



**General Certificate of Secondary Education  
June 2011**

**Classical Civilisation 4020**

**Unit 1H: Greece and Rome: Stories and  
Histories**

***Report on the Examination***

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## Unit 1H Greece and Rome: Stories and Histories (40201H)

### General Comments

Topic A (Homer) proved by far the most popular topic, while very few candidates were entered for Topic D (History of Roman Britain). There were very few problems over timing, and the majority of candidates had been entered for the correct tier, although there were a small number who may have performed better on Tier F. The most valuable lesson for centres to learn from this examination is the need to teach candidates what is required for each assessment objective. All too often candidates wrote factual information (AO1) in response to questions requiring AO2 (understanding) and AO3 (evaluation and personal response). Facts will score very little when explanation and empathy are required. In particular, for AO3 candidates should be encouraged to give their own opinions. It should also be emphasised to candidates that they must answer the question set and not simply list facts or reproduce a prepared response.

### Topic A Homer, *Odyssey*

Question 1(a) and 1(b) were well answered but in Question 1(c), while the majority of candidates knew that Odysseus had to threaten Circe, a considerable number thought he did this so that she would promise to release his men. There were many excellent answers to Question 1(d), and nearly three-quarters of candidates scored all three marks. Responses to Question 1(e) were very pleasing too as candidates used their knowledge of the poem to analyse Odysseus' personality.

Question 2(a) caused very few problems, but marks were lost on 2(b) as candidates often knew that Zeus caused a storm or threw a thunderbolt at the ship but failed to say that the ship was destroyed and all of the crew were killed. Question 2(c) was one of the best answered questions on the paper, and the vast majority of candidates scored at least two marks on Question 2(d). A few failed to gain the third mark as they failed to answer the question and simply listed how Athene helped Odysseus.

Essay A was by far the more popular choice, and there were some excellent answers to part (a)(i). However, part (ii) required explanation and many simply wrote narrative. To gain good marks candidates needed to explain *why* Odysseus gave the Cyclops the wine or tied his men under the sheep. Even those who explained that the Cyclops shouted 'Nobody has blinded me' often failed to say why this helped Odysseus. Candidates clearly knew many examples of good and bad *xenia* in part (iii), and the best Level 5 answers considered those characters who showed both aspects and also looked at the behaviour of Odysseus and his crew.

Essay B tended to be answered by less able candidates who too often listed the names of monsters in part (i) and failed to say what sort of monsters they are. Beyond Circe turning the men into pigs there were surprisingly few examples offered of acts of magic. Part (ii) was poorly answered with few examples from the epic used. There were some thoughtful answers to part (iii), but here too candidates tended to write in general terms and not back up their points with reference to the poem.

## Topic B Livy, *Stories of Rome*

While a surprising number of candidates were unable to name the city in Question 4(a), most knew the story and answered 4(b) very well. Most scored at least one mark on Question 4(c), but there appeared to be quite a few guesses about the military prowess of the triplets. There were some excellent answers to Question 4(d), and the main reason for the loss of a mark here was a failure to explain why Horatius decided to run. Candidates tended to be cautious in their response to Question 4(e) and very responsibly looked at both sides of the case.

The vast majority of candidates had no trouble with Question 5(a), but most scored two marks rather than three for Question 5(b). Most knew it was night and that the Gauls were silent, but many failed to explain how they spotted the path or sent a man to attempt the climb. Questions 5(c) and 5(d) were very well answered, and almost 90% of candidates scored at least two marks for Question 5(e).

The essay questions on this topic were well answered. In AO1, Question 6(a)(i) was answered better than 6(b)(i), with candidates writing in great detail about the capture of the Sabine Women. Although they knew what Horatius Cocles did on the bridge, candidates were less sure about who cut down the bridge and where these people were. Question 6(a)(ii) tested AO2 (understanding) and candidates needed to explain Tanaquil's actions rather than simply writing down what she did. They also needed to say how and why people reacted to her advice. Those who chose 6(b)(ii) were better at explanation, and most knew how Tarquin had captured Gabii and could say why his method was considered 'un-Roman'. There were plenty of pleasing essays about women (Question 6(a)(iii)), but here too less able candidates tended to provide factual information and failed to say why they liked or disliked these women. A similar trend could be seen in responses to Question 6(b)(iii) too, where some candidates wrote about the actions of heroes but failed to say what they thought Livy admired. Personal response is essential for Level 5 marks in these AO3 questions.

## Topic C Athens and Sparta

Question 7 was generally not well answered, which was surprising since slavery is a key part of this topic. Question 7(a) was very well answered, but 7(b) caused many problems. Over half of candidates did not know what was mined at Laurion but coped better with Question 7(c)(ii). A common mistake was to write in very general terms about hard work and long hours, which could apply to many jobs; comments specific to silver mining in ancient times were required for marks. Most candidates scored something on this question, but knowledge was patchy and some candidates were unable to select relevant material for this precise question.

Social and historical topics are by their very nature broader than the literature ones, but basic knowledge did seem to be lacking. There were plenty of good answers to Question 8(a) but, even with the choice of only three named areas of the house, it was not uncommon for candidates to think that cooking or weaving took place in the *andron*. Most knew that houses had an altar in the courtyard and so gained one mark in Question 8(b), but reference to the *herm* was more limited. Candidates must read questions carefully and answer what is asked. Question 8(c) asked about furniture, not about houses in general or floors and paintings. Those who did write about furniture often offered AO1 knowledge and failed to mention a modern house at all. In comparison questions the comparison must be clearly stated and not left for examiner to work out. Question 8(d) was handled much better and there was some lovely personal response. A few candidates failed to notice that the question was about house design and wrote about women's lives; this meant that they rarely scored more than one mark.

Both essays were equally popular, and Essay B was generally better answered. In Question 9(a)(i) knowledge was lacking about the early years of boys' lives and many candidates failed to read the question carefully and wrote about Spartan schooling instead. Similarly few candidates knew in detail how Spartan men spent their days. Most guessed that they trained and others wrote about the *krypteia*, which was not in the question. However, when Question 9(a)(iii) did ask about Spartan schools there were some lovely responses. Those who wrote largely AO1 responses scored low marks, but there were some delightful essays by students who clearly threw themselves into the role of a school inspector.

Question 9(b)(i) was well answered, and candidates displayed plenty of knowledge about Athenian women. There some good answers to part (ii), mainly by those who saw that the wedding itself should figure large in their answer. Weaker answers tended to focus in general terms on women's lives without showing how they were male dominated. Knowledge of women's lives was good and those who gave their own opinions scored highly on Question 9(b)(iii). It cannot be emphasised enough that examiners are looking for candidates' own opinions in AO3 questions.

### **Topic D History of Roman Britain**

Very few candidates answered on this topic, and few of those who did knew who Narcissus was in Question 10(a). Most confused him with Vespasian. Those who did identify Narcissus answered the question well. Over half of candidates scored the mark for Question 10(b), and there were some good answers to Question 10(c). Most candidates also scored at least two marks on Question 10(d), usually mentioning the superior skill of the Roman army and disunity of the Britons.

While half of candidates knew that Agricola had conquered Anglesey, many gave the answer Britain to Question 11(a) and some wrote the Isle of Wight. Basic knowledge was also lacking for Questions 11(b) and 11(c); this knowledge could be found in the prescribed sources. Some candidates did know that Agricola was Tacitus' father-in-law, and some worked out that, as a Roman historian, he might be biased, but the number of candidates who failed to score this mark suggests that more work needs to be done on the sources. All candidates scored a mark on Question 11(f), and the better answers echoed Tacitus in saying that the Britons gained things like better housing but still had to pay tax and do as the Romans wanted.

Question 12(a) was badly answered as candidates did not have sufficient knowledge of Caesar's campaigns. Most focused on his arrival in 55BC, and no-one mentioned his capture of hillforts or the ambush of the legion. As candidates did not appear to know what reverses and successes Caesar had had, they found it hard to apportion blame in Question 12(a)(ii) and evaluate the response of the Roman people in 12(a)(iii). Similarly, no candidate knew how Suetonius Paulinus' troops reached Anglesey in Question 12 (b)(i); most merely said they killed Druids and burnt the sacred groves. Answers to Question 12(b)(ii) were a little better, but there was some writing of pure knowledge (AO1) without any attempt to say which causes each tribe had and why, and which were common complaints. Question 12(b)(iii) saw the best answers with some good personal response, and candidates were divided in their support for Boudicca and Suetonius Paulinus.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.

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