

STRETCH & CHALLENGE

YEAR 7



THE COTSWOLD SCHOOL

The pursuit of academic excellence and individual achievement within a caring community



Stretch & Challenge in and beyond the classroom

*The Cotswold School provides a broad but **challenging**, traditional curriculum. All subjects are taught by well-qualified specialists, including Oxford and Cambridge graduates in the English, Science, History and Modern Foreign Languages departments and Russell Group graduates in every department. Consistent **excellence of teaching** creates the foundation for our students' outstanding learning and achievement.*

*Each classroom is a 'thinking classroom' and we encourage all learners to aim high and keep improving upon their previous best. We encourage **critical and creative thinking**. Nurturing students' **intrinsic motivation** is key. Independent learners are frequently put 'in the learning pit' to work with intensity and resilience to find solutions to challenging problems. Teachers ask intriguing questions, demand depth of knowledge and stretch students to achieve well in the classroom and beyond. The school is a member of NACE, the National Association for Able Children in Education. This allows us to access subject specific resources for highly able students, as well as collaborate with other schools on 'Stretch and Challenge' initiatives.*

Homework consolidates and extends students' learning, but all departments also set optional 'opportunity' homeworks, which highly able students often choose to undertake to give themselves an interesting additional challenge. Half-termly our librarian produces a 'Learning Opportunities Newsletter', highlighting local and national events and competitions to encourage students to take their learning even further.

This is an extract from the school brochure on provision for our most able, highlighting many of the opportunities pupils at The Cotswold School can embrace during their time here. This brochure can be viewed online at <https://cotswold.gloucs.sch.uk/stretch-and-challenge/>.

The first term of **Year 7** is an exciting time with a lot going on – the residential to Whitemoor Lakes, trips to the Cheltenham Literature Festival and other curriculum trips as well as day to day school life! Pupils in Year 7 have to accustom themselves to life in a large secondary school and cope with the new demands and rigours placed upon them. We appreciate that this is a challenging time for many and we certainly do not want to create extra work, especially at a time when children need time out, possibly more than ever. This booklet aims merely to open their minds to possibilities, when they feel ready to explore them.

What follows is an outline from departments answering subject specific key questions relating to stretch and challenge. Each department has a member of staff with responsibility for monitoring and supporting Highly Able pupils. Please do feel free to contact us if you have any questions and, if it is subject specific, we can put you in touch with the subject representative.

Mrs A Newby, Stretch and Challenge Coordinator

ENGLISH

What attributes *might* a highly able pupil display in English?

- Can comprehend and use ambitious vocabulary
- Has an ability to craft words and phrases that compel the reader
- Demonstrates a high degree of verbal fluency and originality
- Can understand complex ideas to support a convincing argument

How can I stretch my child in English?

- Ask probing/open questions about texts to extend their thinking
- Encourage them to read challenging texts that span different genres and have different purposes
- Enhance their cultural experience outside their usual learning environment

How can I stretch myself in English?

- Attempt challenge activities in lessons and for homework
- Independently consider alternative interpretations of texts
- Pose interesting and challenging questions to the class/ teacher

Ideas for Year 7 Stretch and Challenge:

- Start a book club with your friends, ask each other questions about the plot, the characters and think about how the author has created the story
- Challenge yourself to use a wider vocabulary; use a thesaurus regularly in English lessons to experiment with engaging vocabulary





MATHEMATICS

What attributes *might* a highly able pupil display in Maths?

A highly able mathematician will be capable of responding to unfamiliar problems. They will show resilience, incorporating the skills they have learned previously to try and solve problems

A highly able mathematician understands that answers are boring and methods are interesting. They are able to explain their method with clarity, and understand commonly made mistakes. In maths there are rarely two answers, but almost always more than one method

How can I stretch my child in Maths?

It is essential to focus on **mastery of the content covered**, as opposed to moving on to something new. Deep and secure understanding is vastly more important than working through content at speed

Encourage your child to explain how and why they have arrived at their answer. Question every step until they can confidently explain their method

Look beyond whole, positive numbers. Can your child answer questions with decimals, fractions, negatives, or a combination of all three?

How can I stretch myself in Maths?

Aim to complete as many questions as you can, and try and get stuck at least once a lesson

Always aim to get on to the extension questions, which will test your problem solving and reasoning skills

If you have finished, come up with a way to check your answers. Can you write a similar question to what we have been attempting? How do you make it difficult? When is it easy?

Avoid using a calculator unless it is strictly necessary

Make use of "If I know x , what else do I know?" questioning. (For example, if I know 4×8 , what is 4×80 , 0.4×0.8 , etc.)

Ideas for Year 7 Stretch and Challenge:

Students should be able to instantly recall all multiplication facts up to 12×12 . We will use these facts almost every day from Year 7 onwards. These need to be memorised, as instant recall is important for efficient calculation and pattern spotting.

SCIENCE

What attributes *might* a highly able pupil display in Science?

Drawing links between different topics
Thinking critically about assertions, questioning the evidence behind ideas
Representing data in clear and concise forms
Advanced problem solving
Exceptional recall skills

How can I stretch my child in Science?

Ask your child about what they have been learning, and in particular the evidence for it
Ask them if we have always thought that throughout history
When out and about ask scientific questions about what they are seeing and hearing
Discuss scientific stories that appear in the media, particularly those with an ethical dimension
Check they can recall content covered months/years in the past

How can stretch myself in Science?

When learning new content, think about what the implications are, possibly in different areas of Science
Try to keep going over the work you did weeks and months ago in your mind
Look for scientific stories on the BBC news website or other websites (<https://what-if.xkcd.com/> is fascinating)
Watch some of the great science videos on YouTube
Try to solve problems perfectly—neatly laid out, always with units etc

Ideas for Year 7 Stretch and Challenge:

You have just studied the topic of CSI Bourton. Keep an eye out for Forensic Science in the news.
What evidence has been used in recent court cases?
You have worked on ways to display data. Are there any other you haven't covered in lessons?
What charts can you put on Excel?
You will soon be studying the topic Cafeteria Bacteria. What are bacteria? What diseases do they cause?





MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

What attributes *might* a highly able pupil display in Modern Foreign Languages?

- An ability to spot parallels between different languages & make connections
- An eye for detail and a keenness to make their work accurate
- Aptitude and willingness in using their class grammar notes to manipulate linguistic patterns for their own purpose
- Strong organisational skills and awareness of how they can make progress
- A genuine interest in the culture of the countries where the languages are spoken
- A real willingness to practise the language in class
- A real resilience to puzzle things out
- An ability to assimilate new language efficiently

How can I stretch my child in MFL?

- Encourage them to use only recommended websites when working independently
- Encourage them to proof-read their work some time after having written it
- Encourage them to watch age-appropriate films or television series in the foreign language with subtitles
- Subscribe to a recommended foreign language magazine (please get in touch if you would like some suggestions)
- Get them to teach you!

How can I stretch myself in MFL?

- Proof-read your work some time after having written it
- Regularly consolidate your grammar notes & practise key concepts on [languagesonline](#)
- Challenge yourself to learn new words on your current topic to extend your vocabulary
- Complete as much of the 'Challenge Lotto' as you can
- Use websites recommended to you in ICT MFL to practise your languages as often as you can e.g. [thisislanguagel.com](#) / [linguascopel.com](#) / [conjuguemosl.com](#) / [freerice.org](#) / [funwithlanguages.com](#)
- Ask your teacher for some extension reading material

Ideas for Year 7 Stretch & Challenge:

- Look up words which interest you in a dictionary or on [wordreference.com](#) – can you apply the phonics rules you have been learning in lessons to these new words?
- Do some research on an aspect of the culture of one of the countries where the language is spoken. Could you prepare a quiz for your tutor group / languages lesson?
- Have a look at some age appropriate news articles for language learners: [monquotidien.com](#) ([monquotidien.playbackpresse.fr](#)) (links to Spanish & German from website – [mi semanal.com](#) / [meineweche.com](#))

HISTORY

What attributes *might* a highly able pupil display in History?

Good use of detailed, specific, historical evidence

Good use of a range of historical key terms

Developed explanation, which considers both sides of an argument

Making links and connections between factors

Good understanding and explanation of inferences of historical sources

How can I stretch my child in History?

They can complete extra 'Passport to the Past' tasks, which are explained in the front cover of their exercise books

They can complete additional research on the historical context of the topics studied in class (a list is available from class teachers)

They should consider comparisons between topics and time periods (perhaps to those studied at primary school)

They should complete the challenge questions/sections of homework enquiry tasks to extend their thinking

They should complete challenge/extension questions in lessons (these could be on the PowerPoint slide or given as a laminated card if they ask!

How can I stretch myself in History?

Complete challenge/extension questions in lessons (these could be on the PowerPoint slide or given to you as a laminated card if you ask!)

Consider the relative importance of reasons/factors within your explanation

Consider comparisons between topics and time periods (perhaps to those studied at primary school)

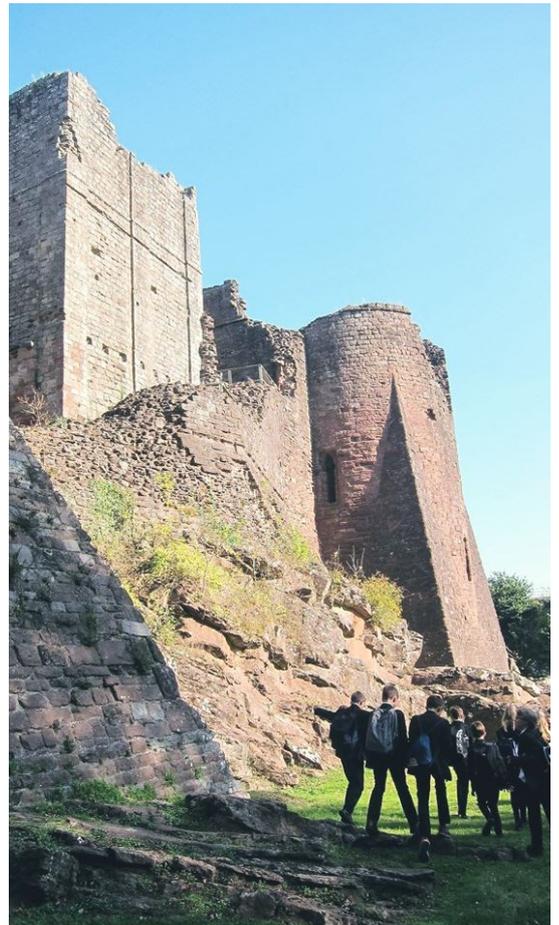
Complete the challenge questions/sections of homework enquiry tasks to extend your thinking

Complete extra 'Passport to the Past' tasks, which are explained in the front cover of your exercise books

Ideas for Year 7 Stretch and Challenge:

Complete 'Passport to the Past' tasks, which are explained in the front cover of their exercise books

Attend Key Stage 3 History Club to study topics outside of the classroom curriculum and debate with peers about these topics





GEOGRAPHY

What attributes *might* a highly able pupil display in Geography?

- Makes synoptic links between topics
- Has excellent wider knowledge of places and processes
- Is able to explain complex processes using accurate terminology
- Is able to think critically about issues and topics
- Can make accurate use of maps, photos, sources and graphs
- Shows resilience and independence

How can I stretch my child in Geography?

- Encourage students to read around the topics they are studying using recent case studies and new articles
- Encourage students to complete challenge and extension activities at home and in school
- Watch the news or read news articles at home and discuss with students
- Have discussions on topics students are studying and critically discuss their ideas and opinions

How can I stretch myself in Geography?

- Complete challenge and extension activities in class and as part of your homework
- Complete wider reading around the topic you are studying and keep up to date with Geography in the news
- Complete further exam practice questions at GCSE and A-Level to build your exam technique
- Have a critical mind set; don't take ideas at face value but challenge and critique them!
- Ask your teacher for ways to challenge yourself further!

Ideas for Year 7 Stretch and Challenge:

- Have a go at the challenge tasks on the coloured sheet in your book at home and in class
- Have a go at the opportunity/challenge homeworks set every week
- Practise your map skills using <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/mapzone/>

PHILOSOPHY, BELIEFS AND ETHICS

What attributes *might* a highly able pupil display in Philosophy, Beliefs and Ethics?

The ability to use subject specific language with ease, confidence and independence
The ability to use quotes and teachings to help explain peoples' opinions and actions
The ability to see how people within the same faith have differing views on ethics and beliefs
The higher skill of evaluating arguments. Seeing their strengths and weaknesses

How can I stretch my child in Philosophy, Beliefs and Ethics?

Encourage your child to watch the news and see how it links to the topics they are covering
Discuss and debate the work they are covering with them to nurture evaluation and critical thinking
Where possible, offer two contesting viewpoints
Read through their work to check that it is thoroughly explained

How can I stretch myself in Philosophy, Beliefs and Ethics?

Complete the stretch and challenge tasks offered in class
Make links between PBE and subjects like History and Geography
Complete the optional homework that your teacher sets
Read philosophical books such as 'Sophie's World' and 'Northern Lights'. Ask the librarian for recommendations
Attend Philosophy Club – Thursday lunchtimes in P2. (Key Stage 3)
Youtube channel 'crash course' for things like 'Crash Course in... Philosophy / Islam/ Buddhism/ Utilitarianism'
See Mrs Holland about borrowing 'Philosophy Now' magazine (Key Stage 4 and 5)
Look at podcasts such as pansycast (Key Stage 5) that cover specific elements of the course

Ideas for Year 7 Stretch and Challenge:

Practise key vocabulary
Develop PQA





DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

What can highly able pupils do in Design and Technology?

Carry out work in Design and Technology lessons in an enthusiastic manner

Take a proactive approach when working in Design and Technology lessons. They actively seek advice from their peers and teachers

Listen to the thoughts and opinions of others and realise the need to accept other views when undertaking product analysis and evaluation work

Show high levels of accuracy and finish applied to designing tasks and manufactured products.

Design and manufacture products of a high standard in all material areas

Have a greater ability to understand the impact of Design and Technology on society

Understand what their role is when working in a team situation

Show problem solving and thinking skills

How can further progress be made in Design and Technology?

Use a range of recommended websites to enhance their knowledge and understanding of design and technology concepts to appreciate the application of Design and Technology within society

Work collaboratively with others to identify and develop Design and Technology links within the subject, across other subjects, and outside the classroom

Extend their knowledge and understanding by carrying out further research into different technologies and design based activities that are beyond the boundaries of the curriculum

Take responsibility for setting achievable targets that will allow them to make further progress in Design and Technology

Incorporate new ideas and skills when undertaking tasks.

Use questioning and dialogue to challenge their own and others' analytical thinking.

Use questions to challenge their own and others' viewpoints when undertaking analysis and evaluation tasks

Use ICT in an imaginative way to present aspects of designing.

Use a variety of software to add to the overall quality of their work

Ideas to help with stretch and challenge in Design and Technology

Visit the library and do some further research on the topic being studied in Design and Technology lessons

Have a look at technology based stories in the newspapers /magazines to get a better insight into how Design and Technology impacts on society

When studying a topic in Design and Technology take note of the key terms used by your teacher during lessons/demonstrations. Find out what they mean in the context of the topic being studied

Look at a range of websites to get a greater understanding of a range of topics. e.g. www.technologystudent.com www.bbc.com/bitesize

ICT & COMPUTER SCIENCE

What attributes might a highly able pupil display in ICT & Computer Science

An ability to solve problems and puzzles methodically and quickly

An ability to code independently in a language of their choice

Extensive interest and knowledge in specific areas of IT such as cybersecurity, artificial intelligence or robotics

A superior ability to create and edit graphics and animation or to skilfully position text and images in publications to produce an effective result

How can I stretch my child in ICT & Computer Science?

Encourage your child to participate in workshops offered by www.Smallpeicetrust.org.uk and competitions such as those offered by www.cybersecuritychallenge.co.uk

Take your child to Bletchley Park, robotic exhibitions and new technology shows

Provide hardware and software to enable your child to develop their skills still further

How can I stretch myself in ICT & Computer Science?

Extend your coding expertise through sites such as www.codecademy.com or www.w3schools.com

Watch documentaries on the latest technical innovations and keep abreast of news articles covering cybersecurity, IT legislation and the effect of technology on jobs, health, the environment, etc

Attend career fairs and talks to understand more about the wide variety of opportunities available in IT

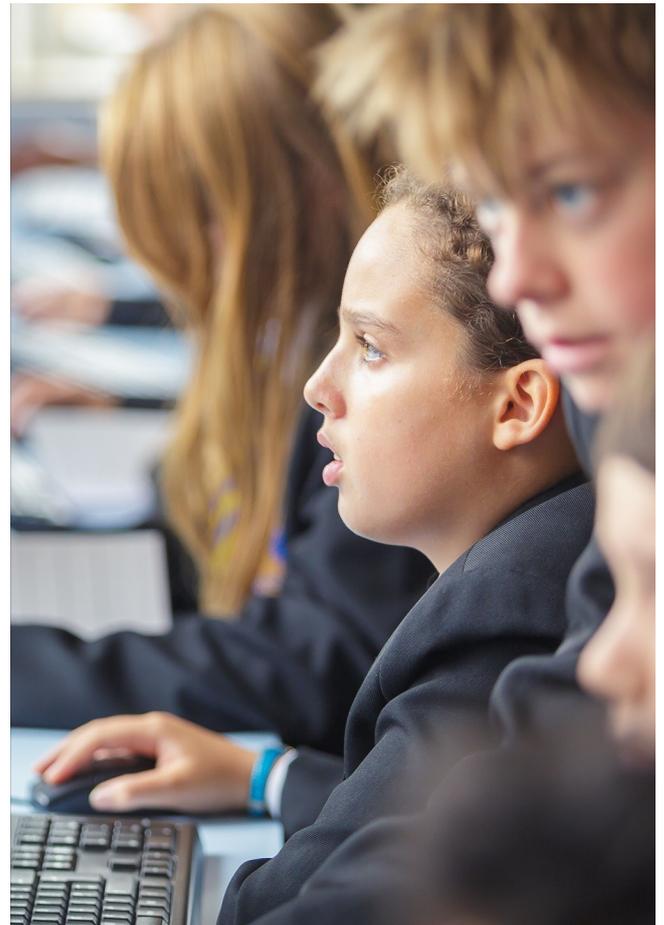
Ideas for Year 7 Stretch & Challenge:

Use www.teachict.com (UserID GL542BD, Password gateway1) to teach yourself python

Watch the videos on www.teachict.com to learn more about computer systems and their component parts

Increase your typing speed by completing homework tasks on the computer whenever possible

Familiarise yourself with the tools available in image editing software and create layered images



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

What attributes might a highly able pupil display in Physical Education?

Perform the basic skills in sport, including running, jumping, throwing and catching consistently to a good standard in a range of sports

Attempt some of the more advanced skills in the sport they are working on

Analyse a performance, describing ways to improve their own and others' techniques

Lead a warm up and small group activities during the lesson

Recall some of the GCSE theory elements being taught throughout year 7's core lessons, applying some knowledge to sporting examples

How can I stretch my child in Physical Education?

Encourage them to attend as many lunchtime and after school clubs as possible to broaden their knowledge in a range of sports

Encourage them to join a local sports club, external to school, to extend their ability in the given sport(s). (If you need assistance with finding a club, please ask a member of the PE department)

Ask them to tell you the GCSE knowledge they have learnt in PE that week

How can I stretch myself in Physical Education?

Attend as many lunch time and after school clubs as possible

Join a local club or clubs to learn more about the sport

Help others in my class to improve their performance

Try to use sporting examples to explain the GCSE knowledge I have learnt in PE

Ideas for Year 7 Stretch & Challenge:

Look at BBC GCSE PE Bitesize to gain more knowledge. There are little quizzes and tests you can complete on there too

Watch competitive performances of the sports you wish to improve in; either live or on the TV/Internet. You are always welcome to come and watch the older years play their fixtures at school!





ART

What skills might a highly able pupil display in Art?

- A strong ability to control tone and record accurate shape when drawing
- A deeper understanding of the ideas behind the artwork of artists studied
- A highly creative and inventive approach to practical tasks
- Confident use of art specific vocabulary in written work
- The ability to combine previous knowledge with new techniques in a personal way

How can I stretch my Highly able child in Art?

- Encourage them to explain their understanding of artistic ideas and techniques and to reflect on their lessons
- Helping students to experiment with art materials at home
- Encouraging them to follow more personalised areas of interest in their artwork
- Supporting pupils to find further inspiration in media such as art books, websites or documentaries (tateshots and Sky arts for example)

How can I stretch myself in Art?

- Practising observational drawing and experimenting with different art materials and processes
- Following the stretch and challenge suggestions that are built into each lesson and each homework
- Discussing ideas with others when creating work to explain ideas and to explore others' opinions
- Visiting galleries outside of school to witness art

Additional ideas for Year 7

- Attend Year 7 Art club on Thursday Lunchtimes
- Comparing the work of two artists together to find similarities and differences
- Looking to go beyond what is taught in lessons to add personalised touches and flourishes to artwork
- Draw, paint and photograph things you are interested in to really enjoy your artwork in your own time
- Bring in your own work. Your art teachers will always be pleased to see your own artwork!



PERFORMING ARTS

In Performing Arts, the stretch and challenge opportunities are more in extra curricular activities - music ensembles, choir, instrumental lessons, drama club, school productions, technical and backstage, costume design etc.

There are always activities to get involved in, which push pupils far beyond what we cover in lesson time, they just need to come to the music corridor or PA3 and see what is happening!





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Celebrating 30 years of outstanding teaching and learning

<https://cotswold.gloucs.sch.uk>

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