve put in front of me, benefit me? Linked to that, is it on the exam? This year, or at least the next academic year at Nottingham High School, we’ll be focusing on the theme of curiosity. We want to be digging into why students have that attitude of “is it on the exam?”, and we want to push beyond that to encourage the students to explore areas of the curriculum that interest them. Nonetheless, this is a real and present issue. Finally, the pandemic. Although we are now at least a year post-pandemic, we see it still having a clear impact. I looked at my year 8 students, and some of them do have issues with comprehending texts when they’re engaging with reading, their reading and writing can sometimes be a little behind where we would expect students to be at that age, and so certainly we shouldn’t be immune to the fact that covid is still having a present impact on our students. Now as educators we can take two approaches: we can either bemoan the influence of technology, and I am often on courses where I can guarantee there will be several teachers who are of the opinion that technology is this great inconvenience, that we shouldn’t embrace at all, we should be sticking to our whiteboards and our pens, we should be writing everything down; or alternatively we can embrace these difficulties, we can embed them at the heart of curriculum design, and the essentially try to stimulate reading that way. Technology can certainly help with this. At Nottingham High School, just before covid hit actually, quite fortuitously we were rolling our Google Classroom, so the moment we went into lockdown, within about two or three hours, we were able to get this out, and be doing full live lessons throughout all stages of the pandemic. What I want to do today is to show you this in action, show you how I embed these difficulties as almost foundation principles behind

some of the tasks I set my sixth formers. I'm going to start with year 12 Classical Civilisation, we study 'Imperial Image', included in which is the *Res Gestae*, which is a thoroughly good text, and we explore how Augustus presents himself to his fellow citizens, and how this reception is used beyond his lifetime. Now, A Level Classical Civilisation requires engagement with classical scholarship, this is really broadly defined, and students find this an incredibly tricky thing. The amount of OCR meetings that I sit in on and training courses where I can guarantee the questions are, in no particular order, what do you define as classical scholarship, and how much do I need to include? These are the questions what you'll see on repeat throughout the entire day. Nonetheless, it's quite valid to be exploring what we mean by classical scholarship, and how we might encourage them to engage in it. So as part of this, I decided I was going to set the following task to my year 12 set. I gave them a stretch and challenge task on Propertius' Elegy 3.11, I gave them an abstract of a paper on the Apologia of Propertius, and I gave them some clear instructions. They should read through the abstract, summarise the main arguments, and then think about what evidence the author might use in each stage of his argument, and underneath that I said to provide quotes from Propertius' Elegy 3.11 in support of what the author says. Now in terms of how that task addresses some key issues, first of all, it is a very short task. It's two pages, maximum, and I like to think of this, similar to if you look at a blog post or a news article, and it will tell you this is a two minute read, they do this to get your attention. This is a two minute read, two minutes of your life is all you need to give us. It's straightforward, it's easy, it's to the point. Secondly, it's scholarship, so it fulfils the brief of being on the exam, and therefore to the students it's relevant and beneficial. The students in particular in this class are now studying classics at university, they're looking at law and politics, so they're not really interested in classics for the sake of classics. And it is also a task which gives them structure. It allows them essentially to have some very clear instructions that they're following, that covid might have knocked out of whack, and allows them to feel that they've got that support in taking this task on. Now here are two examples of what the students came up with, and you can see in these instances what they do is they summarise the arguments, and then underneath they provided quotations. So these students have actually provided here some really good examples of exactly what I asked them to do, and then what you can do is you can use this in a variety of ways. You can set this as a starter activity, to have it as a discussion, so you're then building on the reading by making it a relevant part of the lesson. You're essentially introducing it as a habit, that they then know to expect to be part of the class. In these two instances, the students actually then asked for the full length paper, they wanted to see if their predictions were right. You can almost turn it into a little bit of a prediction game, encouraging them to say well, this is what the argument says, this is the evidence that's used, were you correct on that basis? Because you've given them this structure beforehand, when they then see the actual paper, what they're then able to do is to follow the argument in a way that simply producing the paper in front of them and getting them to read the entire thing will not allow them to do. They find that quite a tricky concept. Similarly in these cases, students who are looking at law and PPE were then asking for additional materials. So you can see here how this task, a really straightforward, simple task that just looks like nothing more than homework that they can do if they wish to, has become something that's got them to think about reading and normalise reading in their own learning. The second example I have here is from year 13 Latin and I call this trickle down reading. I always think in this case it's a bit like mirroring the approach of an Instagrammer. As much as I might like to think that I inspire my students, I'm also aware that at the age of 31 I'm not particularly cool, and they're not going

to be following me as I'm reading Terence. So in a way, you kind of need to get your older students to be mirroring, or at least to be producing and undertaking the reading that then students from lower down in the school can then see and be inspired by. A Level Latin students are required to study up to four texts, and revising these can be really tricky. Essentially, you're telling students you need to go through and you need to have in depth knowledge of around a thousand lines of Latin from four different authors, you need to be aware of the background information to these, and you need to be able to analyse both the style and the content of these texts. So I decided, to help my year 13 Latin set revise, to set the following task. I gave them a link to letters 16 and 17 of Heroides, Paris to Helen and vice versa, and I asked them to consider what Paris says to Helen and how she responds to his points, and use this to imagine that Ulysses was writing a letter in response to Penelope. This is part of what a student produced here, you can see that in the first lines we're talking about 'your slow Ulysses', the original, Heroides 1, Ulysses is describes as being slow by Penelope, she accuses him very much of being slow to return to her. Now in this case, what this does first of all is it gives a task which serves students in aiding their revision, because students a lot of the time do hate the idea of having to revise. They see this as a great chore, but in this case I've actually required the student to summarise and boil down the main points of the text, so they can understand the flow of the Heroides for when they come to revise it. So this is really good, being a fun task, they don't realise they're already doing the revision. Second, it's creative, so it stimulates that curiosity as a very structured activity. Read this piece, see what's happening here, mirror it in your own piece of work. Now I took it one step further with my year 9 class. In the summer term, they undertake a project which is called Mythology and the Modern World, and essentially, they take a myth, they research it, and then they adapt it in some way for some way for the modern world, before presenting their findings to the rest of the class. To give you some ideas for example, one groups took the myth of the Amazons, inspired by the fact they were these powerful female figures, and decided to turn this into an anti-discrimination poem. Another group decided they would take Hercules' Twelve Labours and turn it into Hercules' To-Do List, and then produced some cakes with the twelve different items on their to-do list. Now by taking my year 13 Latin class as an example, I can show the examples to my year 9 class. They then are doing reading which is, in essence, based on ancient literature. Although it's not directly taking them there, it allows them to see that there are older students in the school, completing reading of a particularly high level, and doing so in quite a creative manner, and this then encourages them to emulate that example. So were essentially setting up a model by which the year 9s are inspired to research the ancient world, by seeing what older students have done, who they look up to in the school. Now there are obviously drawbacks. By heavily structuring the reading in this way, we might be still encouraging the consumerist mindset, I'm not blind to that fact, but again with the Latin example, that student then wished to read more of Heroides and he asked for that, and in the end the student also asked for parts of Sappho. He was just inspired by the idea of this type of literature. Nonetheless, regardless of whether it encourages the consumerist mindset, reading is still reading, and I think we should value reading in and of itself. In addition, heavily structuring reading does require a lot of input from us as educators, it requires us, at the start at least, if we're going to sow those seeds, to put an awful lot of work in to actually getting those students to do that work. But, as with my year 12 Classical Civilisation class, by the time you've put that work in, you've sown those seeds, you've embedded those discussions, what you end up creating is a lifelong love of reading, and a

desire to explore the classical world beyond the confines of what you've initially set. Thank you.