A-Level Biology
How to 'read around the subject'

Biology is an endlessly fascinating subject. Reading around it will allow you to get to know the subject, not just the facts!

There is a lot of biological information out there, but the key is to track down easily accessible resources that are at an appropriate depth for you're A-level studies.

If you are asked to read around the subject, you're expected to find and read additional material in support of your learning.

This does not have to be just reading. Listening to podcasts, watching videos, online simulations and attending science festivals and museums are all great ways to discover fascinating new areas of biology and deepen your understanding.

Reading around the subject is important to your overall success because it

- **Helps you to make sense of the topics that you are studying in class.**
- **Keeps you up to date with current biological research.**
- **Informs, inspires and challenges you to find out more.**

Resources to support you in your studies of A-level Biology

Textbooks and Web resources written for our course and endorsed by our exam board AQA - These can be used to make extra notes and provide alternative diagrams, graphs and practice questions.

Recommended Magazines relevant to your course

Biological Sciences Review. This magazine is written specifically for biology students. It is highly readable and **bridges the gap** between your textbooks and scientific journals. Birchwood has a subscription to this magazine.

Big Picture. This is a free magazine produced by the Wellcome Trust. It is written for post 16 Biology students and explores the innovations and implications of cutting edge biomedical science. Visit the website https://www.stem.org.uk/big-picture.

Naked Scientists

Audience interactive radio talk show bought to you by a team of scientists, doctors and communicators. http://www.thenakedscientists.com/

Recommended web resources relevant to your course

1. **Cells Alive** Animations, images and interactives about cell biology. http://www.cellsalive.com
2. **DNA Interactive** Video footage and animations that bring our understanding of DNA replication and expression to life. http://www.dnai.org/
3. **Learn.Genetics** Animations and interactives that bring genetics, bioscience and health to life. http://learn.genetics.utah.edu/
4. **Scientific American** https://www.scientificamerican.com
5. **National Geographic** https://www.nationalgeographic.com
6. **Science Daily** https://www.sciencedaily.com
7. **Any scientific articles in newspapers** e.g **The Guardian** https://www.theguardian.com/science

Resources that can help you to keep up to date with current biological research

1. **New Scientist**. Keeps you up to date with what's new in science. http://www.newscientist.com/
2. **Nature**. This is an international weekly journal of science. http://www.nature.com/
3. **BBC Science and Environment news.** Keep up to date with science and environment news as it happens. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science_and_environment or via the BBC News phone App.
4. **BBC Health news**. This provides breaking news from the world of human health and can also be found on the BBC News App. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health

TED talks

TED: Free presentations from world leading scientists and researchers on a variety of topics. https://www.ted.com/topics/biology

AoB Blog

If you want to try your hand at reading 'papers' (research articles) from a leading scientific journal, the AoB blog is an excellent place to start. The editorial team highlight selected papers from each issue and write a short blog post introducing the paper and giving it some context. http://aobblog.com/

Podcasts:

• Seneca Learning – Revise A-level biology https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/revise-a-level-biology-revision/id1458387799?uo=4

• BBC Science Hour, 5 Live Science Podcast, BBC World Service Discovery) and video lectures.

• Radio 4: Look at the Science and Nature section for 'Now and Next' programmes and their range of podcasts.

• Staircase 12: www.staircase12.org A website put together by University College, Oxford. It contains interviews and book reviews from current students.

Free online biology courses at edX https://www.edx.org/learn/biology