



General Certificate of Secondary Education

Classical Civilisation

40201F Greece and Rome: Stories and Histories

Report on the Examination

2010 examination – June series

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Report on Classical Civilisation GCSE (40201F)

The majority of candidates opted for Topic A, Homer, *Odyssey*. There were no candidates for Topics B, Livy, *Stories of Rome*, and D, History of Roman Britain, and very few for Topic C, Athens and Sparta. Most candidates adapted well to the new style question paper/answer books, but a few wrote at too great a length on the short questions, especially on the questions targeting AO3. This was usually because they opted for a narrative approach and did not focus on the evaluative question set. Candidates should be reminded that the space given in the answer book gives an indication of the length of answer expected. Occasionally, writing at too great a length on the short questions meant that candidates left themselves too little time for the structured essay questions. Candidates also need to be aware that the three parts of these questions are also targeted separately at the three different assessment objectives. Some candidates simply wrote narrative for all three parts of their chosen question; this could only score highly on the first part of the question, which targets AO1.

Topic A Homer, *Odyssey*

Question 1

Both parts of 1(a) were well answered, but part (b) caused some problems for candidates who chose to write about Circe. Most lost a mark as they thought the drugged food turned the men into pigs as opposed to making them forget their native lands. Part (c) caused few problems, and part (d) was well answered, with the majority of candidates referring to the men opening the Bag of Winds and eating the cattle of the Sun God. To achieve full marks they needed to explain their choices and say why they thought these actions caused problems.

Question 2

The answer expected to part (a) was 'Scylla and Charybdis', but credit was also given to those candidates who mentioned the Wandering Rocks. There were many pleasing answers to parts (c) and (d), but some candidates simply repeated the information used in part (b) about Scylla and Charybdis in their answers to part (d). Teachers should advise candidates that repeated information is most probably the incorrect answer and is unlikely to be given credit. There were plenty of interesting answers to part (e), with the Cyclops being the most common choice of villain. Eurylochus was added to the mark scheme as plenty of candidates found him objectionable.

Question 3

Most candidates scored at least half of the available marks on part (a), although few knew that Ino had been human and that she felt sorry for Odysseus. Weaker answers merely stated that she gave him a veil (often described as a cloak, scarf or shawl) without saying what it did and what she told him to do with it.

Answers to part (b) were better, but those to part (c) were a little disappointing as most candidates simply stated that Nausicaa was kind for helping Odysseus. Some candidates said that she was lazy, and a few knew that she was concerned for her reputation.

Question 4

In part (a) most candidates knew Athene sent Nausicaa to help Odysseus, and quite a few knew of her appeal to Zeus, but her help in the storm was rarely mentioned. Part (b) was very well answered, although some candidates lost a mark for mentioning a storm without saying that it wrecked Odysseus' raft. Most candidates wrote about Odysseus' dealings with the Cyclops in part (c), but weaker answers failed to say why they admired him or what qualities he possessed. Simply writing what he did is AO1 and cannot score highly on an AO3 question.

Topic B Livy, *Stories of Rome*

There were no candidates for this topic.

Topic C Athens and Sparta

Question 9

Part (a) was not well answered and most candidates were also unable to say why this type of poetry was studied in answer to part (b). Part (c), on the other hand, was well answered by all. Answers to part (d) tended to focus more upon what was taught rather than on the organisation of the schools, for example small class sizes, single sex, mixed ability and ages. Many facts were known about Spartan education, but these had to be used to answer the question set in part (e). Many candidates lost marks here through a failure to say how what he learned would help a Spartan soldier.

Question 10

Answers to both parts of 10(a) were good, but quite a few candidates were unable to give the reason for the Spartans' long hair in part (b). There were many pleasing answers to part (c), showing plenty of knowledge about the phalanx. Unfortunately far less knowledge was shown about the role of the Helots in the Spartan military. Most candidates scored at least one mark for reference either to the Helots producing food or to the *Krypteia*.

Question 11

Candidates on this tier did not know very much about the appearance of an Athenian house. In their answers to part (a), but were much better at writing about the role of women within the household in part (b). Again, there were plenty of excellent answers to part (c) and candidates included plenty of personal response here.

Question 12

A little surprisingly, candidates found it very difficult to name four trades and occupations in their answers to part (a), although almost all mentioned potters. Answers to part (b) were disappointing as there was scant knowledge and understanding of Athenian manufacturing. As on Tier H candidates responded very well indeed to the AO3 question about slavery, part (c).

Topic D History of Roman Britain

There were no candidates for this topic.