

GCE

Classical Civilisation

Advanced Subsidiary GCE **H008**

OCR Report to Centres June 2018

About this Examiner Report to Centres

This report on the 2018 Summer assessments aims to highlight:

- areas where students were more successful
- main areas where students may need additional support and some reflection
- points of advice for future examinations

It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification 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.

The report also includes links and brief information on:

- A reminder of our **post-results services** including **reviews of results**
- Link to **grade boundaries**
- **Further support that you can expect from OCR**, such as our Active Results service and CPD programme

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H008/11 The world of the hero

Candidates seemed to respond well to the new specification and enjoyed the new format to the paper. Low tariff questions were on the whole well done whereas longer questions generally needed to include a greater depth of detail. The *Iliad* option was proving nearly as popular as the *Odyssey*.

Q.1 Most candidates were able to answer the first part of the question but not all were able to explain 'why'.

Q.2 Very few candidates could answer this correctly. It was often omitted.

Q.3 This caused very few problems.

Q.4 Candidates seemed to prefer this new type of question and had little difficulty in identifying four relevant points. Some responses would have benefited from explaining themselves in greater detail.

It helps examiners if candidates can make four separate points by using either bullet points of separating paragraphs with a clear line.

Q.5 Not all of the responses understood that Thetis was upset, as she knew her son was going to die.

Q.6 Surprisingly there was an array of answers offered to this question and many would have benefited from possessing a more secure knowledge of the text.

Q.7a Some candidates struggled, as they did not know what an epithet meant even though it is at the heart of epic literature.

Q.7b Most candidates opted to talk about Zeus' power or Thetis' beauty.

Q.8 Most commonly mentioned values were *xenia*, mourning and obedience to Zeus. Again, some candidates might have explained themselves in greater depth although it was encouraging to see that the vast majority were making the most of the passage.

It helps examiners if candidates can make four clear points by using either bullet points of separating paragraphs with a blank line.

Q.9 There were not many excellent answers to this question. The majority managed to make effective comment about the passage – Zeus' power, compassion etc. However, too many responses were not able to say whether this was typical, as they did not know the rest of the epic in sufficient depth. Consequently, many answers were struggling to gain higher than half marks for this question.

Q.10 The vast majority of candidates seemed to possess a decent knowledge of Andromache and many knew the main points about Helen and could see that she could also be viewed as an object of sympathy. Again, many responses would have benefited from possessing a fuller

knowledge of the epic. Only the best responses held this knowledge and were able to make direct comparisons between the two.

Candidates need to be aware that this type of question requires discussion of both sides.

Q.11 This question was attempted by fewer candidates. Nearly all were able to see that there was more to the epic than a list of who killed who although actual reference to where this does happens was often omitted. Other elements often discussed included the opportunity to win fame, pathos, involvement of the gods, domestic affairs, the position of women etc.

Q.12 Nearly everyone answered this question correctly.

Q.13 Some responses needed to give an example from the passage to support their answer.

Q.14 This answer was well completed with many candidates often gaining full marks. It was encouraging to see that many candidates were able to explain themselves in detail.

It helps examiners if candidates can make four clear points by using either bullet points of separating paragraphs with a blank line.

Q.15 Nearly everyone answered this question correctly.

Q.16(a) Recall on the second passage was not as sharp as on the first and perhaps showed that there was a disparity in the time spent revising the later books of the epic. Not all were able to answer it.

Q.16(b) As above.

Q.17 This question elicited a broad range of answers though many were able to mention olive tree.

Q.18 This question caused few problems.

Q.19 It perhaps would be beneficial to spend more time reinforcing what particular features define an epic. Most were able to identify the simile (not metaphor!) but often were left struggling to find other relevant material from the passage.

It helps examiners if candidates can make four clear points by using either bullet points of separating paragraphs with a blank line.

Q.20 As with the Zeus question in Section A, candidates too often struggled to take their answer further than discussing the passage and as a result limited the mark they achieved. The need to know the main themes listed on the specification cannot be stressed enough. Of those answers who were able, to mention the scenes with Telemachus and Eurycleia etc. not all realised the question involved the need to make a comparison between these scenes.

Q.21 This question was well completed. Many answers demonstrated a detailed knowledge of the relevant episodes and were able to explore both sides of the argument in depth. It was encouraging to note the number of answers, which also considered the question from an ancient and modern perspective.

Q.22 This was not as popular but was also done well by the few who tackled it. Again, many considered the different perspectives and also discussed both parts to the question, seeing that unappreciated and unimportant are different things. Those who struggled simply did not know the epic well enough.

H008/21 Greek theatre

There was a smaller entry for the new Specification compared to Legacy. As in previous years, the enjoyment of the candidates came through in their answers. There continued to be some issues which transferred from the Legacy Specification, such as spelling, particularly of proper names and technical terms. Legibility caused more problems than in previous years.

In Q.3 and Q.8, a number of candidates wrote one continuous paragraph, which at times made did not clearly identify the points being made and the supporting evidence. It would be easier for both candidates and examiners if these questions were answered as four separate paragraphs, each explaining one point.

Q.11, about the punishments inflicted by Dionysus, proved to be more popular than Q.10 about the roles of Creon and Tiresias in *Oedipus the King*. Many essays indicated a lack of planning, especially seen in the large number of stars/asterisks used to add points.

Although there were few indications of unfinished scripts, many candidates did not seem to use their time effectively, especially with regard to the essays.

Q.1 The vast majority of candidates got the correct answer.

Q.2 Most candidates got the correct answer, although some simply stated that ‘the priest’ sat in the seat of honour. There were some candidates who seemed not to have any background knowledge, giving answers, such as ‘the king’ or ‘the emperor’.

Q.3 Candidates were generally aware of the different features of the theatre and its layout, but often did not explain how these features affected the audience’s enjoyment, thus not actually answering the question.

Q.4 The vast majority of candidates got the correct answer.

Q.5 The vast majority of candidates got the correct answer.

Q.6 The vast majority of candidates got the correct answer.

Q.7 The vast majority of candidates got the correct answer as Heracles, although not all appreciated that Dionysus had disguised himself as Heracles as he had been to the Underworld before.

Q.8 Candidates were generally able to pick out comic and dramatic techniques found in the passage, but, as with Q.3, did not always explain the effectiveness of the techniques.

Q.9 Candidates generally seemed to have some knowledge of the dramatic festivals and the role of religion in them, although they did not always give specific details. They also mentioned the religious elements of the plays, including the role of gods such as Dionysus, and moral messages conveyed by the plays. Candidates also discussed the theatrical aspects of the plays, and elements which would have contributed to enjoyment of the plays by the audience. Many answers lacked balance, concentrating on one of the two aspects of the question, at the expense of the other. The best answers dealt with both aspects equally before coming to a reasoned conclusion. Better answers also seemed to have made use of the Sources, although not specifically required to do so.

Q.10 Candidates generally had a good idea of the roles played by Creon and Tiresias in the play and were able to discuss these roles when assessing their contribution to the plot. The scene involving Tiresias and Oedipus was usually well discussed, but few candidates referred to all three scenes involving Creon, mostly not discussing the final scene of the play. Some candidates seemed to think that Creon was in the play less than Tiresias. Many answers would have benefitted from specific references to the play, rather than vague generalities which lacked precision. Candidates discussed not only how the two characters progressed the plot itself, but also the effect they had on Oedipus and revealing his character traits. Most candidates decided Tiresias was more important due to his prophecies about Oedipus' past, and his role in the underlying theme of sight and blindness. Some candidates got distracted by considering the roles of other characters.

H008/22 Imperial image

Overall candidates coped well with the new questions types on the new specification. Responses to extended questions were their strengths and so it was felt that responses to the lower tariff answers let some candidates down. Detail and accuracy are needed for these.

Section A

Q.1(a) Various gods were suggested as having the Ara Pacis dedication: Mars Ultor and Venus being the most popular.

Q.1(b) The reason given by many candidates was “to commemorate peace”. This was felt to be too general and specific reference was required. The Ara Pacis was to commemorate the return of Augustus to Rome after three years absence from the campaigns in Spain and Gaul.

Q.2 This was answered successfully by those who based their response on the source.

Q.3 In accordance with the mark scheme, centres should note that the priority in gaining marks is through making four points. These should be clearly different points. For the full 2 marks, points also require supporting evidence drawn from the source. Some discussed other panels (Tellus, Aeneas) but the question specified “Source A”

It helps examiners if candidates can make four separate points by using either bullet points of separating paragraphs with a clear line.

Q.4 Most candidates knew the poem referred to the Parthian Campaign. Some assumed it was the Battle of Actium (or Antium (sic) /Ostia/Gallic wars). “The return of the standards” was not deemed specific enough. In preparation or as part of independent research, candidates might consider the historical background to which prescribed poems relate.

Q.5(a) Propertius in his writing on Augustus frequently refers to him as *Caesar*. Quite a few candidates assumed that any reference to Caesar is for Julius Caesar.

Q.5(b) Augustus was known. Of course, Octavian was also credited.

Q.6 Most candidates knew of the ancestors claimed by the Julian Family were Aeneas and Venus. Key words for marks here were: ancestors, descendants, lineage.

Q.7. As for Q.3 Four different points were to be made with support from the passage. Quite a few responses repeated the gaining of wealth or repeated gaining glory. Most understood the avenging of the disaster of Crassus. This was a question where literary appreciation could also gain credit.

It helps examiners if candidates can make four clear points by using either bullet points of separating paragraphs with a blank line.

Q.8 A simple sentence for an introduction and conclusion will suffice for this question. The question asked candidate to consider whether Augustus was more successful in portraying himself as a man of peace or as a military leader. Too many candidate chose either the military option or the man of peace and therefore did not have a counterargument. This excluded some good responses from the highest Level. Candidates need to be aware that this type of question requires discussion of both sides.

Section B Essays

Candidates scored equally well on both questions.

Q.9 This question was attempted by fewer candidates. A suitable introduction here would be to explain the term *pater patriae* or to place it in its historical/ social context. The assessment of success could be considered after each point made. Several candidates forgot to do this and produced a very fact-heavy response. This limited marks under AO2.

Social, political and historical context is always rewarded though some discussion of supporting sources is also required.

Q.10 This was by far the more popular essay. However, some candidates made assumptions about the title and did not plan their responses accordingly. A good introduction here would have been for candidates to give their understanding of the *message* Augustus wished to spread. And the focus of the question was on Augustus' message – whereas his *image* was often used throughout the response.

Required for discussion were both visual/cultural material and literature. Whereas a 50/50 balance is not required for such responses, too often consideration of literature was left as a passing comment in the conclusion. Some candidates gave general comments “as seen in Horace/Ovid/Propertius” but then did not offer any supporting detail. Candidates should study the marking grids and consider the amount of detail they offer in their responses. Some candidates use this as a vehicle to write in detail about a source known to them (in most cases a page on the Prima Porta statue) and could be more selective in the relevance of the detail offered and its contribution to the answer.

Q.11 Candidates were generally able to discuss the punishments issued by Dionysus, and there were answers which looked at his actions from both a contemporary perspective, and that of a modern audience. Virtually all candidates discussed Pentheus' death, although better answers also considered his humiliation by Dionysus by being possessed and led through Thebes dressed as a Bacchant. Although Pentheus was considered to be worthy of punishment, many considered his punishment to be too harsh, especially in the light of his position as a new king of his city. There were quite a few candidates who dealt only with Pentheus, and did not deal with the rest of his family. Of those who did consider Agave and Cadmus, most thought that Cadmus did not deserve punishment as he was seen to worship Dionysus at the beginning of the play, and advised Pentheus to do so. Agave produced a more mixed reaction. Some thought she also did not deserve her punishment because she too worshipped Dionysus as a Bacchant, but more perceptive answers mentioned the disrespect she showed to Semele and Dionysus. As with Q.10, there were a lot of answers which lacked specific details from the play as evidence to back up their argument.

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