



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2012**

Classical Civilisation 4020

**Unit 2H: Greece and Rome: Drama and
Life**

Report on the Examination

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Unit 2H Greece and Rome: Drama and Life (40202H)

General Comments

Greek Drama was by far the most popular topic with around 800 students; Roman Social Life was next with around 400 while Roman Comedy and Mycenae were smaller entries.

The format of the exam seems to have bedded down quite successfully now and students had few difficulties with the mechanics of the paper.

There did seem to be more cases of students needing to use additional sheets for essay questions, which on the whole is surprising, given the amount of space supplied on the examination paper. **However on the short questions, students should try to remember that the space given on the examination paper indicates the amount that they are expected to write and if they do need to write more, they should request extra paper rather than write in the margin.** It is good to note that in this regard more students followed the advice given last year. One or two difficulties arose when some students used the essay space from other topics. Students should be reminded to ask for additional paper and not use space from other topics to finish off their answers.

Last year's advice that students must be aware of the Assessment Objectives and avoid the danger of writing too much narrative and insufficient evaluation or explanation seems to have been heeded, but there is still some way to go; it was noted that in particular some students have difficulties with the AO2 objectives.

It is worth repeating and re-enforcing the importance of the structured essays, where there are 26 marks on offer. **Students must remember the three Assessment Objectives for each part; AO1, factual detail, for the first question, AO2, explanation and understanding, for the second question and AO3, personal response or evaluation, for the third question.** Students, who limit their responses to factual detail and no more, fail to achieve higher marks.

It is worth noting that those students who gave bullet-point answers in either the short AO2 or AO3 questions were unable to obtain more than a Level 1. While those who did something similar in the essay questions barely achieved anything beyond level 2.

Few students seemed to have any difficulties with time management; in fact the examiners were often surprised how much some students could write within the time frame.

Topic A Greek Tragedy and Drama Festivals

Question 1:

Question (a) was on the whole answered quite confidently and it wasn't too difficult to obtain both marks, but it was necessary to mention that Jason had left Medea and his children **and** that it was for another woman to achieve the marks. Question (b) again was handled comfortably although there were some students who mistook the timeframe and answered that Creon's new decision was to allow Medea to stay one day longer. To obtain both marks it was necessary to refer to Medea's banishment **and** that of her children **or** that he was going to banish her immediately.

Question (c) required an AO2 response. In question (d) it was possible for students to obtain full marks by explaining why they thought Medea was right to punish Jason provided they presented a developed argument. The other side of the argument was also credited, provided the students offered some evidence to support their viewpoint.

Question 2:

Questions (a) and (b) most students obtained full marks. Question (c) was reasonably successfully answered, but quite a few students didn't respond to the emboldened 'and' and therefore obtained only one of the marks. Question (d) was not dealt with quite as successfully, with fewer students appreciating the reasons for the divisions of the seating in terms of Athenian tribes. No credit was given for attributing wealth alone for having front row seats. Question (e) provided students with the opportunity to show their appreciation for the role of the chorus. This question produced adequate responses, but relatively few students obtained full marks.

Question 3:

A much smaller proportion of students answered question (a). In (a)(i) the better students were able to highlight the complete role of the Archon from the first stages right through to when he gave his account of the running of the City Dionysia; weaker ones merely stated his role in selecting the plays. In (a)(ii) many students seemed to think that the Choregos had a performing role and was actually the Chorus Leader. The final question in (a) required a much greater degree of comparison between the roles of the Archon and the Choregos than many students were prepared to deliver. Those students who merely stated how good one of the roles was without comparing it to the other failed to achieve the higher levels.

A higher percentage of students answered the question on Medea, which most found quite accessible. However, the question (a)(i) on her acts of cruelty tended to be only half covered; while better students made reference to her actions before the play and to her gloating at the news of the deaths of Creon and Glauce and her treatment of Jason at the end of the play; weaker students merely referred to her actions before the play started. There were two parts to question (b) (ii) and it was necessary to answer both parts to access the higher level. Many students had a reasonable knowledge of the details about the scene with Aegeus but failed to achieve the requirements of AO2. Although the question about Medea being a witch was aimed at discussing her 'magical' powers, those students who interpreted the word 'witch' in a more colloquial way, as a very nasty person, were given credit, provided they supported their responses with relevant argument and opinion.

Topic B Plautus, *The Pot of Gold* and *The Brothers Menaechmus***Question 4:**

Most of the short questions posed few difficulties for those who knew the play, although a surprisingly high number of students did not know where Euclio first met the slave. For question (d) most students were able to explain quite effectively how the slave obtained the gold. Similarly strong students gave good assessments of the character of the slave with sound reasons and full argument. Weaker ones gave less detail and argument.

Question 5:

The short questions on *The Brothers Menaechmus* were not handled quite so successfully as those on the *Pot of Gold*, a reversal of last year's responses.

While most knew that it was Erotium's house that Messenio was about to knock at, there were many who believed it was that of Menaechmus – clearly showing a lack of knowledge of the play. The mark scheme provided sufficient opportunity for full marks for question (b)(i) but while

many obtained one mark, comparatively fewer achieved both marks. Likewise there was some confusion about the name of the character referred to in (b)(ii). Comparatively few students obtained full marks on question (c), mainly through lack of sufficient detail. Question (d) showed a better range of knowledge but in several cases there was insufficient lack of AO3 to justify full marks.

Question 6:

Question (a) was easily much more popular than question (b). Perhaps students were more confident and comfortable with a question that related to one play only, but it is interesting to note that there was no discernible difference in the overall quality in the answers to both questions.

The question on bad behaviour (a)(i) was handled reasonably well although it was necessary to provide a wider range of examples to reach the higher levels. The stronger students referred to some of the less obvious answers. One or two students tried to give this an AO3 response when clearly all it required was detail of poor behaviour, not judgement on that behaviour. One or two students gave examples of Euclio's bad behaviour when clearly the question excludes him. The same criticism can be made of some answers to the second question (a)(ii), where again Euclio is excluded. Although the mark scheme refers to Congrio as a male character, it wasn't necessary to refer to him to achieve the higher levels. Again there was a tendency for poorer students to merely state what happens to the characters without providing sufficient AO2 response. Question (a)(iii) gave students good opportunity to make judgement on the character Euclio and assess the degree to which he had redeemed himself. Stronger students gave a measured value judgement of his character throughout the play and thereby obtained the higher levels.

Question (b) dealt with the roles of female characters from both plays. Question (b)(i) provided the opportunity for students to show sound knowledge of the Pot of Gold and it was reasonably straightforward to achieve some marks, but greater details were required for the higher levels. Question (b)(ii) required explanation of the roles of the female characters in Brothers Menaechmus and although Erotium's maid is referred to in the mark scheme, it wasn't necessary to mention her to reach the higher levels. Stronger students were able to show how the roles and characters of the women impacted on the plot and triggered the events of the play. Weaker students stated merely what the women did in the play. The idea behind the question on Plautus's presentation as women as victims gave students the opportunity to discuss how badly female characters were treated in the plays studied. Better students were able to present strong arguments with supporting evidence and there were some very good answers to this question.

Topic C Mycenaean Civilisation**Question 7:**

The shorter questions were generally dealt with very well with (a)(i), (a)(ii), (b) and (c), producing a high number of completely correct answers. Most students were able to handle some features of question (d), but comparatively few achieved full marks. Similar to last year this question required more explanation and understanding and while the mark scheme does offer the opportunity for high scores, students on the whole did not provide sufficient detail and explanation for full marks. AO2 answers need good development to access the highest mark. Question (e) gave students the opportunity to choose their own most impressive feature of the site at Mycenae. Stronger students were able to provide full and comprehensive responses, but many did not take the opportunity to expand the reasons for their choices.

Question 8:

Most students were able to deal comfortably with both of the AO1 questions, (a) and (b). Similarly question (c) was well within the scope of most students with a high proportion obtaining full marks. Question (d) also gave those students who had prepared well the opportunity to present their appreciation of how warlike the Mycenaeans were. As elsewhere those students who provided reasons to support their argument achieved high marks.

Question 9:

There was more or less an equal balance between questions (a) and (b) with perhaps the question on Schliemann being slightly more popular.

Question (a)(i) was dealt with generally quite adequately but students had to be thorough in their knowledge to reach the higher levels. On the other hand students were able to access higher levels in question (a)(ii) more easily, although few students referred to literary evidence. Similarly, in question (a)(iii) students dealt with the qualities of Schliemann as an archaeologist with a reasonable degree of confidence, with opinions very much mixed. To attain the higher levels, students need to provide more detail and greater balance of argument.

Sound knowledge was displayed from many students in response to question (b)(i) and quite a few reached level three or above. However, responses to question (b)(ii) were not as confident or expansive and students had more difficulty in reaching the higher levels. Answers tended to be thinner and not as extensive. However, question (b)(iii) provided greater opportunity for students to display a wider range of opinion from a more extensive span of evidence.

Topic D Social Life in Rome in the First Century AD

Question 10:

In questions (a) and (b) a majority of students displayed fine knowledge of the relationship between patron and client and there was a high proportion with full marks. Strangely, a comparatively small number of students was aware of the number of guests at a Roman dinner party for question (c). On the other hand, question (d) elicited very good AO2 responses from a high proportion of students. Clearly patrons and clients is a topic well taught, or perhaps well-learned, as the evaluative responses for question (e) were on the whole well presented with a high proportion of students obtaining full marks.

Question 11:

Question (a) seemed to have caused difficulties. The answer expected was a Roman citizen, but several particular types of citizen, such as Senator and Equestrian, were given. All were accepted, but 'man' without reference to his nationality was not credited.

On the other hand, parts (i) and (ii) of question (b) provided few problems for students. However, many students seemed to have difficulties in question (b)(iii) on the difference between a boy's toga and a man's toga.

Question (c) was on the whole dealt with quite confidently and three-quarters of students obtained full marks.

Question (d) likewise was handled quite competently; however, those students who referred to private dinner parties and attendance at the baths as public entertainment were not given any credit.

Question 12:

Question (b) was marginally more popular than (a) although generally both were handled equally well.

It was surprising that more students did not obtain level 4. Those students who referred to the wedding ceremony itself were not credited. The question was about preparations for the wedding and details could have been drawn from the initial engagement up to the bride's physical appearance before the ceremony.

Question (a)(ii) gave students the opportunity to compare Roman weddings with modern ones and those students who offered a wide range of points of comparison were able to achieve the high levels.

Question (a)(iii) was a question that has appeared in many different forms in the past and is one which is easily accessible for students with sound knowledge of the role of women in Roman society. Better answers displayed a good balance between advantages and disadvantages for women in Roman society.

Question (b)(i) was divided into two separate parts and produced many competent answers. Most students dealt with both parts and gave themselves the opportunity to access higher levels.

On the other hand in question (b)(ii) fewer students provided answers with sufficient breadth to access the top levels. The mark scheme offered a wide range of points that could have been made, but responses here were generally more limited.

In question (b)(iii) as is often the case, those students who provided a balanced response to the AO3 question achieved the higher levels. There were many points that could have been made and arguments drawn out of those points, but many students showed some limitation in their knowledge and underscored as a result.

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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