

GCSE (9-1)

Examiners' report

CLASSICAL GREEK

J292

For first teaching in 2016

J292/02 Summer 2022 series

Contents

Introduction	3
Paper 2 series overview	4
Question 1	6
Question 2 (a)	8
Question 2 (b) (i)	8
Question 2 (b) (ii)	8
Question 2 (c)	9
Question 2 (d)	9
Question 3 (a)	10
Question 3 (b)	10
Question 3 (c)	11
Question 4 *	12
Question 5 (a)	14
Question 5 (c)	14
Question 6	15
Question 7	16
Question 8*	18

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. A selection of candidate answers are also provided. 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 and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

Advance Information for Summer 2022 assessments

To support student revision, advance information was published about the focus of exams for Summer 2022 assessments. Advance information was available for most GCSE, AS and A Level subjects, Core Maths, FSMQ, and Cambridge Nationals Information Technologies. You can find more information on our [website](#).

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Paper 2 series overview

As usual, the *Tales from Herodotus* set text was offered by the great majority of Centres. The disruption to the past two examination series, and the consequent extension of the 2020/21 prescription to 2022, had required the production of a third paper from this prescription. Centres evidently made effective use of the 2020 and 2021 papers, alongside the Advance Information released in February 2022, to prepare their candidates, who have been studying Greek in far-from-ideal conditions. The overall standard was, unsurprisingly, a little lower than in the previous full examination cycle (2019), but most candidates fared very well under the circumstances. Examiners felt that while many had simply not had time to develop the skill of detailed textual analysis, candidates nonetheless knew the text well and were able to communicate their understanding with intelligence and insight.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showed detailed knowledge and understanding of the prescribed Greek text • Supported their answers with accurate Greek quotation and translation • Analysed literary style effectively • Used their knowledge of the whole text in their response to the final 10-mark question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offered imprecise translations • Did not support comments with appropriate Greek quotation • Did not analyse linguistic / literary features • Used a prepared essay to answer the final 10-mark question • Showed limited knowledge and understanding of the whole text

Length of lemmas (quoted extracts of Greek) in question stem

A maximum of six words will be quoted in any question stem. Candidates are advised to refer back to the whole passage when answering a question that draws on a section of that passage.

Legibility of Scripts

There were many hard-to-read scripts, which examiners did their best to decipher so that due marks could be given.

Centres are encouraged to make appropriate access arrangements for candidates likely to be disadvantaged by illegible handwriting: type-written scripts are welcome and, indeed, often easier to mark. If the issue of Greek quotation discourages candidates from typing, there are various options to consider, listed here in order of preference:

- **Ideal:** a polytonic Greek keyboard, which can be toggled on an off and allows the typing of diacritical marks (breathings, iota subscripts and accents). Candidates would need to familiarise themselves with the keyboard layout and practise using it in exam conditions.
- **Simpler but acceptable:** the Symbol font in Word for typing Greek quotations without diacritical marks; some practice is advised with this too (e.g. terminal sigma ς = SHIFT + v).
- **Last resort:** hand-written Greek quotations in the answer booklet, clearly linked to the question answered on a type-written response. This is a more time-consuming, fiddly format for on-screen markers to navigate but examiners will read and consider everything written on a script.

OCR support



Centres are encouraged to consult the examiners' report from the previous full examination series (2019), as well as the materials produced for the January 2022 CPD 'Understanding the Assessment' – GCSE Classical Greek (J292)

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/classical-greek-j292-from-2016/>

Question 1

1 Read the passage and answer the question.

ἐβουλευσατό ποτε ὁ Καμβύσης στρατεῖαν ἐπὶ τοὺς μακροβίους Αἰθίοπας οἰκουμένους Λιβύης ἐπὶ τῇ νοτιά θαλάττῃ. ἔδοξε δὲ αὐτῷ πρῶτον κατόπτας ἀποστέλλειν, ὀψομένους τε τὴν ἐν τούτοις τοῖς Αἰθίοψι λεγομένην εἶναι ἡλίου τράπεζαν εἰ ἔστιν ἀληθῶς, καὶ πρὸς ταύτη τὰ ἄλλα κατοψομένους, δῶρα δὲ τῷ λόγῳ φέροντας τῷ βασιλεῖ αὐτῶν.

5

Translation:

Once, Cambyses planned an expedition against the long-lived Ethiopians who dwelt in Libya by the southern sea. He decided to dispatch spies first to see if what, amongst these Ethiopians, is said to be the Table of the Sun really exists, and in addition to this to spy out other things, ostensibly bringing gifts to their king.

Tales from Herodotus XV(B) (*The Ethiopians*) 1.1–7

How does Herodotus' language in this passage create an impression of deception?

You should make **two** points, each supported by close reference to the Greek.

1

.....

.....

.....

.....

2

.....

.....

.....

[4]

More successful candidates selected appropriate Greek quotations, translated these accurately and offered perceptive observations about Herodotus' use of language. The use of the related words κατόπτας... ὀψομένους ... κατοψομένους was a popular choice and there were excellent points made about the embedding of τῷ λόγῳ (ostensibly) between the 'gifts' and 'bringing' to reflect Cambyses' hidden agenda. Less successful candidates gave translations which did not match the Greek quoted. Note that this question, which asks specifically about language, requires at least one style point to access full marks. Exemplar 1 illustrates a more successful response which fell short in this respect.

Exemplar 1

- 1 'ἔδοξε δὲ αὐτῷ πρῶτον κατὰ τῆς ἀποπέμψαις' meaning 'he decided to dispatch spies first' conveys the fact that Cambyses is seeking to deceive the Ethiopians by sending spies, who will not reveal their true identity and will try to go unsuspected ~~of~~ ^{of} their true intention.
- 2 'Ἐπεὶ δὲ τῷ λόγῳ φερόντας', meaning 'ostensibly bringing gifts to their king', indicates that the spies will seek to win favour with the King in order to deceive him into considering them to be his allies or friends, even though Cambyses does not truly seek his friendship.

141

This response offers two good content points, supported by appropriate Greek quotation, accurately translated. It did not earn 4 marks, however, because there is no comment about language.

Question 2 (a)

2 Read the passage and answer the questions.

ἡ μὲν δὴ τράπεζα τοῦ ἡλίου καλουμένη λέγεται εἶναι τοιάδε. Καμβύση δὲ
 ὡς ἔδοξε πέμπειν τοὺς κατασκόπους, αὐτίκα μετεπέμπετο ἐξ Ἐλεφαντίνης
 πόλεως τῶν Ἰχθυοφάγων ἀνδρῶν τινὰς ἐπισταμένους τὴν Αἰθιοπίδα γλῶτταν.
 ἐπεὶ δὲ ἀφίκοντο, ἔπεμπεν αὐτοὺς εἰς τοὺς Αἰθίοπας, ἐντειλάμενος ἅ λέγειν
 χρῆν, δῶρα φέροντας πορφυροῦν τε εἶμα καὶ χρυσοῦν στρεπτὸν περιαιυχένιον
 καὶ ψέλια καὶ μύρου ἀλάβαστρον καὶ φοινικείου οἴνου κάδον.

5

Tales from Herodotus XV(B) (*The Ethiopians*) 1.14–21

(a) ἡ μὲν δὴ τράπεζα ... τοιάδε (line 1): what has Herodotus told us, before this passage, about the food which is placed on the Table of the Sun?

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

This was answered very well by most. Those who gave information about both the nature of the food and one further detail (its source or who consumed it) earned full marks.

Question 2 (b) (i)

(b) μετεπέμπετο ... ἐπισταμένους τὴν Αἰθιοπίδα γλῶτταν (lines 2–3):

(i) whom did Cambyses summon from Elephantine?

..... [1]

Question 2 (b) (ii)

(ii) why were these men a sensible choice for his mission?

..... [1]

Almost all candidates got these questions correct. A few gave the answer 'Ichthyophagi', without translation, for Q2 (b) (i) and therefore lost a mark.

Question 2 (c)

(c) πορφυροῦν τε εἶμα ... καὶ ψέλια (lines 5–6): which **three** gifts are mentioned here?

- 1
- 2
- 3

[3]

Those who focused on the section of the Greek specified in the lemma easily earned full marks. A few were side-tracked by the rest of the sentence, mentioning the flask of perfume or the casket of palm wine, which were treated as Harmful Additions. 'Clothing' was accepted for εἶμα but plurals for singulars and vice versa ('necklaces'; 'bracelet') were not accepted.

Assessment for learning



Candidates are advised to pay careful attention to the section of the Greek specified in the question stem. As noted in the general overview above, the lemma will consist of at most six words.

Question 2 (d)

(d) Why do you think Cambyses sent gifts?

-
-
- [2]

Most candidates gave a thoughtful personal response to this question, with an interesting range of motives suggested.

Question 3 (a)

3 Read the passage and answer the questions.

εἰς τούτους δὴ οὖν τοὺς ἄνδρας ὡς ἀφίκοντο οἱ Ἴχθυοφάγοι, δίδόντες τὰ δῶρα
τῷ βασιλεῖ αὐτῶν ἔλεγον τάδε, “βασιλεὺς ὁ Περσῶν Καμβύσης βουλόμενος
φίλος καὶ ξένος σοι γενέσθαι ἡμᾶς τε ἀπέπεμψεν, εἰς λόγους ἐλθεῖν κελεύων,
καὶ δῶρα ταῦτά σοι δίδωσι, οἷς καὶ αὐτὸς μάλιστα ἦδεται χρώμενος.”

Tales from Herodotus XV(B) (*The Ethiopians*) 1.28–33

(a) τούτους ... τοὺς ἄνδρας (line 1): in addition to their height, what **two** things has Herodotus already highlighted as special about these people?

1

2

[2]

Two marks were earned by those who offered two of the three possible answers (long-lived / very beautiful / different customs). Many candidates did not get full marks, however, neglecting the superlative force of κάλλιστοι, or suggesting that Herodotus has highlighted the Ethiopians' strength. Note that the detail about their unusually long lives is printed (and translated) in the first question of the paper.

Question 3 (b)

(b) εἰς λόγους ἐλθεῖν κελεύων (line 3): what do the envoys say they have been ordered to do by Cambyses?

.....

..... [1]

The great majority got this right. Some incorrectly interpreted the phrase as an instruction about the words (λόγους) the envoys were told to say to the Ethiopian king.

Question 3 (c)

(c) καὶ δῶρα ... χρώμενος (line 4).

Pick out and translate a **three-word Greek phrase** which emphasises that Cambyses placed a high value upon the gifts he sent.

Greek phrase:
English translation:

[2]

The steer in the question ('three-word Greek phrase') helped most candidates to identify an appropriate phrase, and translations generally matched the quotation chosen. Even so, some offered two, four or five-word phrases, earning at most one mark.

Question 4 *

4* Read the passage and answer the question.

λαβὼν δὲ τὸ εἶμα τὸ πορφυροῦν ἤρετο ὅ τι εἶη καὶ ὅπως πεποιημένον· εἰπόντων δὲ τῶν Ἰχθυοφάγων τὴν ἀλήθειαν περὶ τῆς πορφύρας καὶ τῆς βαφῆς, δολερούς μὲν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἔφη εἶναι, δολερὰ δὲ αὐτῶν τὰ εἶματα. δεύτερον δὲ περὶ τοῦ χρυσοῦ περιαιχενίου ἤρετο καὶ περὶ τῶν ψελίων· ἐξηγουμένων δὲ τῶν Ἰχθυοφάγων, γελάσας ὁ βασιλεὺς καὶ νομίσας αὐτὰ εἶναι πέδας εἶπεν ὡς παρ' ἑαυτοῖς εἰσι ῥωμαλεώτεραι τούτων πέδαι.

5

Tales from Herodotus XV(B) (*The Ethiopians*) 2.1–9

In this passage, how does Herodotus make the exchange between two different cultures tense and entertaining?

In your answer you may wish to consider:

- the king's questions and the visitors' replies
- how the king shows his opinion of the gifts

You must refer to the **Greek** and discuss Herodotus' use of language.

[8]

This question was well answered on the whole, and many candidates earned full marks or at least reached Level 3. The most successful responses were those which extracted a range of stylistic points from the passage, finding much to say about δολερούς and δολερὰ and the irony that although the spies are speaking the truth (τὴν ἀλήθειαν) about purple dye at this point, the king uses their explanation to highlight their underhand motives. A few candidates noted how Herodotus' emphasis on the luxurious nature of the gifts (not just jewellery and a cloak but a golden twisted necklace; bracelets and a purple cloak) made the Ethiopian king's rejection of them even more surprising and entertaining. Some also commented on the inclusion of the reported speech which, although not historically accurate, brought the passage and the culture clash alive. Examiners particularly enjoyed the references to how Herodotus structures the conversational exchange, with each of the King's questions followed by a genitive absolute.

Less successful candidates applied a style point to arbitrary words in the passage without good evidence, selecting, for example, a word at the start of a sentence or a striking phrase and applying incorrect significance to it. Thus, for example, there was some unconvincing reliance on λαβὼν at the start of the passage, interpreted as an illustration of the king's aggression, as he 'violently snatched' the robe: examiners were not persuaded by this line of reasoning.

In a number of cases, proper style points were missing, with candidates quoting the Greek but not identifying stylistic features from those quotations. There were frequent misuses of literary terms, although these were not penalised if adequately explained by the candidate.

Some candidates did not give much context to their points: for example, the repeated adjective δολερούς / δολερὰ was not always connected to the noun's 'men' and clothes'; and the comparative adjective ῥωμαλεώτεραι and the repeated noun πέδας / πέδαι were noted without supporting contextual detail to explain why the king is talking about 'stronger chains' at this point. See Exemplar 2 below for an illustration of this shortcoming.

Exemplar 2

Herodotus conveys the low-regard the Ethiopian King has for these gifts when he writes "τῆσάν" (chains) "τῆσαν" (chains). The use of polyptoton conveys the Ethiopian King's shock that the Persians actually thought these were useful, good-quality gifts. The drastic difference between the two cultures makes the exchange entertaining.

Herodotus conveys the superiority the Ethiopian King feels towards the Persians when he writes "ἰσχυρωτέρων" (stronger). The use of a comparative highlights this superiority and makes the exchange tense as the Ethiopian King is saying the Persians are inferior in this sense anyway.

Both points here are relevant to the question and supported by Greek quotation, accurately translated. The candidate has also correctly identified stylistic features, commenting on the polyptoton and the use of the comparative adjective. Neither, however, constitutes a good point, since there is insufficient contextual detail to show that the passage has been fully understood.

Assessment for learning



Teachers are encouraged to emphasise what is meant by 'close reference to the Greek': candidates should not just copy out words and phrases but actually engage with the literary effect of the examples chosen. Candidates are advised to avoid listing their points without development: bullet-point style responses are liable to lack depth of analysis.

Centres may want to check that their candidates are able to put into their own words the style tactics of set authors rather than insist on the correct terminology at GCSE level. A common misconception is highlighted below.

Misconception



'Juxtaposition' is a term frequently misused to describe what is technically 'antithesis': the simple word 'contrast' is perfectly acceptable, and indeed more accurate than 'juxtaposition'.

Question 5 (a)

5 Read the passage and answer the questions.

ἀντερομένων δὲ τὸν βασιλέα τῶν Ἰχθυοφάγων περὶ τῆς ζωῆς καὶ διαίτης, ἔφη ἔτη μὲν εἰς εἴκοσι καὶ ἑκατὸν τοὺς πολλοὺς αὐτῶν ἀφικνεῖσθαι, ὑπερβάλλειν δὲ τινὰς καὶ ταῦτα, σίτησιν δὲ εἶναι κρέα ἐφθὰ καὶ πῶμα γάλα. θαῦμα δὲ ποιουμένων τῶν κατασκόπων περὶ τῶν ἐτῶν, ἐπὶ κρήνην αὐτοῖς ἠγήσατο ἀφ' ἧς λουόμενοι λιπαρώτεροι ἐγίνοντο, καθάπερ εἰ ἐλαίου ἢ κρήνη εἶη, ὥς ε' ἀπ' αὐτῆς ὡς εἰ ἴων.

5

Tales from Herodotus XV(B) (*The Ethiopians*) 3.1–8

(a) ἀντερομένων ... διαίτης (line 1): what differences between the Persians and the Ethiopians are being explored at this point?

.....
..... [1]

Question 5 (c)

(c) καθάπερ εἰ ἐλαίου ... ὡς εἰ ἴων (lines 5–6): to what is the spring likened?

.....
..... [1]

Questions 5 (a) and 5 (c) both required two details to earn one mark. While most candidates managed this in question 5 (a), a significant number omitted 'violets' in their response to 5 (c). The two-lines allocated to these responses and the words quoted in the lemmata were an indication that more detail was required than just one or two words. Question 5b was answered almost universally correctly.

Assessment for learning



Candidates should be reminded to look at the whole lemma in the question stem, and to use the number of lines in the answer space as an indication of how much to write.

Question 6

6 Read the passage and answer the question.

ἀσθενές δὲ τὸ ὕδωρ τῆς κρήνης ταύτης οὕτω δὴ τι ἔλεγον εἶναι οἱ κατάσκοποι ὥστε μηδὲν οἷόν τ' εἶναι ἐπ' αὐτοῦ ἐπιπλεῖν, μήτε ξύλον μήτε ὅσα ξύλου ἐστὶν ἐλαφρότερα, ἀλλὰ πάντα χωρεῖν εἰς βυθόν. καὶ διὰ τὸ ὕδωρ τοῦτο, εἴ ἐστιν ἀληθῶς οἷόν τι λέγεται, μακρόβιοι ἂν εἶεν, εἰς πάντα χρώμενοι.

Tales from Herodotus XV(B) (*The Ethiopians*) 3.8–13

What features of this passage might encourage Herodotus' readers to be cautious about believing strange tales about exotic lands?

You should make **two** points, each supported by close reference to the Greek.

1

.....

.....

.....

.....

2

.....

.....

.....

[4]

The most successful candidates found plenty to say here about the hearsay nature of the report and the hyperbolic description of the water's qualities. There were perceptive style points made too, although these are not required in the four-mark AO3 question when it is not accompanied by an English translation: two well-made content points can earn 4 marks. Less successful candidates did not explain their points fully or demonstrated insufficient understanding of the Greek. Thus, for example, ἀληθῶς or the repeated negatives μηδὲν ... μήτε ... μήτε were often quoted without sufficient context or clarification.

Question 7

7 Read the passage and answer the question.

Δαρεῖος δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα καλέσας Ἰνδῶν τοὺς καλουμένους Καλλατίας, οἱ τοὺς γονέας κατεσθίουσιν, ἤρετο (παρόντων τῶν Ἑλλήνων καὶ δι' ἑρμηνέως μανθανόντων τὰ λεγόμενα) ἐπὶ τίνι χρήματι δέξαιντ' ἂν τελευτῶντας τοὺς πατέρας κατακάειν πυρὶ.

Tales from Herodotus XX (*The Power of Custom*) 7–11

Translate this passage into English.

.....
.....
.....
.....
..... [5]

There were fewer full mark answers to this question than usual, but it was encouraging that very few candidates got just one or 2 marks or made no response. Marks were most often lost through the omission of words (typically μετὰ ταῦτα, ἐπὶ, δέξαιντ', τελευτῶντας, and πυρὶ), although some such omissions were treated as an inconsequential error. The interpreter was sometimes made plural. Exemplar 3 shows a response which earned 3/5 for these various reasons. Another common error was the lack of co-ordination between the participle καλέσας and the main verb ἤρετο.

Exemplar 3

After these things Darius having called those of the Indians known as Callatae, who eat their parents, ~~he~~ asked them (with the Greeks being present and learning the things being said through interpreters) for what amount of money they would be prepared to burn their fathers. [5]

The overall meaning is clear here but there are two inconsequential errors (plural 'interpreters' and of πυρὶ) and one more serious error (omission of τελευτῶντας).

Misconception



Lack of co-ordination between participles and main verbs is a recurrent translation error. To clarify: acceptable translations of καλέσας ... ἤρξετο would be 'having summoned, (he) asked' or 'summoned and asked' but 'summoned, asked' would be treated as a minor error.

'Receive' was not accepted as a translation of δέξαιντ', which in this context means 'accept' or 'agree to'.

Assessment for learning



To avoid losing marks for omitted words, candidates could be encouraged to tick off the Greek words in the passage printed on the paper, checking that they have translated every one.

Question 8*

8* 'Herodotus was more interested in characters and themes than in facts and events.' Do you agree?

You should support your answer with a range of references to the texts you have read, and you may include passages printed on the question paper. **[10]**

There were some excellent answers to this synoptic essay question and also some less impressive ones. Many candidates wrote at length, producing a well-structured response with clear argument and pertinent examples taken from the whole text. Others found the phrase 'characters and themes' hard to nail down and resorted to reproducing practice essays about characterisation, for instance, or the credibility of Herodotus' account.

The most successful candidates commented on the cultural differences that preoccupy Herodotus, some citing these as examples of 'facts', others identifying a recurrent 'theme'. A few candidates discussed how the Ethiopian king's responses to Cambyses' gifts highlighted both aesthetic and moral differences between the Ethiopians and the Persians. Many used Darius' experiment as further evidence of Herodotus' interest in comparing cultures, although often the details of this experiment were not elucidated. A significant minority omitted the Darius episode altogether: this omission reduced the maximum possible mark to 9/10.

There was some good exploration of Herodotus' interest in the characterisation of Cambyses and his failings, which earned marks when supported by detailed examples from the text. Less successful candidates offered general comments (e.g. 'Cambyses is shown to be an arrogant and angry ruler') without giving precise, supporting evidence.

Candidates perhaps found it harder to give examples of Herodotus' interest in facts but the best responses used geographical details (the location of Libya) and statistical details (120 versus 80 years) to good effect. More successful responses not only discussed Herodotus' frequent references to the vagueness of his sources ('it is said'; 'the locals say') but also noted that Herodotus considers competing accounts: for example, he gives a rational explanation of how the food makes it onto the Table of the Sun as well as the fabled reason.

Weaker responses tended to make only brief references to the prescribed text or to list examples of facts and events versus characters and themes, without developing an argument.

Interestingly there was a general tendency to judge Herodotus by modern standards, and to assume that facts and data equate to good historiography. Very few candidates considered what Herodotus may have been trying to achieve when writing two and a half millennia ago.

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