

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

CLASSICAL GREEK

H444

For first teaching in 2016

H444/03 Summer 2019 series

Version 1

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates. The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report. A full copy of the question paper can be downloaded from OCR.



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Paper 3 series overview

The majority of candidates again seemed comfortable with the different types of questions and were able to produce good answers across the paper. The vast majority had no issues with running out of time on the paper or spending too long on a particular question. Several candidates chose to write their essay first before tackling the shorter questions. This often worked well but it is important that candidates make clear what question they are attempting. Writing the question number in the margin is sufficient for this.

As for last year, the key point to be aware of is the need in 15 mark questions and essays for candidates to answer the question that is asked rather than the question they would have liked to have been asked. The best answers maintained a constant focus on the question meaning that their evaluation was consistently good throughout their answer. Some candidates lost focus in evaluation and didn't always answer the question directly.

On the 15 mark questions, some candidates adopted a style of writing a paragraph in English but including the Greek for some words in their point rather than analyse a specific quotation. This did not demonstrate a high level of engagement with the text.

It was clear that many candidates knew their set texts extremely well and it was pleasing to see the range of evidence used in the essays.

Question 1 (a)

- 1 Read the following passages and answer the questions.

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Thucydides, *Histories* 4.21

- (a) Translate οἱ δὲ τὰς μὲν σπονδάς ... καὶ τῷ πλήθει πιθανώτατος (lines 4–7).

Write your translation on alternate lines.

[5]

This question was very well done by most candidates. One thing to check for would be candidates making sure that they have translated the whole of the passage. Some candidates clearly knew the translation but missed out a few words possibly because of a desire to move on to the next question. Some candidates included translation of the preceding Greek section – they were not penalised for this. Finally, describing Cleon as a ‘people-leader’ conveys the meaning but isn’t really an English word. ‘Demagogue’ would have been better.

Question 1 (b)

- (b) καὶ ἔπεισεν ... ἀμφοτέροις (lines 7–13): explain the proposal of Cleon outlined here. [5]

There were no problems with this question. Most candidates showed excellent knowledge of this section and scored full marks by translating the relevant Greek.

Question 1 (c)

- (c) τοὺς ἐν τῇ νήσῳ (lines 8–9): who were these people, and why were they on the island? [2]

Virtually all the candidates knew that ‘these people’ referred to Spartan soldiers but fewer were able to give a reason as to why they were on the island. The common mistake was to say that they were being blockaded by the Athenians but this doesn’t really explain their original motive for being there.

Exemplar 1

	a	These were the Spartan hoplites who were on the island
		to attack the Athenians who were on Pylos, since it was
		Lacanian land. They were then stranded there because of the
		Athenian attack on the 'harbour' outside Pylos.

Exemplar 1 shows a candidate achieving 2 marks. They give a reason why the Spartans had been put on the island in the first place which gets them a second mark. They also then mention the blockade which is not creditworthy.

Question 1 (d)

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Thucydides, *Histories* 4.27.1–2

(d)* In this passage, how effectively does Thucydides convey the despondency in Athens at this time?

You should refer **both** to the content **and** to the language of the passage.

[15]

The majority of candidates had a good understanding of the passage and most of the answers covered a range of points. The best candidates looked to discuss Thucydides' style as well as the content of the passage. Style terms were generally used well with subsequent explanation although there were a few candidates who relied on just naming a style term for their analysis.

Question 2 (a)

- 2 Read the following passages and answer the questions.

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Plato, *Apology* 19d–20b

- (a) What were the intellectual interests of the sophists listed in lines 3–5?

[3]

The question wanted specific interests of the named sophists, and some candidates were able to show good factual knowledge on this. However many candidates chose to instead explain what sophists did, which doesn't really answer the question.

Exemplar 2

Gorgias was interested in the power of words and rhetorical abilities; he wrote the Encomium of Helen on this subject. Prodicus was interested in linguistics and Hippias was a polymath so he studied a variety of subjects including astronomy and rhetoric.

Exemplar 2 shows a candidate achieving 3 marks with good knowledge of the three sophists. Mentioning the Encomium is impressive but not necessary for the mark, and 'polymath' would have been sufficient for Hippias.

Question 2 (b)

(b) Translate τούτων γὰρ ἕκαστος ... χάριν προσειδέναι (lines 5–8).

[5]

The translation was again done extremely well by the majority of the candidates. The only area to comment on was some candidates being too free in their translation for 'to leave the company of those men'.

Question 2 (c)

(c) εἰ μὲν σου τῷ ὑεῖ ... ἐπιστήμων ἐστίν (lines 12–17): explain the analogy of the colts and calves.

[4]

Many candidates explained the analogy extremely well drawing out the key points of the argument and commenting on the need to teach excellence in humans. Where candidates tended to lose marks was in a general explanation that didn't give the necessary specific detail and was too brief as a result.

Question 2 (d)

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Plato, *Apology* 23c–d

(d)* How effectively does Socrates appeal to the jury in these lines?

You should refer **both** to the content **and** to the language of the passage.

[15]

This question was generally done very well with the majority of candidates able to analyse both the style and content of the passage. When discussing the superlatives used, the better candidates explained the reason behind these rather than just using the term. It was pleasing to see many candidates analysing the choice of verbs made by Socrates. Most candidates showed good knowledge of the context to help argue how effective the appeal was.

Question 3 (a)

- 3 Read the following passages and answer the questions.

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Thucydides, *Histories* 4.36

- (a) ὁ τῶν Μεσσηνίων στρατηγὸς (line 1): why were the Messenians on the side of the Athenians? [2]

This question was done very well with most candidates able to show excellent knowledge.

Question 3 (b)

- (b) Translate ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἀπέραντον ἦν ... δοκεῖν βιάσσεσθαι τὴν ἔφοδον (lines 1–4).

Write your translation on alternate lines.

[5]

The translation was generally done extremely well. Some candidates were too free in their translations of 'was never ending' and 'toiled in vain' but the majority of translations were excellent.

Question 3 (c)

- (c) λαβὼν δὲ ἃ ᾔτησατο ... ἐκράτουν ἤδη τῶν ἐφόδων (lines 4–14): with reference to these lines, explain the comparison which Thucydides draws between the events in this passage and the conflict with the Persians. [6]

It was clear that the majority of candidates had excellent knowledge of the two battles. Some candidates included Greek quotations in their answers: this is not necessary in this question. Several candidates commented on the Spartans being weak from hunger but this was not common to both battles.

Exemplar 3

c)	Thucydides draws a comparison with what happened during these events and the events at Thermopylae. They set out from a hidden position so that they were undetected and went round on the most precipitous part of the island, flanking them, causing panic to them with unexpectedness. The Athenians were then encouraged as this worked, the Spartans were then attacked on both sides, comparing small with large, the battle of Thermopylae when they were destroyed when the Persians went round another path. After they endured no longer with few fighting many and with physical weakness. Then the Athenians secured the entrances.
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Exemplar 3 shows a candidate who achieved 6 marks on this question. As stated, there is no need to include Greek in the response here, and their response is concise but factual. The candidate does not waste words here and includes lots of relevant detail.

Question 3 (d)

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Thucydides, *Histories* 4.32.3–4

(d)* In this passage, how does Thucydides convey the difficulties which Demosthenes' tactics will cause for the Spartans?

You should refer **both** to the content **and** to the language of the passage.

[15]

The majority of candidates analysed the content of the passage very well and picked out a range of relevant points on the tactics used. Stronger responses then looked to analyse the language and style as well. There were some good ideas discussed on use of superlatives, polysyndeton, and the positioning of words.

Question 4 (a)

4 Read the following passages and answer the questions.

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Plato, *Apology* 37e3–38b5

- (a) ἴσως οὖν ... πείσεσθέ μοι λέγοντι (lines 1–8): with reference to details in these lines, explain why Socrates cannot 'live in silence' (line 1). [5]

This question was done extremely well with almost all candidates scoring full marks.

Question 4 (b)

- (b) Translate τὰ δὲ ἔχει μὲν οὕτως ... μοι τιμῆσαι (lines 8–13).

Write your translation on alternate lines.

[5]

The translation was well done with no problems on this passage.

Question 4 (c)

- (c) εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἦν μοι χρήματα ... ἀργυρίου (lines 10–13): explain Socrates' argument in these lines. [3]

The majority of candidates scored full marks on this question. Direct translation of the Greek was common and completely acceptable.

Question 4 (d)

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(d)* How does Plato depict Socrates' character in these lines?

You should refer **both** to the content **and** to the language of the passage.

[15]

The question was generally answered well and it was clear that the majority of the candidates had a very good knowledge of the trial. There was lots of focused analysis on how he addressed the jurors and his concerns for his sons. Socrates' use of personal pronouns also saw some really precise discussion in stronger responses.

Question 5 (a)

5 Read the following passages and answer the questions.

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Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1.2.17–19

(a) Translate ἴσως οὖν εἴποι τις ἂν ... ἃ διδάσκουσι καὶ τῷ λόγῳ προσβιβάζοντας (lines 1–5).

Write your translation on alternate lines.

[5]

The few candidates that did this question handled the translation very well.

Question 5 (b)

(b) οἶδα δὲ καὶ Σωκράτην ... τῶν ἄλλων ἀνθρωπίνων (lines 5–7): what does Xenophon tell us about Socrates' teaching methods in these lines? [3]

This question was also done extremely well.

Question 5 (c)

(c) οἶδα δὲ καὶ ἐκείνῳ σωφρονοῦντε ... δύνανται (lines 7–16): explain Socrates' argument in this passage. [5]

Although very few candidates mentioned Xenophon's claim of personal experience, the question was answered well with lots of excellent background detail on the cases involving Alcibiades and Critias.

Question 5 (d)

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Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1.2.33–34

(d)* What picture of Socrates emerges in this passage?

You should refer **both** to the content **and** to the language of the passage.

[15]

This question was done extremely well by candidates who showed an excellent knowledge of events as well as good analysis of the language used in the passage.

Question 6

6* How good is Thucydides at explaining the reasons for the actions, and the causes of the events, that he describes in his account of the Pylos campaign? [20]

Many candidates showed an excellent knowledge of events in the Pylos campaign and used a range of evidence to support their ideas. Less successful candidates tended to focus more on AO2 giving many examples of things that had happened and then concluding paragraphs with a generic comment on how Thucydides explains things.

Better candidates tended to outline themes of Thucydides' account such as focusing on leaders (both Athenian and Spartan) as well as the role played by chance. Often the counter-argument then focused on his dislike and bias against Cleon. These essays tended to score better on AO3 because of the greater evaluation throughout the essay.

Question 7

7* 'Socrates' behaviour in the *Apology* fully explains why the jury found him guilty.' To what extent do you agree with this view? [20]

Again the majority of candidates showed excellent subject knowledge and covered a range of examples in their essays. The vast majority tended to follow a structure of looking at negatives of behaviour, at positive behaviour and other reasons for the guilty verdict.

Excellent knowledge of the context was shown leading to some intelligent and perceptive points made about his involvement in the trial of the generals.

Question 8

- 8* To what extent does Xenophon's account in the *Memorabilia* show that the Athenians were wrong to put Socrates to death? [20]

Very few candidates tackled this essay. Those that did tended to do very well with good factual knowledge on the various individuals mentioned in mark scheme as well as perceptive evaluation.

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