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Dear Future Stoic

We are very much looking forward to welcoming you into the School in September!

We would like to ask you all to complete a reading task before you arrive. Please could you source a copy of Daniel Coyle's **The Talent Code**? This is available in paperback through Amazon, or on Kindle. You will need to read chapters 1 to 7 and discuss your reading with your parents or guardians before coming, as part of your preparation for our Vanguard Programme. This programme is designed to get you thinking about how you learn and to build your skills as an independent learner for your time with us at Stowe, for your studies and life beyond. Over the next three years through the Vanguard Programme, you will be encouraged to identify those subjects or activities you are particularly passionate about and to learn to pursue those interests in a focused, deep and scholarly way. You will be building your skills of forward planning, research, communication and reflection, and learning how to become good at those things you want to be good at. It will culminate with an independent project which is worth the equivalent of a GCSE.

Below you will find five questions based on the contents of the book, which we will expect you to have read about and thought through before you arrive. This book explains how people learn and improve their skills in all areas – so it should be as useful for your learning in sport as it is for your academic work! Please don't feel you have to write out your answers to these questions in advance, but it may be wise to take down a few notes on these questions over the summer, as you will be expected to be able to talk and write about your thoughts on these themes in the first few weeks in September when we start the course.

Have a great summer and we hope you enjoy the book!

Dr Julie Potter  
Deputy Head (Academic)

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Questions and Topics from chapters 1-7 of **The Talent Code** to think through before arrival at Stowe:

1. What is myelin, what is its function and why is it so important?
2. Why, according to Coyle, does Brazil produce so many fantastic football players?
3. What is deep practice and why is it so important to developing talent?
4. What are the three rules of deep practice?
5. What factors help to create a 'hotbed' of talent?