



PREPARING FOR A-LEVEL

BIOLOGY

Well done on choosing the best A Level to study! Some pupils find the transition from GCSE to A Level Biology challenging. To help make this transition smoother and to give you the best possible start I have prepared this information for you. The support guide contains suggestions for useful websites and web resources that you can use to strengthen your GCSE knowledge and stimulate your enthusiasm in the lead up to starting A Level Biology in September. We do not expect you to teach yourself the A Level Biology syllabus – that is our job!

We follow OCR A Level Biology A (H420)

Practical skills will be examined as part of the A Level exams, there is no coursework. You will receive a Practical Endorsement, which is a pass/fail certificate of 12 practicals (PAGs) you will complete over the course of the A Level. This does not contribute towards your final A Level grade, although you will be tested on your knowledge of these practicals in your exam.

- Year one A Level
- Development of practical skills in Biology – embedded throughout the content of the specification
- Foundations in Biology – Cell structure, biological molecules and cell division
- Exchange and transport – Exchange surfaces, transport in plants and animals
- Biodiversity, evolution and disease – immunity and disease, biodiversity, classification and evolution
- Year two A Level
- Communication, homeostasis and energy – neuronal and hormonal communication, plant and animal responses, photosynthesis and respiration
- Genetics, evolution and ecosystems – cellular control, inheritance, manipulating genomes, cloning and biotechnology, populations and sustainability

Trips

- University of Kent Electron microscope visit L6th
- Ecology field trip Summer 2023: integral part of course, carry out Ecology required practicals and statistics
- University of Kent Genetic engineering visit U6th
- A Level Biology Live conference

Tasks

- Purchase a copy of the CGP book [Head Start to A Level Biology](https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/secondary-books/as-and-a-level/science/biology/bbr72-head-start-to-a-level-biology-with), <https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/secondary-books/as-and-a-level/science/biology/bbr72-head-start-to-a-level-biology-with> - Kindle edition on Amazon or £4.95 to buy as a paper copy.
Work through the book
– it builds upon GCSE knowledge and is very accessible. Ask for help with anything that you find difficult.
- Oxford University press has produced a [GCSE to A Level Biology](http://www.billericayschool.com/assets/Uploads/Files/Curriculum/2020-21-Home-learning/2.-A-Level-Transition-Pack-OCR-Biology.pdf) <http://www.billericayschool.com/assets/Uploads/Files/Curriculum/2020-21-Home-learning/2.-A-Level-Transition-Pack-OCR-Biology.pdf> transition work pack which is excellent to help consolidate working scientifically and maths skills as well as some key biological concepts. The answers are at the end of the pack.
- This is a link to a useful set of [Science GCSE revision videos](https://www.freesciencelessons.co.uk/videos/) <https://www.freesciencelessons.co.uk/videos/> to consolidate weaker areas.
- We also have a [New Scientist online subscription](https://www.newscientist.com/). <https://www.newscientist.com/> The log in email address is sas@stedmunds.org.uk and password is moonlanding. There will be interesting Science and Biology related-articles you can look at.
- A useful document on working scientifically terms <https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/407081-working-scientifically.docx> OCR has produced.
- This is a good [video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wlyUtbn0O5Y) about the inner life of a cell <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wlyUtbn0O5Y>, one of the first topics we study.