

Preparation for A Level Law

Studying 'A' levels is going to be very different from anything you have done before. Despite anything you might read in the newspaper or hear on TV no-one is giving away A levels – they must be worked for and that work will be tough.

Fortunately the work is also going to be incredibly interesting. Being in the Sixth Form will be about studying new subjects, learning new skills and having new experiences. The enjoyment and success you have will be directly linked to the effort you put in and there are many things you can do to prepare.

Watch the TV (I'll bet that isn't what your parents say)

- a) The news will tell you many things about what you can expect in the future. We have recently had a shocking story in the news (news international/phone hacking) and this will have a huge impact on changes in the law in the coming year. Watch **Newsnight** or **Question Time** if you can, but if not, try the early evening news – it's a start.
- b) Not all drama shows are bad (some parents won't agree with that either). Any potential law students could try to switch off Hollyoaks and look at shows like **Law & Order UK**, which is usually quite good at representing the criminal justice system accurately. Some films can also be useful – **The Name of the Father** (Emma Thompson/Daniel Day-Lewis) about the Guildford bombers who were wrongly convicted, **Twelve Angry Men** (Henry Fonda) – about the secret jury room. **This is England** and **Kes** are both films that will encourage you to think about the society we live in.

Read

- a) Start looking at **BBC News** when you log on to the computer, you will read the headlines but then may begin to be interested in some of the stories. It will only take a moment before you go to Facebook or MSN and it is a good habit to form.
- b) Read a good book. Chris Ryan, J K Rowling etc. This means a book you are going to enjoy - it doesn't need to be War and Peace or the size and weight of the telephone directory. Reading is going to be a crucial part of studying 'A' levels so you need to be able to do it well and that means practice. To a large extent it doesn't matter what you read but that you read regularly, don't forget you can pick up lots of interesting facts from a Cheese String or the side of a cereal box.

Equipment

Always be prepared for lessons and study. In September arrive at the Sixth Form with paper and pens and a bag to keep books and files in. This may seem obvious to young adults wanting to take 'A' levels but long experience tells me that the students who turn up late or at the last minute without the correct equipment are the ones who will get the lowest marks.

Summer Task

Research activity

- 1) What is the difference between civil and criminal law? Suggest reasons for why they have been separated and give an example of a civil case and a criminal case. For each case you choose you

need to identify the name, date and court in which it was heard. You also need to include case facts and the decision of the court.

- 2) Draw a diagram to show the formal structure of the criminal courts.
- 3) Draw a second diagram to show the structure of the civil courts.

I look forward to meeting you all in September. Enjoy the holidays.

Mrs V Derbyshire