

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

H408

For first teaching in 2017

H408/24 Summer 2022 series

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

Advance Information for Summer 2022 assessments

To support student revision, advance information was published about the focus of exams for Summer 2022 assessments. Advance information was available for most GCSE, AS and A Level subjects, Core Maths, FSMQ, and Cambridge Nationals Information Technologies. You can find more information on our [website](#).

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Paper 24 series overview

Many candidates were well-informed and able to write enthusiastically about the different aspects of the art they had studied, but there was generally less evidence of detailed personal response in this year's answers. Examiners wondered whether this was because there had been fewer visits to museums and galleries to see the works first hand because of Covid restrictions.

At best, there were some superb responses with perceptive arguments, and some lively and vigorous discussions, with insightful observations, of the different art forms studied. Many candidates had studied material beyond that prescribed and were able to interweave it skilfully into their responses. It was pleasing to read that level of detail and analysis alongside some critical engagement with modern scholarship. Reference to a wider range of material or further reading is to be encouraged and is always given credit if it is relevant to the question. A note of caution, however: such material should not be used to the exclusion of the prescribed material or material specified by a particular question.

Most candidates seemed to manage their time well and there were few who did not complete their responses to the extended writing questions. However, there was regrettably little evidence of planning in this year's scripts. Examiners firmly believe that the value of even a brief plan cannot be over-estimated. Examiners were pleased to see that some offered diagrams to support their responses: where they were used, they were generally very effective in enhancing the line of argument.

Finally, legibility and quality of written communication seem to have deteriorated since 2019 – perhaps this is another effect of Covid and online learning. Candidates should be advised to read through what they have written to make sure that their work communicates their ideas clearly and effectively. Writing on alternate lines can sometimes make difficult handwriting easier to read.

Assessment for learning



Candidates should be reminded to:

- follow the instructions carefully
- start each question on a new page of the booklet
- number questions carefully
- write clearly and legibly.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:

- read the questions carefully
- followed the rubric carefully
- displayed good examination technique
- provided a range of examples
- displayed detailed knowledge of the material required for each question
- addressed the question directly
- provided a balance of material and argument in questions which required comparison between media/materials
- came to a conclusion.

Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:

- made little or no reference to scholars in the essay
- used information which was not relevant to the question, e.g. 4th century sculpture in Question 6 and pediments in Question 7
- confused material between the different media
- wrote lengthy introductions to some responses
- started a response to higher tariff questions with a conclusion and then disagreed with their introduction, leading to a confusing argument.

Section A overview

Although the low-tariff questions are designed to be quick to answer and help candidates to pick up marks, there was a wide spread, with few candidates earning all 5 marks. Examiners felt that it was good practice to answer all the low-tariff questions at the beginning of the examination on one page.

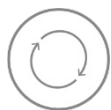
Some candidates made the decision to target the higher-tariff questions at the beginning of the examination. Question 5 was designed to spring from Question 2 and Question 4. This meant that many of those who tackled Question 5 first wrote too much and did not leave themselves enough time to do justice to Question 2 and/or Question 4.

Question 1 (a)

- 1 (a) Give the name of the painter of the pot in **Source A**. [1]

Many candidates were able to identify Sophilos as the painter of the pot in **Source A**. Some candidates did not read the question carefully enough and gave responses such as black-figure, red-figure and the subject matter of the wedding of Peleus and Thetis.

Assessment for learning



Candidates should be encouraged to read the question carefully before starting to write a response.

Question 1 (b)

- (b) Give the date of the pot in **Source A**. [1]

The date of the pot was generally well-known.

Question 1 (c)

- (c) What is the technical name given to the type of pot in **Source A**? [1]

Most candidates correctly identified the pot in **Source A** as a *dinos*.

Question 2

2 'A decorative delight.'

Explain how far you agree with this description of the pot in **Source A**.

[10]

The majority of candidates recognised the narrative of the top band and were able to identify a few figures within it (commonly Dionysus, Hebe and Peleus). Many pointed to the use of colour, the 'props' carried by individuals, the labelling of the figures and the decoration on the dresses of female figures, as elements which contributed to the pot being a 'decorative delight'. Fewer extended their responses to discuss how poses, spacing and grouping add variety to the composition and therefore to the pot being a 'decorative delight'. Answers which scored well made points which were related directly to the question and provided specific examples from the narrative band. Please see **Exemplar 1**.

Responses which concentrated on the lower bands tended to concentrate on the archaic elements of the style of painting, resulting in an 'overview' impression lacking in tangible examples. Please see **Exemplar 2**.

It was clear in a few responses that candidates had little knowledge of the pot and its decoration and were treating the question as an 'unseen', basing their response purely on observation, with varying degrees of success.

Exemplar 1

The balance of fine detail and repetition is developed further in the pot's first band, Sophilos' stylized procession bearing intricate details like the patterned dress of the goddesses, banded much like the pot itself, and also being easy on the eye, the somewhat repetitive adherence to the profile view of individuals and their similar anatomy, all long-fingered, long-footed and almond eyes making each individual fit seamlessly into the greater whole. Sophilos' use of drapery, though simple, is effective in introducing variety, as is the subtle overlapping of figures and hair. The pot's ~~the simplistic~~ effective use of a processional scene contains enough variety to not be bland, but possesses enough lively detail in the inclusion of turning figures like Chiron,

Exemplar 1 shows one paragraph from a response which combines aspects of the ideas of pattern and repetition.

Exemplar 2

Q2	I agree with this statement to a limited extent. The pot is most definitely decorative with three scenes from a base dominated by mythologic creatures and patterns but it is not a "delight". The vase is archaic so limitations are expected however the narrative isn't clear and the comic like inscriptions make the vase look unserious compared with the use of inscriptions in Ajax and achilles playing dice
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Exemplar 2 offers one paragraph from a response which shows an 'overview' impression.

Question 3 (a)

3 (a) On which building was the frieze in **Source B** located? [1]

The low-tariff questions on the Siphnian Treasury frieze were slightly better answered than the those on the Sophilos *dinos*.
 Very many candidates knew that this frieze comes from the Siphnian Treasury. A few identified it as a section of the frieze from either the Parthenon or the temple of Apollo at Bassai.

Question 3 (b)

(b) In which sanctuary is this building located? [1]

Delphi was generally well known.
 The most common alternative responses were, as with Question 3(a), Athens and Bassai. Apollo was also given as a response. This was not accepted unless the location of the sanctuary itself was given.

Question 4

4 Analyse the content and composition of the scene in **Source B**.

[10]

Despite the fact that there were many misidentifications of the narrative content (including Amazonomachy and Centauromachy), candidates were still able to discuss the way in which the battle was presented, even if they were unsure of individual characters.

The single strip of the frieze seemed to focus candidates' attention. Many responses took an overview of the composition, noting elements such as layering, symmetry, mirroring and the shapes created by the positioning of the figures. Note how in **Exemplar 3**, the candidate homes in on part of the sculpture [the shields] and derives AO2 from them [variation and contrast] in quite a simple, yet effective manner.

Individual figures (notably Apollo, Artemis, Kantharos, the giant and the lion) were used to develop discussion of anatomy, drapery and expression. Some also pointed to the symbolism of the image and its setting in the sanctuary at Delphi.

As with Question 2, some treated the image as an 'unseen' exercise. **Exemplar 4** shows that such responses were less successful than similar responses for Question 2.

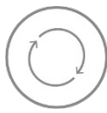
Exemplar 3

		A part of the composition, that is really successful
		is the overlapping of shields on either sides
		of the battle. Not only does it add variation
		and create contrast but it also draws our
		attention to the centre which is a lion biting
		the giant.
		The lion is one of the eye-catching components
		in this composition, however the lion adds
		variation in multiply ways and the diagonal
		formation of the lion adds to the dynamism
		of the composition.

Exemplar 4


4		<p>The scene in source B depicts a battle including animals. The era frieze is composed of hardened hardened clay. It is</p> <p>We can tell its era composed of clay because of the way it is brown and partly red and is slightly crumbling in the way that marble doesn't. The frieze seems to be partially eroded.</p>
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Assessment for learning



Candidates should be advised that introductions are not needed for the 10-mark questions and can waste valuable time.

Misconception



Many candidates referred to the giant being mauled by the lion as 'screaming out in pain'. The helmet covering the giant's face is, in fact, also concealing an archaic smile.

Some thought that Apollo and Artemis were two female gods.

Some thought that Cybele/Themis was Athena, Apollo or Dionysus.

Question 5

5* 'Vase-painters were more imaginative and creative storytellers than sculptors of Ionic Friezes.'

Explain how far you agree with this statement.

You may use **Source(s) A and/or B** as a starting point in your answer.

[20]

This question prompted some passionate discussion of a range of vase-paintings and Ionic friezes. All candidates attempted the question and found it accessible in terms of the demands of the question and the material required. The quality of the responses depended on striking a balance in the analysis of the selected examples. Most responses used Sources A and B as starting point for the argument, although there is no obligation to do so. Some of the less successful responses only made use of the printed sources, which meant that such responses were rarely more than basic.

The most successful responses tackled the terms of the question head-on, offering criteria for 'imaginative' and 'creative' and considering the advantages or limitations of the type of source (e.g., shape, material, function). Generally, vase-painters were considered to be both more imaginative and creative storytellers because they were less restricted by religious constraints in sanctuaries, and they had to adapt their stories to fit on a particular shape of pot. Among the most popular examples were the Dionysus sailing kylix, the Perseus and Medusa hydria, the Fall of Troy hydria, the Achilles and Hector volute krater and the François Vase.

When discussing friezes, candidates tended to use the different elements of the Siphnian Treasury in some detail. Better responses were able to discuss in some detail different panels from the Parthenon frieze and the Amazonomachy and Centauromachy from the temple of Apollo at Bassai.

A key point to remember for the 20-mark question is that, although it is an extended piece of writing, it is not designed to take the same amount of time as the 30-mark essay and there is no requirement to refer to scholars. Some candidates stated their conclusion almost before they started, then wrote in detail about a range of pots (usually) with the names of a couple of friezes inserted at the end. This resulted in an unbalanced response, with a one-sided argument that was not fully developed.

Misconception



One argument which was often presented for vase-painters being more creative and imaginative was that vase-painters had access to a range of colours which enlivened their work, while sculptors of Ionic friezes did not have access to colour.

Section B overview

Question 6, on free-standing sculpture, was significantly more popular than Question 7, on the metopes of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia and the Parthenon in Athens. The most successful responses really engaged with the quotations, displaying a thorough knowledge of the material and using a range of statues and metopes to support their arguments.

As in 2019, the majority of candidates were able to quote, paraphrase or mention scholars with varying degrees of success and engagement. Woodford was the most quoted of the scholars, with Spivey's '*korai* are sexy' the most quoted opinion. However, there were also more responses this year which contained no scholarly reference at all.

Question 6*

Use classical sources, and secondary sources, scholars and/or academic works to support your argument. You should also consider possible interpretations of sources by different audiences.

- 6* 'Sculptors of the 5th century BC produced more beautiful and more successful free-standing statues than their predecessors of the 6th century.'

Explain how far you agree with this statement. Justify your response with reference to specific examples of statues from both centuries. [30]

It was a pleasure to read many of the responses to this question. Candidates clearly enjoy studying sculpture and are able to appreciate the works they have studied from the 5th century. Fewer candidates showed good critical appreciation of the 6th century statues and they were often quite harsh in their criticism, particularly of the New York Kouros and the Berlin Standing Goddess. It was pleasing to read so many positive statements about the Aphrodite of the Agora – a change from previous years.

The best responses tended to consider 'beautiful' and 'successful' separately, often arguing that neither 5th nor 6th century sculptures are simultaneously both. Such responses were also structured successfully, considering elements such as material, production method, pose, drapery and anatomy. Some candidates referenced a good number of sculptures, but more in the manner of 'name dropping' rather than giving individual detailed analysis. Some also confused the dates, giving examples from the 4th century (e.g. Eirene and Ploutos, Hermes and Dionysus, Aphrodite of Knidos and Apoxyomenos) to support an argument about advances in drapery, pose or anatomy. There was some apposite use of examples from beyond the specified sources (e.g. Kritios Boy, Nike of Paionios, Riace Warriors).

Exemplar 5

6.	.	<p>Placed forward slightly. The hair was sculpted in formalised and geometric spherical patterns, the hair was long and continued down the back. Woodford highlights that these features show the "strong desire for order" at the time. A potential flaw clear already is the proportions, the waist is very slightly too small, making the figure appear delicate and weak, although, improvements were soon made.</p>
		<p>It is clear that the desire for order is still pleasing to the eye, despite it not being naturalistic. Kleobis and Biton (580BC) were were known through myth. They were famously strong, as they wielded their mother's wagon. This strength is accurately portrayed in their musculature, which shows the new emphasis on "solidity and depth" as Cook notes. Spivey however, states that they are "bovine", perhaps too stocky. It is important to note that at this time, naturalism was not the goal, and so although the figures show no realism, they are still aesthetically pleasing for through the use of order, and musculature that represents their story.</p>

Exemplar 5 shows a good appreciation of the aesthetics of 6th century sculpture, while interweaving the opinions of three different scholars.

Question 7*

- 7* 'The metopes of the Parthenon were better and more innovative than the metopes from the temple of Zeus at Olympia.'

Assess to what extent you agree with this statement. Explain your answer with reference to specific metopes from **both** the Parthenon **and** the temple of Zeus at Olympia.

[30]

Candidates wrote with interest and passion about individual pieces of sculpture. They were able to appreciate the content and compositional elements, were prepared to make bold and interesting comparisons and engaged, and sometimes disagreed, with the views of different scholars.

There were some superb responses where there was detailed analysis of the six metopes from the prescribed material. The terms from the question, 'better' and 'more innovative', were sometimes dealt with separately, but less often than in Question 6. Some candidates made good use of metopes from beyond the specification [e.g. Herakles and the Nemean lion, and Parthenon metopes I and XXIX]. This kind of reference is not expected, nor is it required; but it can be given. There were some responses where similar metopes from the two buildings were discussed side by side – for instance the comparison of the Cretan Bull metope at Olympia and Parthenon metope XXVII worked particularly well. Other direct comparisons, such as the Augean Stables metope and Parthenon metope XXVII, did not have as many valid points of comparison.

Those candidates who made their decision about which metopes were better and more innovative at the beginning of their responses tended to produce good detail about these and provide a reasonable argument for their opinion, but they often dealt with the metopes from the other temple in a cursory manner.

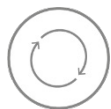
The overwhelming consensus of opinion was that the opinion expressed in the question was incorrect and that the metopes from the temple of Zeus at Olympia were superior in terms of innovation, storytelling, and composition. Candidates seemed to find it easier to refer to scholars in this question than in Question 6.

Misconception



Some candidates thought that all the Parthenon metopes depicted scenes from the Centauromachy and were, therefore, boring and not innovative because there was too much repetition. The metopes were also not innovative because the story had been done before at Olympia and Bassai, although the frieze was later than the metopes.

Assessment for learning



Candidates should refer to the opinions of at least two different scholars and be prepared to engage with those opinions. Quotation is not necessary: close reference to scholars' views is sufficient.

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