



The Newnham Archaeology Prize 2021-2022

The Archaeology Essay Prize is open to all **female students currently in Year 12** (Lower Sixth) at a **UK state school**. It is designed to give students the opportunity to think and write about archaeology in the broad sense in which it is offered at Cambridge, from archaeological science and biological anthropology to heritage and ancient languages.

As archaeology is not formally taught at UK schools, we hope that this essay prize will offer students an opportunity to explore and pursue their interests in this field while developing their independent study and writing skills. Through exposure to the type of work they might be expected to do at Cambridge, we also hope high flying students will be encouraged to consider applying to the University – and hopefully to Newnham. Newnham archaeologists have a long history of being at the forefront of their field, and include Dorothy Garrod (first female Oxbridge Professor), Jane Harrison, Jacquetta Hawkes, and Gertrude Caton Thompson.

Archaeology is a broad subject spanning both the arts and humanities and the sciences so this prize may appeal to students studying a range of subjects - from history, English and sociology to biology and chemistry. We welcome entries from students studying any combination of subjects. Entrants are invited to submit a response to any **one** of the questions on the next page, which should be between 1,500 and 2,500 words (including footnotes and captions). All sources must be appropriately acknowledged and cited, and a bibliography – including websites consulted – should be attached (though excluded from the word count). Up to **four** entries may be submitted per school.

This is the second Archaeology essay competition so, as well as checking 2021's winning Archaeology entries, entrants may find it helpful to look at entries to previous competitions on the [Newnham College website](#), which may be useful as they decide how to answer their chosen question. However, it is to be noted that there are many angles from which to approach each question and those available on the website are only a limited sample. Good essays will present a clear argument using specific examples, but outside of this many different approaches are welcome.

Newnham will be running a programme of essay writing skills advice and guidance webinars in the new year. Dates and information can be found [here](#).

Each of the Newnham Essay Prizes have a first prize of £400, a second prize of £200 and a third prize of £100. Prize money is split 50:50 between the Essay Prize winner and the funding of resources for their school.

The [completed cover sheet](#) must also be submitted. Please ensure that a school/college representative has completed the appropriate section before submission. Entries without an appropriately completed coversheet will be invalid.

Entrants should submit their entry to the webform, found here:
https://cambridge.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cHgegVW9EBBIKTpY

The deadline for submission is **12pm on Friday 11 March 2022**. For any queries not answered here, please contact essayprizes@newn.cam.ac.uk.



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The Archaeology Prize 2021-22: Questions

1. What are the differences between relative and absolute dating methods, and why is dating important for archaeology?
2. Can the study of the past help us in understanding modern climate change?
3. How do archaeologists reconstruct the diets of past peoples, and why is this an important topic of study?