

ENTRY LEVEL CERTIFICATE IN CLASSICAL GREEK

R446: Exemplar Task: Part 2 Classical Greek Culture

400 word task

Classical Greek Literature in translation



INSTRUCTIONS TO TEACHERS

- Please refer to Section 4 of the specification for instructions on completing internal assessment tasks.
- Students should have studied selections chosen from Homer's *Odyssey* in class before completing this task and should have access to the extracts and to their notes while completing the task.
- The total number of marks for this task is **40**.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

- This document consists of **4** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.



This is a literary task. It would be appropriate to set the scene in any given passage. The passage below is a suggestion of length and approach. Centres should be alert to choosing suitable content.

Exemplar Task:

Homer

Odyssey Book IX, lines 308–423 (The blinding of the Cyclops)

As soon as Dawn appeared, fresh and rosy-fingered, the Cyclops relit the fire and milked his splendid ewes and goats, all in their proper order, putting her young to each. Having efficiently completed all these tasks, he once more snatched up a couple of my men and prepared his meal. When he had eaten, he turned his plump flocks out of the cave, removing the great doorstone without an effort. But he replaced it once more, as though he were putting the lid on a quiver. Then, with frequent whistles, he drove his plump flocks off towards the mountain, and I was left with murder in my heart, scheming how to pay him out if only Athene would grant me my prayer. The best plan I could think of was this.

Lying by the pen the Cyclops had a huge staff of green olive-wood, which he had cut to carry in his hand when it was seasoned. To us it looked more like the mast of some black ship of twenty oars, a broad-bottomed merchantman such as makes long sea-voyages. That was the impression which its length and thickness made on us. Standing beside this piece of timber I cut off a fathom's length, which I handed over to my men and told them to smooth it down. When I had done this I stood and sharpened it to a point. Then I hardened it in the fire, and finally I carefully hid it in the dung, of which there were great heaps scattered throughout the cave. I then told my company to cast lots for the dangerous task of helping me to lift the pole and twist it in the Cyclops' eye when he was sound asleep. The lot fell on the very men that I myself would have chosen, four of them, so that counting myself we made a party of five.

Evening came, and with it the Cyclops, shepherding his plump flocks, every one of which he herded into the broad cave, leaving none out in the walled yard, either because he suspected something or because a god had ordered him to. He lifted the great doorstone, set it in its place, and then sat down to milk his ewes and bleating goats, which he did methodically, giving each mother its young one in due course. When he had efficiently completed all these tasks, he once more snatched two of us and prepared his supper. Then with an olive-wood bowl of my dark wine in my hands, I went up to him and said: "Here, Cyclops, have some wine to wash down that meal of human flesh, and find out for yourself what kind of vintage was stored away in our ship's hold. I brought it for you as an offering in the hope that you would take pity on me and help me on my homeward way. But your savagery is more than we can bear. Hard-hearted man, how can you expect ever to have a visitor again from the world of men? You have not behaved rightly."

The Cyclops took the wine and drank it up. And the delicious drink gave him such exquisite pleasure that he asked for another bowlful. "Give me more, please, and tell me your name, here and now – I would like to make you a gift that will please you. We Cyclopes have wine of our own made from the grapes that our rich soil and rains from Zeus produce. But this vintage of yours is a drop of the real nectar and ambrosia."

So said the Cyclops, and I handed him another bowlful of the sparkling wine. Three times I filled it for him; and three times the fool drained the bowl to the dregs. At last, when the wine had fuddled his wits, I addressed him with soothing words.

"Cyclops," I said, "you ask me my name. I'll tell it to you; and in return give me the gift you promised me. My name is Nobody. That is what I am called by my mother and father and by all my friends."

The Cyclops answered me from his cruel heart. "Of all his company I will eat Nobody last and the rest before him. That shall be your gift."

He had hardly spoken before he toppled over and fell face upwards on the floor, where he lay with his great neck twisted to one side, and all-compelling sleep overpowered him. In his drunken stupor he vomited, and a stream of wine mixed with morsels of men's flesh poured from his throat. I went at once and thrust our pole deep under the ashes of the fire to make it hot, and meanwhile gave a word of encouragement to all my men, to make sure that no one would hang back through fear. When the fierce glow from the olive stake warned me that it was about to catch alight in the flames, green as it was, I withdrew it from the fire and my men gathered around. A god now inspired them with courage. Seizing the olive pole, they drove its sharpened end into the Cyclops' eye, while I used my weight from above to twist it home, like a man boring a ship's timber with a drill which his mates below him twirl with a strap they hold at either end, so that it spins continuously. In much the same way we handled our pole with its red-hot point and twisted it in his eye till the blood boiled up round the burning wood. The scorching heat singed his lids and brow all round, while his eyeball blazed and the very roots crackled in the flame. The Cyclops' eye hissed round the olive stake in the same way that an axe or adze hisses when a smith plunges it into cold water to quench and strengthen the iron. He gave a dreadful shriek, which echoed round the rocky walls, and we backed away from him in terror, while he pulled the stake from his eye, streaming with blood. Then he hurled it away from him with frenzied hands and raised a great shout to other Cyclopes who lived in neighbouring caves along the windy heights. Hearing his screams they came from every quarter, and gathering outside the cave asked him what the matter was.

"What on earth is wrong with you, Polyphemus? Why must you disturb the peaceful night and spoil our sleep with all this shouting? Is a robber driving off your sheep, or is someone trying by treachery or violence to kill you?"

Out of the cave came mighty Polyphemus' voice in reply: "O my friends, it's Nobody's treachery, not violence, that is doing me to death."

"Well then," came the immediate reply, "if you are alone and nobody is assaulting you, you must be sick and sickness comes from almighty Zeus and cannot be helped. All you can do is pray to your father, the Lord Poseidon."

And off they went, while I laughed to myself at the way in which my cunning notion of a false name had taken them in. The Cyclops, still moaning in agonies of pain, groped about with his hands and pushed the rock away from the mouth of the cave. Then he sat himself down in the doorway and stretched out both arms in the hope of catching us in the act of slipping out among the sheep. What a fool he must have thought me! Meanwhile I was cudgelling my brains for the best possible course, trying to hit on some way of saving my friends as well as myself. I thought up plan after plan, scheme after scheme. It was a matter of life or death: we were in mortal peril.

Question:

Explain why you would have enjoyed going on adventures with Odysseus. Remember to use the notes you have made when studying this passage to help you answer the question. You should write about 400 words.

OR

Explain why you would **not** have enjoyed going on adventures with Odysseus. Remember to use the notes you have made when studying this passage to help you answer the question. You should write about 400 words.

[40]

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