



**General Certificate of Education  
June 2011**

**Classical Civilisation**

**CIV3A**

**Unit 3A    *Mycenaean Civilisation***

**Exemplar Script 2  
Grade A 59/75**

## SECTION 1

### Option A

- 01 What name is usually given to the particular tomb illustrated in the drawing above? Give its site and approximate date.**

The 'Treasury of Atreus' or 'Tomb of Agamemnon' [1], Mycenae [1] c. 1400-1200 BC [1].

(3 marks)

#### Response

Tomb of clytumneshra at Mycenae. Approximate date 1400BC.

#### Comment

Date and site are given correctly, but the name of the structure is wrong

**2 marks**

- 02 What are the conventional names given to this type of tomb and to the feature labelled 1 in the drawing?**

Tholos tomb or beehive tomb [1] *dromos* [1].

(2 marks)

#### Response

The conventional name is a tholos tomb, the feature is a dromos.

#### Comment

Both the answers here are correct.

**2 marks**

- 03 How successfully has the architect solved the problems of constructing this type of tomb?**

The answer may include:

- monumental architecture of very large stones (Cyclopean masonry); long *dromos* leading to imposing archway with relieving triangle, originally decorated with attached columns and carving – other examples include the 'tomb of Clytemnestra'
- comparison with the Lion Gate for form and resemblance to the approaches and constructional features of defensive sites
- simple but effective principles – size makes it difficult to destroy or deconstruct
- corbelled construction

**Response**

When constructing this tomb the architect used a small wall of mud or stone to stop the tomb from collapsing during construction. This indicates that many, maybe smaller attempts had been made before this tomb, the largest and best preserved, was built. The idea that these tombs were constructed after a planning process or maybe through trial and error is emphasised by the mathematical accuracy to which it is built. The corbelling on the roof would have been very difficult to stop from collapsing, but there is some evidence for a structure which held the roof in place during construction.

The fact that the tomb was cut into the hillside gave some support to the structure and also allowed it to be easily covered over after completion. The small wall around the outside not only marked where the tomb was but help to hold the covering earth in place.

**Comment**

A short answer, which shows knowledge of the mud lining, though not of its waterproofing purpose, corbelling, cutting into the hillside, and the retaining wall. The candidate comments on the possible design and planning process. A level 3 answer, which would have achieved a higher mark with informed discussion of the dromos and the door construction.

**Level 3****6 marks**

- 04 How important are the structural remains at Mycenae, other than those of graves, to our understanding of Mycenaean society? Evaluate the advantages and limitations of this kind of evidence.**

*(20 marks)***Level 5** Demonstrates

- well chosen, accurate and relevant knowledge covering most of the central aspects of the question
- coherent understanding of the central aspects of the question
- ability to sustain an argument which
- has an almost wholly analytical and/or evaluative focus,
- responds to the precise terms of the question,
- effectively links comment to detail,
- has a clear structure
- reaches a reasoned conclusion
- is clear and coherent, using appropriate, accurate language and
- makes use of specialist vocabulary when appropriate.

**19-20**

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| <b>Level 4</b> | <p>Demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• generally adequate accurate and relevant knowledge covering many of the central aspects of the question</li> <li>• understanding of many of the central aspects of the question</li> <li>• ability to develop an argument which                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>has a generally analytical and/or evaluative focus,</li> <li>is broadly appropriate to the question,</li> <li>mainly supports comment with detail and</li> <li>has a discernible structure</li> </ul> </li> <li>is generally clear and coherent, using appropriate, generally accurate language and</li> <li>generally makes use of specialist vocabulary when appropriate.</li> </ul> | <b>14-18</b> |
| <b>Level 3</b> | <p>Demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a range of accurate and relevant knowledge</li> <li>• some understanding of some aspects of the question</li> <li>• some evidence of analysis and/or evaluation appropriate to the question</li> <li>• some ability to structure a response using appropriate language, although with some faults of spelling, punctuation and grammar</li> <li>• some ability to use specialist vocabulary when appropriate.</li> </ul>  | <b>9-13</b>  |
| <b>Level 2</b> | <p>Demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>either</b> a range of accurate and relevant knowledge</li> <li>• <b>or</b> some relevant opinions with inadequate accurate knowledge to support them</li> <li>• <b>and</b> sufficient clarity, although there may be more widespread faults of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>   | <b>5-8</b>   |
| <b>Level 1</b> | <p>Demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>either</b> some patchy, accurate and relevant knowledge</li> <li>• <b>or</b> an occasional attempt to make a relevant comment with no accurate knowledge to support it</li> <li>• <b>and</b> little clarity; there may be widespread faults of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>   | <b>1-4</b>   |

**Response**

The structural remains at Mycenae are incredibly important to our understanding of Mycenaean society. The advantages are that we can see which type of buildings are necessary for the Mycenae's, be they religious or military. The limitations are that we cannot always determine the usage of every building with any certainty. The most striking structural remains at Mycenae are the cyclopean walls, named for their sheer size. The walls are likely to be for defensive purposes, though we cannot be absolutely sure when cross referenced to other sites, Tiryns and Gla also possess great cyclopiian walls. It is possible then, that the sites were trying to look as grand and spectacular as possible, rather than for defensive means. Evidence of this is shown through the Lion Gate at Mycenae. There are no defensive attribute to its eloquent design, therefore it is purely aesthetic. On the other hand, the cyclopiian walls were built late, around 1400BC, were followed by further fortification to the water cistern, preventing the water supply from being contaminated by an enemy. This happened in around 1300BC, similarly to when Tiryns protected their water supply. This gives evidence for an imminent, or ongoing, attack on the two cities, hitting at the possibility of a warrior society.

Another common structure across the Mycenaean world is the Megaron. They can be found at Mycenae, Tiryns and Pylos, highlighting that it is an important building. The limitation of the Megaron is that we can only speculate at what it was for. There is always a throne on the right side for example, which could mean there was a monarchy, making the Mycenae's a hierarchical society. We know from Linear B tablets at Pylos that there was a wa-na-ka, it is possible that the throne may belong to him. Another potential usage of the Megaron is for religious purposes. Evidence of religion is centered around the hearth, present in the centre of all Megaron. It is considered too large for cooking, therefore linking to some force of sacrificial burning. There are channels along the floor of the Megaron, which could be used to pour libations or drain away sacrificial blood. The throne may even have been reserved for a God to sit on. All of this is evidence for a very religion orientated society. Which can be further suggested by the cult centre at Mycenae. It is linked to the Megaron via a pathway, which may suggest a similar purpose. The cult centre housed idols, one on display with many more in storage. These may have been worshiped one at a time, before being swapped with the next idol. There were frescoes on the walls which are linked to religion one of a procession of creates possibly donkeys, standing up and in line. There are similar depictions of this procession on a fresco at Tiryns, as well as on the Daemon ring. It is speculated that it could be mythological, or perhaps a ritual festival where the Mycenaean's dressed as animals. There is another, giant fresco at the cult centre, of three woman, two wielding weapons, and one with composite creature likened to a griffin. It is suggested to be a fresco of goddesses, because Mycenaean women did not likely have elaborately decorated weapons, they are not associated with war. The women are very eloquently dressed with two small male figures in the background, possibly to highlight the immense size of the women. The griffin is a motif seen in other Mycenaean pieces, along with composite creatures in general, suggesting a cult worship. Limitations of the cult centre are that we do not know who or how they worshiped.

Overall, the structural remains at Mycenae are very important to our understanding of Mycenae society. The advantages are that there is enough remains at the main site to speculate how the society was run. The limitation is that we cannot put it into context, and there is still so much evidence yet to be uncovered.

**Comment**

This answer discusses the defensive walls at Mycenae, making a case for its main purpose as a prodigy building rather than necessarily a primarily defensive one. It cites parallels with Gla and Tiryns, and mentions the protected water-supply. It then moves to a discussion of the palace, which concentrates on the megaron and tries to make a rather confused case for it as a religious centre rather than a governmental one, linking it with the cult centre, and describing some of the frescoes. There is enough knowledge of evidence and interpretation to justify 14 marks, but it would have improved the answer if there was further argument demonstrating knowledge and understanding of the storage spaces and non-palatial remains on the site, and of the relationship between the site and its surrounding landscape and road system.

**Level 4****14 marks****Option D**

**11 Judging from the archaeological evidence you have studied, how important do you consider seafaring and overseas trade to the development of Mycenaean civilisation?**

**(40 marks)**

This is intended to trigger discussion of evidence for e.g.

- the geographical spread of Mycenaean trading activity
- the commodities they used
- the luxuries they wanted e.g. gold, amber, bronze weapons, objects of glass and ivory
- the evidence provided by foreign objects such as grave-goods
- later local adaptation or acquired expertise
- debts to the material cultures of Crete, Egypt etc.
- finds of Mycenaean objects elsewhere

A good answer will be aware of the problems of separating the native Mycenaean from the foreign, and also of the problems of discussing trade when most of the evidence is the end-product.

**Level** Demonstrates**5**

- well chosen, accurate and relevant knowledge from different sources which thoroughly covers the central aspects of the question
- coherent and perceptive understanding of the links between the central aspects of the question and the values of the classical world
- ability to sustain an argument which
  - is explicitly comparative,
  - has an almost wholly analytical and/or evaluative focus,
  - responds to the precise terms of the question,
  - fluently links comment to detail,
  - has a clear and logical structure
  - reaches a reasoned conclusion
  - is clear and coherent, using appropriate, accurate language
  - and
  - makes use of specialist vocabulary when appropriate.

**37-40**

|                |  |              |
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| <b>Level 4</b> | <p>Demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• generally adequate, accurate and relevant knowledge from different sources which covers many of the central aspects of the question</li> <li>• sound understanding of many of the central aspects of the question, including the values implicit in the material under discussion</li> <li>• ability to develop an argument which                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>makes connections and comparisons,</li> <li>has a generally analytical and/or evaluative focus,</li> <li>is broadly appropriate to the question,</li> <li>mainly supports comment with detail and</li> <li>has a discernible structure</li> <li>is generally clear and coherent, using appropriate, generally accurate language and</li> <li>generally makes use of specialist vocabulary when appropriate.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <b>27-36</b> |
| <b>Level 3</b> | <p>Demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a range of accurate and relevant knowledge from different sources</li> <li>• some understanding of some aspects of the question, including some awareness of classical values</li> <li>• some evidence of analysis and/or evaluation appropriate to the question</li> <li>• some ability to structure a response using appropriate language, although with some faults of spelling, punctuation and grammar</li> <li>• some ability to use specialist vocabulary when appropriate.</li> </ul>   | <b>17-26</b> |
| <b>Level 2</b> | <p>Demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>either</b> a range of accurate and relevant knowledge</li> <li>• <b>or</b> some relevant opinions with inadequate accurate knowledge to support them</li> <li>• <b>and</b> sufficient clarity, although there may be more widespread faults of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>   | <b>8-16</b>  |
| <b>Level 1</b> | <p>Demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>either</b> some patchy, accurate and relevant knowledge</li> <li>• <b>or</b> an occasional attempt to make a relevant comment with no accurate knowledge to support it</li> <li>• <b>and</b> little clarity; there may be widespread faults of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>   | <b>1-7</b>   |

**Response**

The archaeological evidence from the Mycenaean civilisation suggests that seafaring and over seas trade was important to the civilisation however there are some reservations.

The shipwreck at Cape Gelidonya (c1225BC) excavated by George Bass was a monumental discovery in the archaeological evidence to suggest that the Mycenaeans were a trading civilisation. It was believed that the inhabitants of Mycenae, Tiryns and Pylos were making connections to the wider world due to the artefacts found in Grave Circles A and B at Mycenae and other foreign swade objects and materials such as gold found in the citadels. The ship found at Cape Gelidonya was originally thought to be Canaanite however Bass revised his theory on a recent trip and concludes that it was Cypriot. Mycenaean objects were found on the ship such as stirrup jars which incidentally were found all over the surrounding countries of the Mediterranean and as far as the Black Sea. The ship was a merchant ship which collected scrap metals such as a bronze plough share and probably visited coastal cities in order to collect metal and reuse it. The Mycenaeans obviously used the ship and others like it to extent its trading opportunities and consequently Mycenaean stirrup jars and pots have been found especially in Crete. This increase of trade benefited the civilisation by bringing in much wealth.

The difference that trade made to the Mycenaeans can be seen in the Grave Circles at Mycenae. Around 1650BC- 1550BC the inhabitants had some wealth and trading contacts shown by the rock crystal duck found in Grave Omicron of Grave Circle B which had Egyptian influence. In contrast Grave Circle A had much more wealthy objects such as the fine gold death masks c1550BC and the gold shroud ornaments of the same period. The wealth of the grave also corresponds with the diet of bodies, as analysis of the bones have shown the introduction of sea food into the diet of the elite. Fish and crustaceans were eaten by these in Grave Circle A c1600 – 1450BC and not by those in Grave Circle B. This suggests that trading overseas was very important to the increase in wealth of the Mycenaeans and also gave a variation in their diet.

On the other hand the Linear B tablets found at Pylos do not record any trading activities. The administrative records were found by Carl Blegen in the Archive Room at Pylos (c1200BC) and the 6000 tablets were preserved by a devastating fire which signalled the decline of the civilisation. This means that the records only are from the last few months of the civilisation therefore if the city was in decline then they most likely had other duties to be attending other than trading. Phrases such as “thus the coast guards are watching the sea” suggest a fear from invaders, however this may be a yearly precaution during the month of Plowistos the sailing month. Similarly the records account for many shepherds’ flocks which suggest that daily jobs were continuing which leaves the question again of why there are no ships recorded. The lack of Mycenaean shipwrecks suggest that the Mycenaean were not as extensive traders as once thought and perhaps there were not dominating the seas. Another reason must allow therefore for the development of the civilisation.

On the other hand more evidence in the palace at Pylos for manufacturing trading products suggest that the Mycenaeans did contribute to the development of society. The rooms behind the throne room were for making large quantities of perfumed olive oil. The quantity made was on such a large scale that archaeologists believe that it was for trade. Mycenaean stirrup jars found in the Uluburun shipwreck (c1306BC) contained ingredients made from olive oil. The trading of olive oil and other products must have contributed to the increase of wealth at Pylos. Moreover seafaring in general must have been an important past time to the Pylians as a port was created by them when they diverted the Selos River c1300BC.



In contrast the situation of Mycenea does not lend itself to be the site of a seafaring civilisation. The Citadel was far from the coast unlike Tiryns and Pylos. Other activities took place at Mycenae as shown by the frescoes on the walls such as the Battle Fresco and the Throne Room and the Lady of Mycenae in the house of the High Priest (both c13BC). The Mycenaeans valued other past times as suggested by the importance of the cult centre at Mycenae which was rebuilt after an earthquake and incorporated into the citadel walls c1250BC. This suggests that the civilisation developed from other areas of society including farming and religion.

The extent of Minoan influence however, found in the Grave Circles at Mycenae, plus the frescoes at all three main sites suggest that it was the Minoans who lived on the trading island of Crete who contributed to the development of the artistic creations of the Mycenaeans. The flourishing started c1600BC and can be seen in Grave Circle B and the gold shroud ornaments. Moreover the gold shroud ornaments in Grave Circle A include images of double headed axes and sacral horns which were Minoan religious symbols which must have passed onto the Mycenaeans through trade. The Minoan influence can be seen in the Vapheio Cups (c1500-1450BC) as one cup, the peaceful cup is overtly Minoan due to the naturalistic style. This cup is contrasted by the 'violent' cup which has been attributed to a Mycenaean craftsman who was heavily influenced by the style of the Minoan made 'peaceful' cup. The violent cup shows three bulls violently attacking a group of men, and falling dramatically to the ground. Moreover Minoan influence can be seen in the dresses of many of the women on the frescoes, such as the fresco of three ladies in the room of the fresco in the cult centre of Mycenae (c 13BC). Further this flared skirt can also be seen in the Great Goddess King (c1500BC). The influence of the Minoans greatly contributed to the flourishing of art of the Mycenaeans during the early part of the civilisation, however at least Crete's downfall c1450BC, the Mycenaean's used less Minoan religious iconography but continued to trade.

The archaeological evidence to suggest the Mycenaeans were a seafaring and trading civilisation is extensive. On the other hand lacking evidence in Linear B and the situation of Mycenae suggests otherwise. However the wealth and introduction of new materials into the Mycenaean society c1550bc onwards attributes the great increase in wealth to trading. Ironically it is a possibility that the Mycenaeans were destroyed by pirates searching for wealth therefore the development and the downfall of the civilisation may have been due to trading.

### Comment

This essay begins by showing knowledge of the Gelidonya wreck, and of its contents, and of possible interpretations of the material. It then moves towards evidence of wealth and trading contacts from the Shaft Graves at Mycenae, making the valuable point that Circles A and B provide different emphases. There follow thoughts about the Linear B records from Pylos of sailing and a decline in naval activity, contrasted with the contents of the store-rooms at Pylos, and the olive-oil trade; the contents of the Uluburun wreck are cited as further evidence of this lucrative product and its export. Mycenae shows less evidence of active seafaring and trade, but the candidate does explore the influence of Cretan contacts in the contents of the Grave circles. The answer shows considerable knowledge of its evidential material, which deserves a level 4 mark. It would have achieved level 5 if the argument had been extended to discuss travelling skills, and our problems of identifying the origins of the excavated objects which provide most of our evidence.

**Level 4**

**35 marks**