



General Certificate of Education

Classical Civilisation

CIV2C Athenian Vase Painting

Report on the Examination

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CIV2C Athenian Vase Painting

Throughout the paper there was abundant evidence that the few candidates entered for this option had very much enjoyed their study of Athenian Vase Painting and had gained useful insights into Athenian art and society. Equally pleasing was the level of analytical detail and sense shown in their responses to the questions. No candidates chose to answer Option B. Equal numbers of candidates attempted the two 30-mark questions; the essays on Euphronios and Euthymides in Question 11 resulted in a slightly higher average mark than did responses to Question 12 on the visual presentation of stories, although sound essays were common on both.

Option A

All candidates correctly identified Achilles and Ajax in 01 and the shape of vase depicted for 03; more impressively nearly all were equally confident in the relative dates of the paintings in 02. Answers to 04 regularly produced full accounts of both strengths and limitations in the Andokides Painter's technique. The debt to black-figure was universally acknowledged as both a strength and a weakness, some candidates speaking of frustration at what the Andokides Painter did not change. Most went on to identify the debt owed to the Andokides Painter by later generations of red-figure painters, while praising him for his basic development of the portrayal of human figures. Some answers could have been more specific on details such as musculature and facial expression, but all made at least general reference to these key points. Question 05 encouraged a more detailed look at black-figure painting, and most candidates again took full opportunity to evaluate both strengths and weaknesses, basing their responses on a fair range of vases to support the assistance given by Photograph A. Many candidates spoke of symmetry as a key strength, backing the assertion with good detail from at least two vases. The limitations imposed on the portrayal of the human form by incision were noted, but often a balancing argument was constructed by stressing other priorities closer to the painter's heart, creation of atmosphere and integration into the shape of the pot, for example.

Option C

Many of the strengths exhibited in answers to Question 05 were again apparent here. All candidates demonstrated a sound basic knowledge of the contributions of Euphronios and Euthymides to their period, in particular their move towards naturalism. Most were also clear about the variations in style between these Pioneers, particularly in their approaches to human anatomy. The best answers were illustrated with a range of specific examples. All candidates used at least one vase for each painter to back their arguments. Equally pleasing were the attempts to set the pair into their chronological and artistic contexts; all answers showed understanding of their place in the development of red-figure painting, with the strongest candidates employing specific examples of paintings by earlier and later artists to illustrate both the sense of continuity and the points of progression typical of the Pioneers. Analysis and evaluation were built into answers throughout, rather than tagged on as afterthoughts. The answers were a pleasure to read.

Option D

Most candidates made a good attempt to adopt an evaluative approach, resulting in all answers reaching at least Level 4 for explaining how successfully different types of stories were depicted on vases. Some candidates struggled a little to find a framework, initially choosing a fairly random selection of stories upon which to focus; invariably, however, the degree of detail expounded in these answers was considerable, and the arguments often very convincing. The best answers introduced a developmental element, either using specific examples to compare and contrast the problems and opportunities offered by black-figure and red-figure (and occasionally white-ground) techniques, or grouping by subject, for example mythological stories

and/or social events; attempts to interweave these two approaches resulted in some highly commendable answers. Again, it was pleasing to see the wide range of paintings which had clearly been studied in depth by all candidates.