

GCSE (9-1)

Examiners' report

ANCIENT HISTORY

J198

For first teaching in 2017

J198/11 Summer 2022 series

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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. 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 11 series overview

Due to the adaptations made to the qualification in response to the pandemic, candidates were able to focus their responses to the period study, and the overall engagement of candidates with the topics that were assessed was positive.

This is the second full exam series of the Persian Empire as a period study and centres had prepared candidates well for the assessment objectives, as well as developing candidates' exam technique.

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"> • engaged with Source A for Questions 3 and 4 • identified the success of individual kings • understood the limitations of Greek sources • managed time effectively to develop responses to Question 5 • could spell the names of people and places correctly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focused on the warfare elements of the reign of each king • did not distinguish between different kings • spent too much time responding to Question 2 • listed all their knowledge on a topic, instead of choosing the most relevant points from each king and comparing them.

Question 1 (a)

The Persian Empire, 559–465 BC

1 (a) Name **one** of the peoples Darius conquered. [1]

Less successful responses referred to specific people, e.g. False Smerdis, rather than groups.

Misconception

Darius did not conquer the Scythians, he was pushed back by them.

Question 1 (b)

(b) Give **two** reasons why Darius had the Bisitun (Behistun) inscription constructed. [2]

The most successful responses expanded their responses beyond “propaganda”.

Question 1 (c)

(c) Name **one** battle fought between Greeks and Persians between 490 and 479 BC. [1]

This question was answered well. Some candidates cited the Battle of Eurymedon which is outside the timeframe of the question.

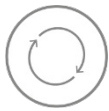
Question 2

2 Outline the main features of the Battle of Salamis.

[6]

The most successful candidates were able to develop three key points regarding the battle itself, after Themistocles' evacuation of the city of Athens. Some candidates confused the Battle of Salamis with the Battle of Pelusium or the Battle of Thermopylae.

Assessment for learning



Encourage students to summarise key events in six sentences. The first in each pair explaining what happened, and the second providing more detail.

Students should be encouraged to spend approximately five minutes answering this type of 'outline' question.

Question 3

3 Using details from **Source A** and your own knowledge, what can we learn about how Cyrus wished to be seen by people in his empire?

[10]

Many successful responses here used the whole passage, explaining and developing each point with their own knowledge. Candidates from across the attainment range were familiar with the Cyrus Cylinder and were able to place it within the context in which it was written. The most successful responses were able to draw out the nature of the object as something produced by Cyrus and therefore were able to give a very detailed and sophisticated evaluation of how he wished to be seen, and compared this with other information they knew.

Misconception



Candidates were able to link the Cyrus Cylinder with the return of the Jewish people from Babylon and the rebuilding of the temple of Jerusalem. It was frequently cited that they are a named people on the Cylinder, they are not, which is surprising to us in the 21st Century.

Exemplar 1

One idea we can gather from passage A was that Cyrus wanted to be seen as a peacebringer. This can be seen in the quote, "in a peaceful manner" which suggests that he wished to be harmless and not bring chaos. This extract from the Cyrus Cylinder shows us that he tried to promote himself as a peacemaker. We also know this from his conquest of Lydia in 547 - 546 BC. When Croesus called out to Apollo to save him, Cyrus was shocked when he did. He then took Croesus off the Pyre and employed him as an advisor. This therefore shows Cyrus wanted to be perceived as a peace bringer.

This candidate has taken a quotation from the passage, explained what it means and made a direct detailed comparison with another event in Cyrus' reign. The response had three of these paragraphs written in this style, covering the beginning, middle and end of the passage.

Question 4

- 4 Using details from **Source A** and your own knowledge, how similarly did Cyrus and Cambyses treat the peoples they conquered? [15]

The higher performance responses to this question used starting points from across the passage, explained and compared with other points in Cyrus' reign and with Cambyses. Candidates should be encouraged to begin their responses to these questions with the passage on the paper, less successful responses did not refer to the passage. The most successful responses were able to highlight when Cyrus did not behave in the way he is represented on the Cyrus Cylinder, and those that argued that Cambyses in the non-Greek sources is presented as treating peoples in a similar way to Cyrus.

Question 5

- 5* 'The building projects of the Persians were their greatest achievement.' How far do you agree with this view? [20]

(✎) Spelling, punctuation and grammar and the use of specialist terminology [5]

The most successful responses to this essay were able to make links directly between the building projects of individual Persian kings and their other achievements, making holistic judgements regarding the aims and purpose of building programmes, in relation to expansion and consolidation of the empire. Less successful responses were focused on listing the features of different building programmes of the kings, focussing predominantly on Pasargadae and Persepolis, or argued against the question without including details of the buildings themselves.

Misconception



The Cyrus Cylinder was cited as a building project.

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