

Report on the Units

June 2008

OCR (Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations) is a unitary awarding body, established by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate and the RSA Examinations Board in January 1998. OCR provides a full range of GCSE, A level, GNVQ, Key Skills and other qualifications for schools and colleges in the United Kingdom, including those previously provided by MEG and OCEAC. It is also responsible for developing new syllabuses to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers.

This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the syllabus content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this Report.

© OCR 2008

Any enquiries about publications should be addressed to:

OCR Publications
PO Box 5050
Annesley
NOTTINGHAM
NG15 0DL

Telephone: 0870 770 6622
Facsimile: 01223 552610
E-mail: publications@ocr.org.uk

CONTENTS

GCSE Biblical Hebrew (1943)

REPORT ON THE UNITS

Unit/Content	Page
1943/01 Paper 1 Language	1
1943/02 Paper 2 Literature	3
Grade Thresholds	7

1943/01 Paper 1 Language

Section A

Question 1 (a) (Gridsheet)

היעלו - candidates frequently did not understand that this word is in the *hifil* conjugation and translated it 'and they went up' instead of 'and they offered up'.

משנה - few candidates answered this correctly. Those who gained only one mark often did not recognise the construct form of the noun.

הוא - the suffix was often translated as 'his'.

The rest of the grid components were generally answered competently. Paragraph 2 was also answered well.

Section B

Reference is made only to parts of this question where candidate responses fell short of competency.

- (b) (iii) A significant number of candidates gave ילך as the root of the וילך and frequently the conjugation was misunderstood.
- (c) (i) and (ii) Surprisingly, a significant number of candidates had scant knowledge of the פו class of verbs. The examiners would point out that the specification requires full knowledge of the common irregular verb types.
- (e) (i) Not many correct answers were given for this question. Directions of the compass are very common in Biblical language and centres should teach this area of knowledge in a more rigorous way.
- (l) This question attracted four marks and instructions were given clearly on the examination paper that four points had to be mentioned in the answer. Despite this, many candidates only gave two or three points. As in previous years the Vocabulary Assistance was ignored by a small number of candidates.
- (m) The infinitive construct form of the verb was not recognised by a large number of students

Section C

The examiners are anxious to bring to the attention of centres that the Divine Name should be translated as Lord or God. It appears that many centres use the translation "Hashem" which is not found in any English dictionary. The question states clearly that the passage must be

translated into English and, in future, candidates will be deducted marks for mistranslating the Divine Name. Having said this, the passage was translated well by the majority of candidates.

Almost every student had enough time to complete the paper.

It is patently obvious that some centres did not use the recommended vocabulary list given in the examination specification and, therefore, their candidates were disadvantaged.

1943/02 Paper 2 Literature

Question 1:

Generally a well-answered question

- (b) (i) Few candidates realised that the noun **אמת** was substantiating the noun **חסד** (an absolute kindness).(see line 5)
- (ii) Some candidates merely understood the phrase as a reference to a promise, which is true. The question requires further information for full marks. (see: Mark Scheme)
- (c) (i) Many very good suggestions were offered.
- (d) - (e) These were well answered.
- (f) Few candidates understood the technicality of how the Infinitive Construct operates but nevertheless gained almost full marks due to their differentiated translation which demonstrated their intrinsic knowledge of how it works in practice which fulfils the demands of the question at this level.
- (g) Few candidates accurately recorded an example of a *piel* verb. Many candidates noticed a *dagesh* in the middle root letter e.g. **וירבו** (line 1), and cited this, mistakenly, as an example. The examiners would urge due emphasis should be given to verb patterns.
- (h) Some candidates referred to examples outside the line references which could not be given a credit.

Question 2:

- (b) (i) Some candidates failed to realise that the Infinitive Construct **לאמר** introduced reported speech. Similarly, the force of the *hiphil* **השביעני** (line 4) was sometimes missed.
- (d) (ii) Some candidates indicated that this source anticipated a later Pharaoh's refusal for Moses/Moshe to allow no-one, except the men, to leave Egypt (Exodus/Shemot 10:11). Although not required for study, this was allowed.
- (d) (iii) A sizeable minority had little idea where Goshen was. Very basic geographical background is required to aid the study of the set-texts.
- (f) (i) It was difficult to award a mark for translation unless it was clear that the candidate showed understanding that the word **אכל** was indeed a noun.

Question 2 continued:

- (f) (i) Very few candidates appreciated the ellipsis (see: Mark Scheme). An alternative answer could be that **אָבֵל** is a meadow or plain. It could imply an area full of Egyptians.
- (h) This question was aimed at the higher level of achievement. Few candidates gained the maximum marks although most candidates made an attempt and scored 1- 2 marks.

Question 3:

- (b) (i) The repetition of a verbal stem and its associated noun is a common feature in Biblical literature. The phrase **נִדְרֵי אֲשֶׁר נִדְרָתִי** (line 2) is best translated: "my vow which I made".
- (ii) It is expected that basic background information to the set-texts is known. This distinguishes the set-text comprehension from the unprepared equivalent.
- (g) As per (b) (ii)
- (i) Very few candidates scored full marks on this question. The letter **י** in the word **בְּרַגְלֵי** is a distinguishing feature that indicates the plural and therefore **בְּרַגְלֵי** implies "on feet" (literally: "on their feet") whereas **בְּרַגְלוֹ** implies "under his command". The response plural and singular gained 2 marks only.
- (j) Very few candidates understood the full implication. See the Mark Scheme for full treatment.
- (k) The question specifically refers to the situation described in the cited passage. Marks could only be gained if the rubric was adhered to.

All other parts were well answered.

Question 4:

- (b) (i) The infinitive construct **כַּנְפֵּל** (line 8) implies when [David] will attack.
- (ii) There was some confusion as to the masculine and feminine for the numeral 1.
- (d) and (e) were generally well answered.
-

- (f) (i) The question was essentially testing the candidates' ability to recognize the pointing of the definite article.
- (ii) Few candidates understood the idea of the indefinite article (which always accompanies the construct noun).
- (iii) Few candidates understood the effect of the guttural ν with the accommodating *kametz*.
- (g) (i) There were many varying and good suggestions for a translation. The understanding of the passive verb was expected.
- (ii) There are always questions to test the top range of ability. Only a minority of candidates understood that יבלע was in the *pual* conjugation. See the Mark Scheme for a full treatment.
- (h) Generally a well answered question.

Question 5:

- (a) It was necessary to describe Na'aman as a Syrian (or Aramean).
- (b) (i) The word אלי (line 1) could apply either to the preceding or following phrase. Both were marked correct. They are indicated in square brackets in the Mark Scheme. The noun מציע needs to be translated although any sensible suggestion was accepted. Many candidates failed to notice that the clause commencing דבר גדול (line 5) is a conditional sentence: "If the prophet...".
- (ii) The question was not asking for an historical or religious appreciation of *keri-kethib* but for an application in this specific instance (See: Mark Scheme).
- (c) (ii) It was not sufficient to say that Na'aman "did as the was told". (!)
- (d) (i) Some candidates did not acknowledge that the phrase צמד פרדים was a sub-clause, which led to confusion when translating.
- (ii) Many candidates missed the point that Na'aman considered Israelite soil as essential for worshipping the 'G-d of Israel'. However full marks could have been gained without understanding this (See: Mark Scheme).
- (f) This question was testing some basic knowledge of accidence. Some candidates merely translated the words which was not required.
- (g) Generally well answered.
- (h) Most candidates answered this comprehensively.

Question 6:

- (a) (i) Some candidates cited the rabbinic tradition that the four excluded persons were Naaman and his sons. However, candidates should cite evidence that is internal within the text.
- (b) (ii) A minority of candidates were unaware where Aram/Syria was. It should be emphasized that background information is important for the understanding of set-text literature.
- (c) – (d) Well answered
- (e) (i) It is important for candidates to understand that there was a chain of commands from the messenger to the King (See: Mark Scheme).
- (ii) As per (b) (ii) background information is considered important in set-text preparation.
- (f) For ease of reference, it would be helpful if candidates either copy the Hebrew work and then explain or simply give the line reference.
- (g) As per 5 (f)
- (h) Although credit was given for translation since it can be argued that it helps explain the form of the verb, some basic explanation was needed for full marks
- (i) Well answered

Grade Thresholds

General Certificate of Secondary Education
Biblical Hebrew (Specification Code 1943)
June 2008 Examination Series

Component Threshold Marks

Component	Max Mark	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
01 – Language	100	81	70	59	51	45	37	30	0
02 – Literature	100	75	65	55	49	41	35	29	0

Overall

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Percentage in Grade	11.6	32.0	29.3	13.6	5.2	4.1	1.7	1.0	1.5
Cumulative Percentage in Grade	11.6	43.6	72.9	86.6	91.7	95.9	97.5	98.6	100

The total entry for the examination was 484.

Statistics are correct at the time of publication.

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

OCR Customer Contact Centre

14 – 19 Qualifications (General)

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

www.ocr.org.uk

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored

Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations
is a Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England
Registered Office; 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU
Registered Company Number: 3484466
OCR is an exempt Charity

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
Head office
Telephone: 01223 552552
Facsimile: 01223 552553

© OCR 2008

