

**Pembroke North Essay Prize 2020**

**Questions**

Please select one of the follow questions, for your chosen category.

**Science**

1. Should scientific research for the sake of research be carried out, even if it has no direct benefit to humanity?
2. In response to the 2020 Coronavirus pandemic, the UK government claimed that it was following '*the science*'. More generally, should the word 'science' ever be used with the definite article?
3. A rice plant has approximately 50,000 protein encoding genes whereas a human only has approximately 23,000. Are you really more 'complex' than a rice plant?
4. Using numerical evidence, discuss what carbon stocks could be enhanced to make the UK carbon neutral.
5. Imagine being a mathematics student living in 2 dimensions. What kind of maths would you be learning in year 12?
6. 'Biology is Chemistry, Chemistry is Physics, Physics is Maths.' Discuss all or any part of this statement.

**Humanities:**

1. What does the history we study tell us about ourselves?
2. Reading is a technology for perspective-taking' (Pinker). Discuss how literature might foster empathy AND/OR any other form of response in its readers.
3. 'пошлость, waldeinsamkeit, sobremesa'. Should untranslatable words be taken as proof that language defines our understanding of, and engagement with, the world around us?
4. When does the past become history?
5. What is the greater barrier between a historian and their understanding of a foreign language source: a lack of knowledge of the language, or a lack of knowledge of the socio-cultural context in which the source was produced?
6. 'Music is the purest form of art' (Tagore). Discuss.

**Social Sciences:**

1. What was the most important cause of the 2008 financial crisis?
2. Can states justifiably refuse entry to migrants seeking to escape poverty?
3. Are governments justified in infringing some fundamental rights to respond to crises such as Covid-19?
4. Am I always under a moral obligation to obey the law, no matter what it tells me I should and shouldn't do?
5. To what extent does the North-South divide exist in the UK, and what are its implications for a post-Covid-19 nation?
6. What impacts has communication technology had on policy making?