ANCIENT HISTORY

OP SUBJECT

WHY STUDY ANCIENT HISTORY?
In our everyday lives, including our work, we need to understand situations, identify causes of change, acknowledge the perspectives of others, develop personal values, identify bias and reflect on decisions and judgements. Studying Ancient History develops these skills.

Studying Ancient History helps us to understand humanity by looking at its beginnings, to observe some of the processes of change and continuity that have shaped today’s world.

Because of its strong focus on research, and the effective communication of knowledge and understanding, the Ancient History course will develop the student’s research, writing and oral communication skills.

WHAT IS STUDIED IN ANCIENT HISTORY?
• Archaeology
• Prehistoric peoples (including Australia)
• Ancient civilizations: Egypt, Greece, Rome and the Middle East

These topics are studied as part of a theme. Examples of themes are:
• Palaeolithic and Neolithic cultures
• Archaeology
• Everyday lives of ancient peoples
• Visual arts
• Influence of groups
• Pharaonic power in Egypt
• Government in Greece
• Political centristm in Rome
• Personalities in history

HOW IS ANCIENT HISTORY STUDIED?
Ancient History is studied as a process of inquiry. In each unit of work the following phases will occur:
• orientation (teacher input)
• identification of issues
• framing of relevant research questions or hypotheses
• interpretation, analysis, evaluation and corroboration of evidence
• reaching conclusions supported by evidence

HOW ARE STUDENTS ASSESSED?
Students express their judgments and/or their proficiency in inquiry through:
• recall of information in short answer tests
• responding under test conditions in essay form
• a written assignment or oral presentation, accompanied by a journal of research

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
The following three criteria are used when making judgements on student exit levels of achievement.
Criterion 1: Planning and using an historical research process
Criterion 1 is about planning and putting into effect the procedural and organisational structures of a research task. It involves students in:

- identifying the issue for investigation
- devising, developing and focusing the key research question or hypothesis, and sub-questions
- locating and using primary and secondary sources
- maintaining a record of research
- reflecting on and revising the research process where necessary

Criterion 2: Forming historical knowledge through critical inquiry
Criterion 2 is about the development of historical knowledge and cognitive skills through critical engagement with historical sources. It involves students in:

- identifying the information that is explicit in sources
- understanding the nature of historical sources of evidence, assumptions about the problematic character of historical sources, and the tentative and interpretative qualities of historical knowledge
- analysing what is explicit and implicit in sources, including themes, values and interrelationships within and among sources
- evaluating the worth of sources: assessing the reliability, authenticity, representativeness, relevance and accuracy of the sources and locating value positions, biases, perspectives and standpoints in their historical context
- making decisions about a question or hypothesis: synthesising evidence, reaching a conclusions about a question or hypothesis, and justifying the conclusion.

Criterion 3: Communicating historical knowledge
This criterion is about presenting the results of historical research. It involves students in:

- communicating a knowledge and understanding of
  - historical information
  - concepts
    - change and continuity
    - cause and effect
  - events
  - developments
- producing written and non-written responses in appropriate genres
- producing logically developed and fluent historical arguments, with claims substantiated by sources of evidence or references to evidence
- meeting the requirements for language conventions, referencing, length, scale and scope of responses.

WHO SHOULD STUDY ANCIENT HISTORY?
Students who have an interest in
- people and the development of ideas and attitudes.
- the way the landscape has shaped our way of life.
- stories, mysteries, puzzles and new discoveries.