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LATIN

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Paper 0480/01

Language

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General comments

As in previous years, candidates are generally achieving a high standard on this paper. The new syllabus this year has allowed them to concentrate on two, rather than three, tasks, and this seems to have given candidates the time and the confidence to pay even closer attention to detail. Only a very small number of candidates struggled with the time given to complete the paper, and they might have done better had they tackled the comprehension passage first. It was apparent that most candidates had learned the vocabulary thoroughly and that they were able to handle the major grammatical constructions very well.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

All candidates followed the story well, and there were several who produced completely accurate translations, but for a couple of vocabulary errors. The first sentence was done well by virtually everybody, though candidates would do well to bring out the force of the imperfect tense whenever it is reasonable in English. For instance, *ducebat* (line 1) can quite naturally be translated 'was leading', while *ferebat* (line 2) would be better translated by the perfect. In the second sentence, a large number of candidates missed the common 'catch' word *inviti* (line 1) and were led into further error by trying to fit 'invited' into their translation. The pluperfect *constituerant* was often ignored, and some candidates had the Campanians helping the Romans against Hannibal. In line 3, there is another example of natural English having to take precedence over a literal translation of the Latin, and candidates needed to translate *cenant* as 'were eating/dining'. Similarly, the future perfect in the *si* clause in line 4 *(necavero)* should be translated by a present tense in English. Many candidates had 'the young man's father' as the subject in line 4, and a number of candidates did not know *secutus est.* In line 5, *filius patri* was often rendered as 'the father's son', even though the subsequent sense made that impossible. All but the weakest candidates dealt well with the indirect statement in lines 5-6, and with the indirect question in line 6, though candidates might be advised to take care not to omit the little words such as *id* (so too *iterum* in line 8, *illam* in line 10 and *ipse* in line 15). While some wanted *senex* as the object of *audivit viditque* in line 8, most dealt well with the negative indirect command in line 9, even when *oro* itself was not known, and some recovered the sense somewhat by using a direct command. The full force of *num* (line 9) and *nonne* (line 10) was frequently omitted, and a large number of candidates did not quite work out that the subject of the *nonne* sentence lay in *times.* As has been suggested in previous reports, candidates should be vigilant over comparatives and superlatives: again, *maxime* (line 11) was often left as a positive or even omitted. The section *ego corpus…. pectus* (lines 11-12) was well done. In line 13, there was quite a bit of confusion over who was crying; some wanted the putting down of the sword to depend on *promitteret* instead of taking *deponeret* as a parallel verb, but again, the indirect statement was well translated (line 14). *Paruit* (line 14) caused some confusion, though most followed the sense well enough to avoid translating it as 'prepare'. Only the best candidates saw the final nature of *ne* in line 15.

Section B

All but a very few candidates followed the story well. In **(a)(i)**, a significant number did not know *septuaginta* and offered 700 or 27. It is quite common for errors to be made over numbers, thus, candidates are advised to learn them with even greater care. In **(a)(ii)**, a fairly large number of candidates had the barbarians helping rather than being helped, so the relative clause needed to be worked out more carefully. **Question (b)** was comparatively badly done: the second point about using force was grasped by most, but only the best candidates dealt accurately with *alias insulas se Atheniensibus dedere coegit.* Most performed well in **(c)**, **(d)** and **(e)**. In **(f)**, some candidates paraphrased too much, and it is worth pointing out that, if in doubt, they should adhere as closely to the Latin as they can. Here, for instance, they needed to separate the signal being given by the sailors from the second point, that the King had sent the fleet. The third point, with the final use of the relative, was, on the other hand, well made. The next few questions **(g)**, **(h)(i)**, **(h)(ii)**, **(i)(i)** and **(i)(ii)** were all well done. Moreover, unlike in **(f)**, most candidates did unravel the passage *cum Parum….discessisset* in order to attain 3 marks in **(i)(iii)**. Very few candidates did not achieve full marks in **(j)**, and one can sympathise with those who suggested 'incentive' as a derivation from *incensa*, though it is in fact from *in + canto.*

General comments

This was the first year of the revised syllabus whereby the examination was streamlined, although the amount of work required from candidates remained the same.

The general level of performance was good, with the majority of the candidates scoring high marks. As ever, the more successful candidates were those who were able to translate the texts accurately, using an appropriate style. 25% of the marks available are awarded to translation, and a good knowledge of the texts is the basis of answers for most of the other questions.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Virgil Aeneid IV

Almost all candidates were able to answer **Question 1 (ii)**. There was a divergence of views on whether *illa fuga silvas saltusque peragrat Dictaeos* referred to Dido's wanderings through the city of Carthage, or more figuratively to her mental aberrations, and whether *pastor agens telis* referred to Aeneas or Cupid. Many candidates were confused as to the time of day in **Question 1 (iv)**, but found plenty of evidence in the passage to answer **Question 1 (v)** correctly.

In answers to **Question 2 (ii)**, most candidates were able to scan the line correctly, and this allowed them to formulate good answers to **Question 2 (iii)**. In answers to **Questions 2 (iv)** and **(v)**, not all candidates looked at the line numbers specified, resulting in some confusion.

There were some good answers to **Question 3**, with many candidates noting that much of our knowledge of Aeneas comes through the words of Dido. There were a few disappointing answers that suggested that candidates had learned set answers about the character of Aeneas in the *Aeneid* as a whole, with frequent references to *furor* and *pietas* - not especially relevant to this question. The best answers were those from candidates who had thought for themselves about the passage set and responded to the question spontaneously.

Section B

Two Centuries of Roman Prose

Background knowledge in answers to **Question 4 (i)** was sometimes weak, with vague references to 'The Golden Age' and Aeneas' foundation of Rome *(sic)*. But knowledge of the text itself was generally good, and this produced some excellent answers to **Questions 4 (ii)**, **(iii)** and **(v)**. Similarly, in answers to **Question 5**, candidates displayed a good knowledge of the events described in the passage.

In answers to **Question 6**, there was a good variety of ideas, with most candidates pointing out the difference in subject matter between Petronius' fiction and the more factual writings of Sallust and Tacitus - although shrewder candidates questioned even their veracity. Some assumed that Petronius' style was 'modern' and even near to Italian, rather than colloquial, but of its period. In answers to **Question 4 (ii)**, most candidates were able to identify various stylistic features such as asyndeton and chiasmus, but several failed to give examples from the text. Similarly, in answers to **Question 6**, some candidates were content to produce a list of such technical terms, without examples to show that they had understood particular stylistic features.