

OCR Report to Centres

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This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the syllabus content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

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CONTENTS

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Biblical Hebrew (J196)

OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

Content	Page
A201/01 Language	1
A202/01 Literature	4

A201/01 Language

Q1(a)

נראה: Some candidates confused the *nif'al* with *hof'al*, translating this as 'was shown'. Better candidates responded with 'appeared'; 'is seen' is also acceptable.

משפט: Candidates commonly translate this as 'the law of', or 'the judgement of', without taking note of the fact that this does not make sense in the context. Better candidates used their knowledge of Biblical narrative to reference this verb in other contexts where it means 'appearance', and were awarded the mark. In this context, 'conduct' or 'behaviour' would be the most sensible translation.

נעצרה: Some candidates recognised the verb root and earned one mark. The second mark required the candidate to recognise the cohortative form of this verb.

עלה: To gain the mark candidates had to state 'burnt offering', or 'elevated offering' to distinguish this form of sacrifice from others.

מלאך: Candidates are required to recognise the construct form of nouns.

Q1(b)

Candidates should be trained to translate into English. Many candidates simply transliterated words, such as 'ohel moed', 'mishkon' and 'bomoh'.

This question was competently answered by most candidates, with many recognising difficult roots and conjugations. Some of the common errors are listed here:

ויתחזק should be translated as 'strengthened himself'.

ראשי אבות: A few of the better candidates understood that 'אבות' refers to family groups / tribes. Many others translated this as 'the heads of the fathers'; with a few suggesting 'the heads of the forefathers'.

שם: This was commonly identified as שם; accurate reading of vowels is necessary.

יען: Many wrongly identified this as 'answer' instead of 'since'.

Q2

(b) Occasionally 'נגד' was mistaken for 'נגב'.

(c)(ii) Some candidates recognised the influence of the guttural letter on the preceding vowel, but failed to mention the compensating for a *dagesh*.

(e) 'Mountain' and 'river' were easily identified. ערבה, שפלה and חוף הים were often missed.

(f) לא אוכל was often misunderstood as meaning 'don't eat!' In some instances candidates recognised the verb 'being able', but failed to note the first person singular 'א'.

(h)(ii) To gain this mark, candidates had to recognize 'אויב – enemy' – 'The L-rd has given your enemies into your hands'.

(i) וירדו אחריו was frequently taken to mean 'they chased after them' instead of 'they went down after him'.

Many candidates did not recognise 'וילכדו – they captured'. 'מעברות – crossing places' was very rarely noted correctly.

(j) The majority of candidates earned one mark for noting 'ten thousand'. Some earned the second mark for noting 'approximately'. 'Like ten thousand' earned only one mark – sensible English is necessary.

(k) Candidates responded to this question by noting 'carriers'. Some also recognised 'diggers'. Not many understood that these officers were supervisors / overseers, and not simply 'officers'.

(l) 'וַיִּסְעוּ' is in the *hif'il* conjugation – 'they transported'. Some candidates offered 'they carried', which does not earn a mark.

(m)(i) Better candidates recognised that the number 'fifty' has a pronominal suffix.

(n)(i) Many candidates wrote: 'vav conversive'. This is in fact a *vav* consecutive used conversively. Candidates who noted that this *vav* changes the translation of the verb from imperfect to perfect earned the mark.

(o)(i) Simply stating 'after a *vav* conversive' does not earn the mark. The *vav* conversive can also be 'י' and does not require a *dagesh*. Candidates must note that it is a 'י' that normally has a *dagesh* in the following letter.

(o)(ii) Almost no candidates earned this point. Very few noted 'after a short vowel'. To earn this mark candidates had to note that this is a long-vowelled syllable after a short vowel.

A202/01 Literature

General comments

Roughly a third of the candidates did questions 1 and 2,

Question 1

- (a) – (b) These were well answered by most candidates.
- (c) (i) Many candidates failed to recognise the use of the pluperfect tense but since this is considered a minor error they were not penalised if the rest of the translation was good.
- (c) (ii) Most scripts just translated 'idols' or 'figurines' but did not give the origin of the word e.g. תורפה 'weak' or רפה 'immoral'.
- (d) There were a variety of answers to this question and all valid responses were given credit.
- (e) A significant number of candidates provided the wrong answer. Common errors included 'the Jordan' or 'the Jabbok' which were incorrect.
- (f) Most responses were of a high quality although some had rather colourful translations of the words אכלני הרב ('the sword consumed me', 'I ate Horeb') and קרח ('Korach', 'flowers').
- (g) The vast majority of answers for this question were excellent.
- (h) Whilst many candidates answered this question correctly, others just wrote 'vav conjunctive', failing to explain the vowel rather than the letter.
- (i) Some referred to Jacob's dream instructing him to leave Aram instead of the correct answer.
- (j) Most candidates recognised the Hiphil conjugation but some wrote Piel (probably because of the sheva under the yud prefix).
- (k) Many candidates scored full marks for this question.

Question 2

- (a) This was answered correctly by practically all candidates. The examiners would like to point out, however, that the rubric of the question specifically asks the candidates to answer the questions in English. A minority responded to this question in Hebrew which technically invalidated the answer.
- (b) Most scored well on this question though some wrote that the word ואשלחה ('I have sent') referred to the animals and not to the messengers.
- (c) This passage was well translated although some struggled with the word ויצר which was interpreted as 'and he created' or 'and he went out'.
- (d) Although half the candidates answered this question well the other half failed to score the mark.
- (e) A fair number of candidates just translated the lines referred to in the question and failed to realise that Jacob had gone from poverty to wealth.

- (f) (i) + (ii)** Many candidates mentioned the fact that the numbers usually come before the nouns but here they follow them either to heighten the drama or because this is the characteristic of lists in the Bible.

Others made the point that the females preceded the males and gave the reason that there were more females or that Jacob gave Esau a generous gift of animals which could reproduce. This was accredited equally.

- (g)** Although many gave the correct answer, a significant number of candidates did not realise that this was a Pe-Nun verb where the Nun was missing.
- (h)** This was well translated except that a significant number of scripts had 'when you meet Esau my brother' instead of 'when my brother Esau meets you'. Other responses omitted the ל i.e. 'to whom do you belong' and wrote 'who are you'.
- (i)** (i) + (iii) were well answered but for (ii) many did not explain that the word על was like עם 'with'.
- (j)** There were many good responses to this question but the examiners could not give credit for 'praying to G-d' or 'preparing for war'.

Question 3

- (a)** Surprisingly about half of the answers said 'G-d to Joshua' and scored zero. Some wrote 'Joshua to the elders of Israel' and only scored one mark.
- (b)** Well answered.
- (c)** **(i)** Some very good free-flowing translations were offered although there were some erratic translations of ים הערבה including 'south sea' and ים המלח which a few candidates misinterpreted as the 'sea of Reeds'.
- (ii)** Many answered correctly according to the Mark Scheme. Credit was also given for the 'short and long vowels' rule.
- (d)** Many just wrote 'carriers of the Ark of the Covenant of the L-rd' which gained only one mark.
- (e)** Well answered.
- (f)** Also well answered.
- (g)** Most recognised the Piel but some did not realise the word is in the imperative form.
- (h)** The vast majority of scripts had the right answer but other candidates wrote 'part of root' which is, of course, wrong.
- (i)** There were two marks for any two of three points and most candidates scored two marks.

Question 4

- (a) + (b)** Generally answered correctly.
- (c)** Many, but by no means all, recognised that the first two words were after an oath and therefore a double negative meaning 'surely'. Otherwise this passage was well tackled. A few candidates struggled with the number '85' and wrote '58'. Similarly, 45 was written as 54.

- (d) (i) and (ii) Most responded well to this question although, as with 1c(ii) many candidates simply answered that the giants were 'very big' and failed to provide any linguistic comment.
- (e) + (f) were well answered
- (g) Candidates had to write 'set aside' rather than 'sanctify'. Credit was given for 'verb' and 'noun' but those who put addressed ויקדישו alone had to write some description of the verb e.g. Hiphil.
- (h) (i) and (iii) were, in the main, correctly answered but (ii) seemed to pose a problem to a few candidates who wrote 'it' or 'feminine' rather than the 'extended imperative'.
- (i) This was well answered for the most part but some understood המועדה as 'festivals' or 'testimony'. For future reference, centres are advised that when a question asks candidates to 'explain a phrase', the expected response should have the derivation of the phrase rather than general comments about meaning and context.
- (j) The vast majority answered this quite competently.

Question 5

- (a) Although the answer was actually in the text, those who wrote 'the prophet's house' were also given credit.
- (b) Well answered.
- (c) (i) Most responses were correct. Some pointed out the final Mem suffix but scored zero as this is not a difficulty.
- (c) (ii) Many candidates only gained one mark here for they had two answers which were too similar to be awarded the extra mark. E.g. 'one son started and others joined in; one son gave the basic story and other sons gave the details'.
- (d) (i) + (ii) A variety of answers were offered and were given credit if plausible. Centres are advised that if a question asks for 'difficulty' with a word or phrase, it refers to a linguistic difficulty and not a contextual inconsistency.
- (e) Many translated this passage well although some slightly misunderstood the word השיבו which is a Hiphil and not a Kal.
- (f) + (g) Well answered.
- (h) Quite a significant number of candidates failed to recognise the Passive Kal participle.
- (i) Many just wrote 'his' rather than an indicator of a plural noun.
- (j) The examiners only gave credit if the candidate wrote about the mention of Shomron being anachronistic as it had not yet been built.
- (k) Some responded that there were forbidden altars. Although this is true, this fact is not mentioned in these lines and could not gain a mark.
- (l) Many answered this correctly.

Question 6

- (a) (i)** Most candidates correctly answered 'Baasha'.
- (a) (ii)** This was well answered although there had to be mention of an assassination rather than just a rebellion.
- (b) (i)** posed few problems to candidates.
- (b) (ii)** Credit was given for 'north-east of Israel' or 'Syria'. Many wrote 'in Damascus' which scored zero.
- (c)** Very few actually knew the root פָּרַח and many thought the word was Hophal.
- (d)** Whilst the vast majority recognised the dagesh after a vav conversive, many thought the one in the Dalet was the dagesh in the middle root letter of a Piel. To get the second mark, candidates had to mention both that the Dalet is a 'begad kefat' letter and that it receives a dagesh as it begins a new syllable/after a silent sheva. Some candidates failed to explain this fully.
- (e)** Very few candidates had problems responding to this question.
- (f) + (g)** Most answered these correctly.
- (h)** Those who just wrote the Book of Chronicles could not receive credit as this could be confused with the book of the Bible with same name. There were enough points though for any candidate to gain both marks.
- (i)** Many responses showed that candidates could extract relevant points from the passage.

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