



General Certificate of Education

Classical Civilisation

CIV2D Athenian Imperialism

Report on the Examination

June examination - 2009 series

This Report on the Examination uses the [new numbering system](#)

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Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

CIV2D Athenian Imperialism

Candidates had clearly enjoyed their study of this topic and usually remembered the narrative events quite well. More variable, however, was their ability to produce more than a general overview; in many essays a range of specific detail would have led to far more convincing arguments. This was particularly true of the questions relating to inscriptions. Performance on both sets of short answer questions was similar, while the ten-mark evaluation of changes in the League (in Question 04) was generally better answered than the equivalent question about the speeches at Camarina. In each case there was a good range of material in the passages set which candidates sometimes ignored to their cost. Question 09 was generally much better answered than the equivalent question, 05; it appeared that the more narrative demands of the former gave candidates an easier framework to support their response. In Section 2, Question 10 produced a pleasing number of very good essays scoring Level 4 or 5; there were fewer excellent responses to Question 11, but plenty of sound essays were seen.

Option A

Recall of the information required for Questions 01, 02 and 03 was generally good with no significant recurring problems. Answers to Question 04, on the other hand, often failed to make good use of the information contained in the set passages. The apparently one-sided nature of the arrangements in both was widely noted, but few candidates ventured an opinion in support of the tightening-up illustrated in the Kleinias Decree. Those candidates scored highest who focused on the precise wording of both decrees, quoting directly and analysing how each point may or may not have represented a change. There were also a large number of very general answers to Question 05: these inscriptions are, as some candidates observed, difficult to interpret for a number of reasons, and credit was given to those students noting this, but the inscriptions named in the bullet-points are prescribed for study and should be known in some detail. The Coinage Decree was generally well understood, but few candidates made use of the sections of the Oath of the Khalkidians and Kleinias Decree which had been omitted, often simply paraphrasing their answer to 04. There are positive promises made to Khalkis, for example, while the later part of the Kleinias Decree does include safeguards for the allies as well as for Athens. This side of the issue was rarely raised.

Option B

In Question 06 a number of candidates were a little vague on events leading **directly** to the debate, focusing instead on the wider picture. Overall, though, most candidates scored at least one mark on this question. Question 07, which required recall of part of one of the set speeches, was better answered. As with the other 10-mark question, a number of candidates attempting Question 08 kept their answers very general, often repeating one point in several ways. In answers reaching the highest level, identification of key words and expressions from the set passages went hand-in-hand with sensible discussion of the clear differences in approach of the speakers. Question 09 was answered much better. A number of candidates combined a full account of the allies' frustrations before the Sicilian expedition with a sensible explanation of the domestic issues in Athens and how these affected her performance in Sicily; they then went on to tie in the actions of Persia and Sparta with opportunism by the allies and present a balanced response to the question. Weaker scripts revealed a degree of confusion over these admittedly complex themes.

Option C

Most candidates seemed reasonably secure with this question, which again demanded a clear chronological framework and gave the opportunity for continuous evaluation. The background facts were usually well remembered, although there were a small number of really poor answers, suggesting a lack of preparation. Many candidates reached Level 4 by providing a clear but fairly basic view of stage-by-stage change. The relatively few Level 5 answers introduced a degree of 'grey' by discussing from both sides of the argument, whether, for example, the attack on the pirate base of Scyros constituted a legitimate target given the terms of the League. The strongest answers looked at where and when the aims of the allies could be seen as synonymous with those of Athens, even when targets were not necessarily Persian. Candidates who comment on the reliability or otherwise of Thucydides as a source would be well advised to integrate this into the main body of their argument, rather than produce a general paragraph tagged on near the end (and often contradicting, in part at least, the conclusion which followed).

Option D

This question was less popular than Question 10. There were far fewer high-level performances, perhaps resulting from the need for candidates to create a framework to support the answer. Additionally, a successful response required a detailed understanding of each of the set speeches. Most answers showed at least a basic knowledge of the tone of these; some candidates went on to quote, directly or indirectly, from key passages to back up the thrust of their argument, employing a chronological framework to indicate changes in emphasis according to the political situation at a particular time; these essays gained the higher level marks. The contrasting views of Cleon and Diodotus were often well handled; many references to the other speeches, however, were restricted to a general summary, on occasion attached to one or other of the events listed in the bullet points. These speeches comprise the majority of the prescribed reading for this topic. As with the inscriptions in Question 05, they really need to be known in some detail.