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Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2022

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Biblical Hebrew (1BH0)

Paper 01

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Report 1BH0 - 01

The standard of this language paper was of a similar standard to previous GCSE Biblical Hebrew papers set by other boards.

The only exception was the English to Hebrew composition phrases (Q8 and Q18). Generally students did badly on these questions for the reasons written in the report to Q8. It seems that some of the students who tackled these questions speak Modern Hebrew and this can be a disadvantage for these questions, as Modern Hebrew grammar is very different from that of Biblical Hebrew.

One particular error that kept occurring was the non-recognition of the *vav* conversive (past to future) in Q21. This is one of the fundamental differences between Biblical Hebrew and Modern Hebrew and teachers should reinforce this rule to their students.

Centres are also reminded that the use of Block Hebrew is expected and that using the cursive style may mean losing marks, especially in the English to Hebrew phrase composition.

Q1 Some candidates wrote 'minister of the army' which could imply defence minister but not necessarily the General of the Army. Others wrote 'an officer of the army' which again does not necessarily mean **the** officer/general of the army'.

Q2 Most candidates had no problem with this question.

Q3 Some confused the root *qof* 'add on' with *qof* 'gather'; others failed to write 'May the L-rd your G-d add on to the people **one hundredfold**' which was an essential part of the good wish.

Q4(a) Most students scored well for this question.

Q4(b) Credit was given for any response explaining that the king's word prevailed upon Joab e.g. the literal translation 'was strong on Joab' or 'the king strengthened his word on Joab' (even though the *binyan* indicates the former meaning, not the latter).

Q4(c) Some wrote the wrong direction e.g. west.

Q4(d) Most scored both marks for this. Surprisingly, some candidates wrote '10 days' rather than '20 days'.

Q5 Most did well on this question. Some wrote 800 000 which was the other number on the line but not referring to the men of Judah.

Q6(a) The majority of scripts had at least one correct answer.

Q6(b) Most candidates scored at least two for this question.

Q7(a)(i) Most candidates scored at least two for this question.

Q7(a)(ii) Most candidates did well on this question.

Q7(b) This is a popular question which was well answered. Teachers should remind their students that just writing 'over ten' is not really adequate.

Q7(c)(i) Well answered

Q7(c)(ii) A word of warning for centres for this type of question:

- as stated in the specification, בגד כפת has to be written in Hebrew
- one must write whether the בגד כפת letter is at the beginning of a word, after a silent sheva, or after a closed syllable (which incorporates both of the above).

Q7(c) (iii) Here again, many candidates wrote 'after a vav conversive' but failed to mention 'changing future to past' and scored zero.

Those candidates who chose to answer the English to Hebrew phrases did not do as well as those who tackled the grammar questions

Q8(a) – (c) Most students scored very few marks, writing the wrong form of the verbs, using incorrect pointing or writing in cursive script.

Q9(a) Well answered

Q9(b) Well answered. Some candidates responded 'writer' which was marked correct.

Q10 Some mistranslated בטחון as 'promise'. Others focussed on why Hezekiah was showing trust rather than the trust itself.

Q11 The mark was given for the correct translation although the question was asking for the meaning i.e. the metaphor.

Q12 The majority of students scored at least one mark (for 'strength').

Q13(a) For הִסִיר, some wrote 'turned' which did not convey the real meaning of 'removed'. Many candidates confused גָּמֹת with גְּמֹת 'in the death of'. Others mistranslated מִזְבֹּחַת as 'arks' or 'tabernacles'.

Q13(b) A candidate had to write 'before **this** altar' or some indication of a specific altar to gain the mark.

Q14 Some candidates mistranslated אלפים as 'one thousand'. Many confused רִכְבִּים 'riders' with רֶכֶבִּים 'chariots'.

Q15(a) Well answered

Q15(b) Some students translated יהודית as the name 'Judith' which is true in an alternative context, but not here.

Q15(c) A number of candidates misunderstood the negative consequence ('in case the people by the wall hear' or 'so that the people by the wall should not hear') and wrote a positive consequence 'so that the people of the wall should hear'.

Q16 Many failed to see the vocabulary help for the word שיאך and translated 'carried'. Even those who did apply the vocabulary help failed to realise the word is Hiphil (causative) and translated 'don't persuade Hezekiah'.

Q17(a)(i) Despite the seeming ineligibility of this question, the vast majority of candidates scored the mark. Centres should be aware that, as stated in the specification, answers to questions about the identity of *binyanim* must be answered in **English**.

Q17(a)(ii) About half of the candidates answered this question correctly.

Q17(a)(iii) Most students scored the mark for this question.

Q17(b)(i) The mark was given for 'mappik' or 'shuruk'.

Q17(b)(ii) Many candidates wrote 'possessive' for the mappik hé ; this is not correct, it is a direct object pronoun 'it (feminine)'.

Q17 c (i) Surprisingly, many students just wrote 'plural' and did not recognise the dual plural suffix.

Q17 c (ii) Many candidates wrote 'we' or 'our' or 'we/us'; these were marked as wrong.

Q17 c (iii) Incorrect responses included 'to me' 'we' or 'I'.

Q17 c (iv) This was well answered.

Q18 (a) – (c) The same comments on Q8 above apply here too.

Q19 (a) Well answered

Q19 (b) Some struggled with the number and wrote 180 000 or 1280.

Q19 (c) Many candidates did not write 'of' which lost them a mark.

Q19 (d) About 50% of candidates got this question wrong either because they did not get the correct root or because they translated the word in the singular.

Q19 (e) Many knew the different meanings of המון but applied the wrong ones here i.e. tumult, turmoil.

Q19 (f) A large number of students translated this as 'promised/swore'. Even those who did realise what the root was failed to recognise the Niphal (passive).

Q19 (g) Most students scored at least two marks.

Q19 (h) Some scripts had 'mountains' but, on the whole, this question was well answered.

Q20 The majority mistranslated מצאתנו as 'we found' rather than 'has found us'.

Q21 The recurring mistakes were the non-recognition of the vav conversive (future to past) and the word נאם ('so says') commonly mistranslated as 'pleasant' (נעים).

Students should:

1. study the set vocabulary but know when to use a particular translation in a specific context.
2. study the structure of Hebrew verbs well if they are going to attempt the English to Hebrew composition
3. be competent in writing Block Hebrew for those questions for which it is necessary
4. have plenty of practice translating passages with vav conversives - both past to future and future to past
5. study unseen texts to get practice in translation into clear intelligible English
6. study unseen texts to gain knowledge in idiomatic expressions