



School Visits to *La casa de Robert Graves*

Teacher's Information Sheet v. Nov 2017

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1. Robert Graves, his house and Mallorca

Together with Fredrick Chopin, George Sand, Archduke Luis Salvador, Joan Miró, and Camilo José Cela, Robert Graves is one of the bastions of European culture who lived on Mallorca. He built his house in 1932 in Deià, spent almost 50 years on the island, and died there in 1985. He is buried in the Deià cemetery. The house is beautifully maintained and its Majorcan, Castilian and British furnishings blend harmoniously together. It was here that Graves wrote his most famous historical novel *I, Claudius*, many of works on myth, poetry, religion, his humorous short stories, and some of his best loved poems.

Deià is at the heart of the Serra de Tramuntana Site, now a UNESCO World Heritage Cultural Landscape. Robert Graves was one of the first people who called for the protection of this breath-taking landscape.

Graves wrote over 140 books of poetry and prose for adults and children. He was elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford University (1961-1966), and was awarded the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry. He was twice on the final list for the Nobel Prize in Literature. Although he turned down political honours ("a poet should be free"), he was proud of being named "Adoptive Son" of Deià.

The Casa de Robert Graves is owned by the Fundació Robert Graves, a public foundation under the *protecció* of the Conselleria de Cultura, Promoció, i Esports del Govern Balear. It is open to the public, and schools are welcome. For schools, the introductory film, the visit, the work-sheets, etc. are in English so that the students get a taste of the English culture, and appreciate how different cultures combine and merge. More information may be found on Robert Graves, the house at: <http://fundaci robertgraves.org/>, and on the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/lacasaderobertgraves>

The present document and resources may be downloaded from:

<https://www.fundaci robertgraves.org/educacion/>

or

http://weib.caib.es/Recursos/casa_robert_graves/inici_.htm

2. Resources for Teachers and Students

The present information sheet and the accompanying resources and work-sheets are designed primarily for **secondary schools**, and recommended for **students with a B1 or B2 equivalent level** of English. A simplified form for the older **primary school** child is also available. The resources include pre-visit preparation; visit worksheet; post-visit exercises. They also include a poem and a short story by Graves which may be used for additional class work. Although primary schools are welcome, they are not encouraged unless the children are tightly monitored, at least one of the teachers makes a risk assessment, and the recommended pupil to teacher ratio is adhered to. Safety can be an issue: there are uneven surfaces and terraces in the garden where children can trip or fall (see the risk assessment sections). We do provide alternative resources which include a treasure hunt and drawing exercises.

Visits by students at *bachillerato* and *selectividad* level studying English language and literature, classics, history or myths are specially welcome, and so are university students. Their teachers/lecturers will have their own special study requirements when visiting the house and which *La casa de Robert Graves* is happy to help them develop.

3. What is provided?

- Teacher's information sheet : The present document.
- Visit Worksheet: a set of questions to guide the students through the visit, based on the Timeline; the House Exhibits; and Garden Elements. The main worksheet is for students in secondary education and contains mostly multiple choice questions. The object of the worksheet is to ensure that the pupils focus on a few of the features in the house without having to bunch up. The students should, however, be encouraged to take in as many features as possible. (A simplified worksheet is also available for older primary school children.)
- Post-visit work-sheet. This is for use in the class-room for post-visit discussion sheet and is aimed at a B2 level. Data sheets for each room are available on request for class work.
- Transcript of the introductory film “**I, Graves**” which the teacher may wish to discuss in class prior to the visit in order to improve comprehension. The pupils will watch the film which is shown in English for secondary schools and would normally be shown in Spanish or Catalan for primary schools.
- Poem ‘The Face in the Mirror’ This is not part of the visit resources but can be used for class work prior or after the visit. It is Robert Graves’s self-description as he shaves one morning. A clip of the poet reading the poem in his mirror is seen during the visit. The accompanying worksheet includes instructions about:
 - Words used for physical description;
 - References to life/historical events.

Students are encouraged to write a poem or at least a description of their own ‘face in the mirror’.

- Short Story: ‘School Life in Majorca’ Again this is not part of the visit resources but can be used for class work prior or after the visit. It is a humorous, five-paragraph story in the form of a letter about two English children’s experiences in 1950s Mallorca. The accompanying worksheet includes instructions about:
 - Vocabulary;
 - Historical content (Franco era);
 - Cultural differences (British vs. Spanish; Majorcan vs. Spanish);
 - School experience in 1950s Majorca;
 - Humour.

Students are encouraged to write a letter about their own experiences about the mixture of different cultures in the school.

4. Pre-visit Preparation & Post-visit Report

Teachers may use the resources mentioned in the previous section in the way they feel most appropriate in order to prepare their students for the visit and for the post-visit feedback report. Preparation of the students prior to the visit will ensure they get the most out of the visit.

Teacher may consider setting their class a short essay about their visit, post it on the school website pages and they may want to add a link to these at

<https://www.facebook.com/lacasaderobertraves>

They can also see what is been posted on the house Facebook pages. The house will not publish any photographs without the school's consent.

5. Familiarization Visits and Risk Assessments

In order to help you plan your school trip and carry out your risk assessment evaluation, we offer free familiarisation visits to teachers (maximum 2 per visit) prior to their visit to La casa de Robert Graves. Visits to the House are not recommended for younger primary school children as they will not understand the film, and the exhibition cases are too high for them.

Risk assessment information

Remember it is the **responsibility of the school representative** to carry out specific risk assessments for any organized visit.

Supervision and Behaviour

- Teachers (or other accompanying adults) remain responsible for the general health and safety of children as at school. It is recommended that at least one adult should be qualified to administer First Aid.
- The House is a public building and teachers should be near their students at all times to supervise and take the lead in the event of an evacuation.
- Behaviour and discipline of pupils during their visit to the House remains the responsibility of teachers and adult supervisors. Please ensure that they understand the aims of the visit and their role. The appropriate teacher-to-student ratio should be respected — **Consult the table below for minimum and recommended adult-pupil ratios.**
- If the behaviour of anyone in your group adversely affects the safety or enjoyment of other visitors or staff, or causes damage to exhibits, this person may be asked to

leave. Please brief your students about appropriate behaviour and have contingency measures in place in case anyone is asked to leave.

- If you have missing pupils or lost property, please contact the Ticket Office at the main gate.
- We suggest you select a meeting point when you arrive (e.g. the main terrace)

Adult-pupil ratios

Edad	mínimo	máximo
Primaria (1er ciclo) 6-8 años	1:8	1:5
Primaria (2º-3er ciclo) 8-12 años	1:10	1:8
Secundaria (1º, 2º ESO) 12-14 años	1:10	1:10
Secundaria (3º, 4º ESO) 14-16 años	1:15	1:10
Post -16	1 supervisor por reserva	1:30

6. Group Sizes - Buses

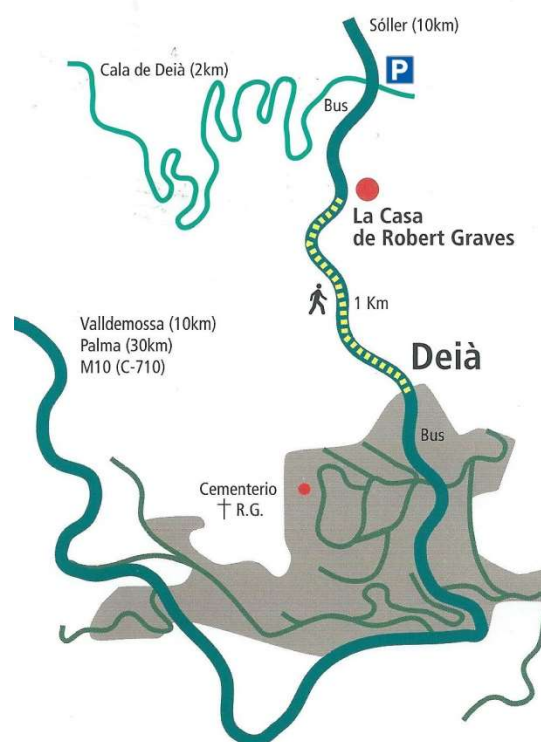
The maximum number of persons that can be accommodated in the auditorium is a bus-load of 55. The visit to *La Casa de Robert Graves* can be combined with a visit to the Deià cemetery where Graves is buried, and to the village itself. This allows two bus-loads to swap activities. In the case of two buses, the bus-load visiting the village **should not** enter at the house until at least 1¼ hours after the first bus-load to allow the first group time to complete the visit prior to the second group arriving from a visit to the village. In possible extreme heat, cold or rainy weather conditions should also be considered while planning visits to the village. Each busload is limited to 1 ½ hours.

With large groups of students (e.g. a full bus – maximum 55 px which is all the auditorium will hold) visiting the house, they first watch the film in the auditorium together. They are then divided to two groups (or classes if that is more convenient). One group/class visits the house while the other group/class studies the “Robert Graves Timeline” and then visits the garden. The students visit the house in **teams of four** with one worksheet between them. Once the first group/class has entered the house (they are asked informal questions by the teacher and the first pupil who answers correctly enters with his/her team), the second group/class comes up to the house. As the first group/class completes the visit to the house they then return to the auditorium to answer questions on the time line and visit the garden if they have not done so already.

After the visit to the house and the completion of the questionnaire both groups meet on the main terrace and depending on the time, will have their *merienda*. In the case of two bus-loads, the swap over then takes place.

7. Visit Logistics

- Opening hours for groups: from 9 a.m.
- Seasonality: visits between November and March and the school can have the exclusive use of the venue.
- For teacher/pupil ratio see section 6. This refers to pupils on-site and not those visiting the village.
- It can be cold, windy and wet in winter. Pupils should have adequate clothing.
- Auditorium: seats a maximum of 55 (total of teachers and pupils).
- The house is small and is the major bottleneck. Only 4-5 students should be in any one room at the same time (other than the exhibition hall).
- To answer the work-sheet pupil should be reminded to bring a clip board/folder and a pen to write with. Writing boards can be borrowed.
- Pupils are required to leave bags in the area provided behind the auditorium.
- Pupils may congregate on the terrace outside the house for their *merienda*, **providing it is not raining.**
- Visit duration: for a full 55 bus allow a minimum of 1½ hours for the auditorium & house visit.
- Add an additional hour for visiting Deià and its cemetery where Graves is buried.
- Price: student rate/groups: € 3.50 per student. Teachers are not charged.
- Payment: please collect the money from the pupils before you arrive. An official invoice will be prepared and sent to the school by our accountants.
- Regional TIB bus service (from Palma *Intercambiador* or from Soller – see below) stops close to *La casa de Robert Graves*.
- Cancellations due to *force majeure* may be changed to a different day.



If you come by hired bus, there is space to park one bus in front of the entrance. For permission to park the bus in front of the house, please check with the Ajuntament de

Deià, (tel. 971 639077). Cars should be left in the public parking lot (5 minutes walk from the entrance).

Should you wish to use the TIB service and you plan to be a group of over 10 persons, please phone the bus company and make a reservation to avoid possible inconveniences with the bus driver. Use the Deià stop. It is a 10 minute walk to the house.

www.tib.org/portal/es/web/ctm/autobus/linia/210

8. Bookings

For bookings please use the form at the bottom of the following page:

<https://www.fundaciobertgraves.org/ca/educacio/>

9. The Visit for Students - How it works

Students bring with them their **‘worksheet’**. The video, the timeline, the garden panels, and the exhibition all contain information which the students are required to find and use to complete the work sheet by the end of their visit. The object is both to force the students to use their English, and also to get the most out of the visit.

Auditorium

The visit starts in the **auditorium** with a 14 minute introductory video in English, “I, Graves” about Robert Graves’s life and work. Much of the footage was filmed in Deià by the BBC in 1959. Optionally the film can be shown in Spanish or Catalan for the primary school children.

As mentioned above, at the end of the documentary, half of the students (up to around 25) go to the house.

The other half stays in the auditorium and studies the 6 metre long **“time line”**, a pictorial panel showing Graves’s life, his books & world events under the years in which these happened; students answer the questions on their work-sheets. Once they complete this task they go into **the garden** to find the answers to more of more of the questions. As soon as the first half has entered the house the second group can congregate at the entrance of the house.

The House

A teacher or responsible person should be at the entrance of the house from the time the film ends to the time the last pupil has entered the house. A second teacher should be in the house with them.

The moment when the first group of students have completed the visit to the house and begin coming down the steps at the back of the house, the second group from the auditorium/garden will be able to enter the house through the front door as indicated by the teacher or the responsible person there.

The house was built in 1932 and almost all the furniture is original (1930s to 1940s). Please avoid touching it. The visit (which can be studied on the map at <http://www.lacasaderobertragraves.org/la-casa/visita-a-la-casa/> includes the:

- Entrance hall,
- Dining-room,
- Kitchen
- Robert Graves's study;
- Press room with its Albion iron manual printing press (1872).
- Laura Riding's study
- Bedroom,
- Exhibition hall:
 - –first editions, letters, memorabilia, etc.;
 - –video recitation of '*The Face in the Mirror*'.
- Beryl Graves's study.

The first group of students congregates at the front door. To avoid crowding in the house, students will be allowed through the door in teams of four. Please do not allow the students to bunch up. One way to avoid them getting bored at the front door is for the teacher to ask them a set of questions based on the film (a list for the teacher is available for this purpose). The student who first answers each question is allowed into the house with his/her team.

Although each room has a plasticized **data sheet** in a holder, these should not be used as it slows down the transit through the house. **Copies of these datasheets can be sent on request to help in the preparation of the visit or for the post-visit work**

Once the first group has moved to the upper floor of the house, those who have been studying the **time-line** and visiting the **garden** can be allowed in through the door with the same system of questions to control the flow. As the first group finishes their visit to the house they exit from the upper floor via the back staircase and return to the auditorium where they study the **time-line** and then go into **the garden** to complete their work-sheets there.

The Garden

The garden is as it was designed in the 1930s. It has labelled plants, a traditional irrigation system, a 1930's electricity generator, a 1920s wheel water pump, and much else.

10. Robert Graves's Relevance to Mallorca

- Protection of the Serra de Tramuntana. Graves was a strong advocate for the preservation of the area's natural and cultural heritage even in the 1960s. It was through his efforts that the houses in villages in the Serra began to be built in stone. In 2011 the *Serra* was finally designated a UNESCO Cultural Landscape Heritage Site, and *La casa de Robert Graves* forms an integral part of it.
- The presence of Robert Graves, already a public figure by the 1930s, brought the attention of his readers and then the media to Mallorca. He attracted the many writers, painters, photographers, musicians, to the village, and international figures came to visit him; this gave Deià its reputation as a cultural centre. As from the end of the 1950s Graves lectured far and wide, and always made a mention of the island, and in 1968 he was named '*Hijo adoptivo de Deià*'. Robert Graves lived in Deià from 1929 to 1985 with only a 10 year break due to the Spanish Civil War and World War II. Since his death in 1985 his house and his grave in Deià have become a focus of pilgrimage for his readers.
- Graves wrote many essays and short stories that show what life was like in Mallorca from the 1930s to the 1960s, and which were published both in the British and American press. A good example is his article "Why I live in Majorca" (1953). His *Complete Short Stories* contains all of Graves's short fiction, and it includes many humorous stories about everyday life in Mallorca.

11. Biography

There are at present no complete biographies of Robert Graves in print. Three have been published and can be acquired second-hand or from a library.

Robert Graves, His Life and Work. Martin Seymour-Smith, Bloomsbury, London 1995

Robert Graves. (In 3 Volumes): I *The Assault Heroic (1895-1926)*; II *The Years with Laura (1926-1940)*; III *The White Goddess (1940-1985)*. By Richard Perceval Graves. Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London. 1986, 1990, 1995.

Robert Graves: Life on the Edge, Miranda Seymour, Doubleday, 1995.

A biographical summary with photographs is posted, both in English and Spanish, at

<https://www.fundaciobertgraves.org/en/topics/biography/>

A more extensive and critical biography is available at

<http://robertgraves.org/trust/index.php?id=2>

At present the best available books in print are Graves's autobiography *GOODBYE TO ALL THAT* written in 1929 when he was 33, and the memoirs by his son William Graves: *WILD OLIVES, Life in Mallorca with Robert Graves*. This covers Robert Graves and life in Mallorca from the 1940s to his death in 1985.

12. Selected Bibliography for older pupils

a. Novel:

Historical novel: *I, Claudius* (famous BBC TV series): Roman Empire c. 40 AD.

—A new form of historical novel in its day consulting ancient sources as new archaeological discoveries

—Ideas of republicanism; contrast with rise of Fascism in Germany at the time of writing.

b. Autobiography:

Graves's avant-garde *Goodbye to All That* (1929) written at the age of 33.

—stark honesty contrasting with the era's hypocritical ethos;

—use of different mediums: personal letters, poems, newspaper articles, etc.;

—Graves's 'cut and paste' writing technique.

c. Myths:

—*The Greek Myths* (1955): imaginative versions of the myths and their classification. (Or *Myths of Ancient Greece, retold for young people* (1961))

—*The Golden Fleece* (1944): a re-telling of the Jason and the Argonauts myth; the foreword is written as a myth set in ancient Mallorca.