



**General Certificate of Secondary Education**

**Classical Civilisation**

**40201H Greece and Rome: Stories and Histories**

**Report on the Examination**

*2010 examination – June series*

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## Report on Classical Civilisation GCSE (40201H)

The majority of centres opted for Topic A, Homer, *Odyssey*. There were similar numbers of candidates entered for Topics B, Livy, *Stories of Rome*, and C, Athens and Sparta, but only one candidate for Topic D, History of Roman Britain. 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. Where candidates do run out of space for their answers, they should request extra paper rather than writing in margins.

Candidates also need to be aware that there are 26 marks for the structured essay questions. Some candidates wrote too much on the short questions and left themselves too little time; others simply wrote too little to score high marks on these 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

Candidates were evenly divided between the parts (a) and (b).

In part (a)(i) the majority of candidates scored at least half of the marks for mentioning Nausicaa's willingness to provide oil, food, clothing and directions to the palace. Better answers mentioned her advice about her mother, and top level answers pointed out that her reputation was more important to Nausicaa than taking Odysseus with her.

There were plenty of good answers to part (a)(ii), but candidates had to explain how Calypso's actions helped and hindered Odysseus to answer the question in order to reach the higher levels of the mark scheme. Simply writing narrative about Calypso's actions is not AO2 and will not score highly in this sort of question.

The same principle applied to part (a)(iii). A list of what the women did for Odysseus is not evaluation (AO3) and will not score above Level 2. However, there were some excellent answers which argued that Odysseus was a womaniser who had one-sided relationships and used women to get what he wanted.

Part (b)(i) was usually well answered, although some candidates failed to mention Athene's help in the storm. As in part (a)(ii), some candidates simply offered a list of what various gods did in part (b)(ii). Again, this could not score above Level 2 unless there was explanation of how the actions helped or caused problems for Odysseus. Candidates must focus on the precise wording of the question set.

Part (b)(iii) invited candidates to assess Odysseus' good and bad qualities, but some merely repeated their answer to part (b)(ii) and said he needed the gods' help. Once again, candidates should be aware that simply repeating material will not gain credit unless a different use is made of it. There were surprisingly few excellent answers to this question as candidates for the legacy specification have been very good at analysing Odysseus' qualities and providing varied examples of them.

## **Topic B Livy, *Stories of Rome***

### **Question 4**

The vast majority of candidates scored at least one mark on part (a), but many lost the second mark by failing to explain what Tarquin did after he sent Ancus' sons away on the hunting trip. Both parts of 5(b) were well answered, and it was rare for a candidate not to score the mark on part(c). A few candidates failed to read part (d) properly and wrote about Tarquin the Old, but most chose either the capture of the Sabine women or the capture of Gabii. Some lost marks because they failed to explain why they thought the action they had chosen was underhand.

### **Question 5**

Not everyone knew that Etruscan blockade was causing starvation in part (a), and quite a few answers wrongly centred upon Porsenna's support of Tarquin the Proud. Part (b) was very well answered, but not all candidates knew the meaning of Scaevola in part (c). Many lost the mark in part (c)(ii) for failing to say that he burnt off his right hand. Most candidates knew that Mucius was rewarded with land, and part (e) was usually well answered.

### **Question 6**

There were many good answers to part (a)(i), but very few candidates knew that Camillus had captured Veii, and some were confused about his attack on the Gauls at Ardea and their final defeat in Rome. In part (a)(ii) most candidates knew how Cincinnatus assumed and resigned the dictatorship, but some were not very clear about how he actually rescued the trapped army. Part (a)(iii) produced very mixed responses, and some candidates, while able to identify examples of unpleasant behaviour, were unable to use them to answer the question. On the other hand, there were also some very well argued responses.

Part (b)(i) was very well answered, with plenty of accurate knowledge about the Fabii, but answers to part (b)(ii) were disappointing. The majority of candidates knew about the Romans' poor behaviour before the battle of the River Allia, and most managed to state that they fled, but very few knew what actually happened in the battle itself or how the fleeing Romans died. Part (b)(iii) was very well answered indeed, with examiners seeing many excellent answers. Some candidates simply wrote narrative (AO1) and thus scored poorly on this AO3 question.

## Topic C Athens and Sparta

### Question 7

Parts (a) and (c) were well answered by all candidates. However, many candidates were unable to say why this type of poetry was studied in answer to part (b). 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 8

Answers to both parts of 8(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 9

Candidates who opted for part (a) generally scored more highly than those who opted for part (b). Surprisingly for an AO1 question, part (a)(i) was not well answered, with candidates writing about how the household was organised instead of describing its physical appearance and the building materials as required by the question. Consequently candidates performed much better in part (a)(ii) when asked to show understanding of the role of women within the household. There were many excellent answers to part (a)(iii). Examiners enjoyed reading about what candidates would have liked and disliked about *symposia*.

Very little was known about metics, and part (b)(i) was answered badly by most candidates who opted for this question. The low marks continued for part (b)(ii) as few candidates seemed to have detailed knowledge about the organisation of Athenian trades and occupations. The majority could write only about the use of slave labour and the lack of female employees. Fortunately candidates' performance improved in their answers to part (b)(iii). Many wrote well about what they would have liked and disliked about being a slave.

## Topic D History of Roman Britain

There was only one candidate on for this option. This candidate's performance showed no real problems with the questions on this topic.