

The Scholar Ship

"The capacity to learn is a *gift*; the ability to learn is a *skill*; the willingness to learn is a *choice*." - Brian Herbert

"Language learning needn't stop...or start at school"

Former pupil David Crouch (Nelson, 1972) outlines his case for the experience of working abroad and learning another language or two...



When struggling with French at school, I never imagined I would end up spending most of my adult life overseas and conversant in two new languages – German and Japanese. Along the way I've learned that language learning needn't stop at school and it needn't start there – and that a great place to learn is in a country where the language is spoken.

The decline in the number of UK pupils studying a foreign language over the last 20 years is actually a great reason to buck the trend and learn a new language – there are now far fewer people in the UK workforce who can converse with overseas customers and suppliers in their own language. And a basic rule of economics is that when the supply of a commodity falls, its price goes up. Put simply, your job opportunities and earning potential will be much higher if you speak more than one language.

But there are other reasons to consider living overseas for a spell. For a start, learning the language and gaining insights into the culture of another country will challenge the basic assumptions about life you've grown up with and will equip you with the ability to see other people's perspectives and points of view – another important skill that you'll find sadly lacking in many workplaces. And acquiring those language skills is easier than you think!

As an example, Japanese might seem daunting on account of its writing system but it is easy to pronounce and grammatically straightforward, with none of the verb declensions and tenses prevalent in English and many European languages. The Japanese and the Chinese do not feel the need to differentiate between "a car" and "the car"; conversely, like many Europeans, they are astonished that English-speakers use the same word "you" when talking to children and adults or to strangers and loved ones. Experiencing other people questioning things that you take for granted is another great preparation for adult life!

As pupils graduating from school in the next few years you will have opportunities to travel and experience life in other countries that were unthinkable a generation or two ago. While that might make getting there less of a challenge, the experience once you arrive will be just as rewarding. Start by taking a gap year and by planning it and organising it yourself. Consume the language and find work in your host country. Get used to people around you not thinking always as you do.

The time you spend away from the educational system will give you a better understanding of yourself and the kind of work you'd like to do. Go to university and out into the workplace equipped with that experience and you won't look back! Employers love candidates who are used to unfamiliar environments and able to consider new ways of approaching problems. And if you're looking for benefits beyond your own employment prospects, consider that in an age of rising nationalism and populism, you'll be helping to improve mutual understanding.

**Royal Geographical Society
Commendation**

Ayoola Oshiyemi

**PSHE Pupils
of the Month**

Eli Anku
Alyssa Cooper

**King's Ely Inter-School
Essay Competition**

Olivia Shi
Bruce Qi

Upcoming Events



February 3rd
Y9 Taster Lessons
*Pupils preview potential
GCSE subjects*



February 7th & 8th
Inter-House Drama
Festival



February 13th, 1900
Jellicoe Room
Scholars' Dinner
*Guest speaker - Dr James
Grime*

A note to my younger self...

Reflection and advice (offering it and receiving it) remain crucial for self-improvement. We asked some of our Sixth Form scholars what advice they would offer to their 12-year-old selves if they could travel back in time...



Xanthe: "The most important thing is not popularity, grades, looks or achievements. Be happy. Learn not to care about the opinions of others; if it makes you happy, do it!"

Alex: Make sure that you keep on top of the work and the organisation side of things, as well as doing the fun things!

Helena: Learn the value of your time and don't waste a second of your spare time doing anything you don't love.

Lily R: Get into good habits early, because it makes things so much easier; get organised and do pieces of work when they are set.

Jason: Try to get things right first time around so you don't use up time repeating things.

Amelia: You don't need to worry so much about how you feel you look. Keep being kind.

Charlotte: Don't stress so much - things will work out OK in the end!

Freya: It doesn't matter what you want to do in life; whatever it is, make sure that you do it to the absolute best of your ability. The worst feeling is looking back and knowing you could have done more.

Lily M: Don't worry so much, you'll always do your best in the end - parents and teachers will always be proud of you if you do your best.

"THE LAST WORD", WITH THIS EDITION'S SCHOLAR...

Some may argue that the Classical World has no place in our modern society, but in my studies I am finding more and more parallels between present and past to suggest quite the opposite. Current affairs are rooted in Classical influence: Boris Johnson comparing his actions in government to those of Augustus invites study of the 1st Century BC, and in the shadow of Grenfell Tower Juvenal's biting satire on unsafe accommodation for the poor hits just as hard today. This extends to my discovering that much of our everyday language is rooted in Latin. For example, 'satisfaction', coming from 'satis' meaning 'enough' and the verb 'facere' meaning 'to do' results in a word meaning literally to have 'done enough'. Little things like this show, to me at least, that the study of the classical world can be most *satisfactory* indeed.

- Lily (Year 13)

