



General Certificate of Education

Classical Civilisation

CIV1E Menander and Plautus

Report on the Examination

June examination - 2009 series

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CIV1E Menander and Plautus

Section One

Nearly twice as many candidates attempted Option B, on Plautus' *The Rope*, as Option A, on Menander's *Old Cantankerous*.

Option A

The majority of candidates scored highly on Questions 01, 02 and 03. Knowledge and understanding of Menander's portrayal of Knemon in Question 04 and the nature of Menander's comedy in Question 05 were also very good. Throughout it was apparent that candidates had enjoyed their study of *Old Cantankerous* and developed a good appreciation of its style and the issues it raises.

Option B

Knowledge of *The Rope* was equally strong in Questions 06 and 07. Although the overall standard in Question 08 was not quite as high as in Question 09, there were several good attempts at analysing Plautus' comic techniques in the passage. Many candidates recognised the verbal humour of the tragic parody and were able to visualise the likely comedy as the passage was acted on the Roman stage.

Similarly, the spread of marks in Question 09 was slightly wider than in Question 05, but most candidates were able to deploy a range of knowledge from all three plays to put forward a reasoned evaluation. However, in several cases Alcmena received rather scant attention in proportion to her importance to the plot of *Amphitryo* and the extent to which her character is developed beyond the stereotypical *matrona*.

Section Two

Answers to the two questions were more evenly balanced than in Section 1, with just slightly more candidates opting for Option D.

Option C

The quality of responses to Option C was generally very high. Knowledge and understanding of all four plays were good and much insight was displayed in responses which were almost invariably evaluative in approach.

Option D

Option D produced a wider range of marks than Option C, but some equally strong performances at the top end. These came from the candidates who, putting forward a clear analytical overview, distinguished the plays in which the plot is entirely centred on trickery and deception from those in which these sources of humour play a subsidiary or incidental role. Weaker answers tended to summarise plots without an overall point of view in relation to the question.