



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Tuesday 3 June 2025 – Morning

A Level Classical Civilisation

H408/34 Democracy and the Athenians

Time allowed: 1 hour 45 minutes



You must have:

- the OCR 12-page Answer Booklet

INSTRUCTIONS

- Use black ink.
- Write your answer to each question in the Answer Booklet. The question numbers must be clearly shown.
- Fill in the boxes on the front of the Answer Booklet.
- Answer **all** the questions in Section A and **one** question in Section B.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is **75**.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets [].
- Quality of extended response will be assessed in questions marked with an asterisk (*).
- This document has **4** pages.

ADVICE

- Read each question carefully before you start your answer.

Section A

Start your answer to each 10, 20 and 30 mark question on a new page.

Source A

Old Oligarch, 2.17–20

Furthermore, <u>oligarchic cities</u> need abide by their oaths and alliances. If they ignore agreements, or if some injustice is done, then there are the names of the handful of people who made the agreement in the first place. But the agreements made by the common people can be thrown out by laying the blame on whoever spoke or took the vote, whilst everyone else claims they were absent or didn't approve of what was agreed in <u>the full Assembly</u> . If it seems like a good idea for their decisions to be ineffective, they make up all sorts of excuses for not doing what they don't want to do. If the common people's policy produces bad results, they blame a small number of people working against them and destroying them while if the policy produces good results, they take all the credit for themselves.	5
They do not allow the common people to be ridiculed in comedy, so they won't be heard of badly. If anyone wants to ridicule a private individual, however, they ask the poet to write it in because they know that the person who gets ridiculed in comedy doesn't generally come from the common people, but is someone who is rich, noble, or well-known. A handful of poor, plebeian types are mocked in comedy, yes, but only if they've been meddling where they shouldn't and trying to rise above their station. This is so the common people don't feel put out by seeing people like them mocked.	10
I believe that the common people in Athens recognise which citizens are good and which are bad, but despite knowing this they tend to like those who are the easiest and most useful for them to like, even if they're bad, and they are also inclined to hate the good. You see, they think that the good are naturally virtuous to the detriment of the people, rather than for their benefit. Of course, on the other hand, some people are not naturally sympathetic to the common people, yet are truly on their side. I excuse the common people for their democracy – one must forgive the everyday man for looking after his own interests. But a man who isn't one of the common people, yet still prefers to live in a democracy rather than an oligarchy, must be preparing to do wrong and has realised that it's easier for evil to go unnoticed in a democracy than in an oligarchy.	15
	20
	25

- 1 '.....oligarchic cities' (line 1). What does the term 'oligarchic' mean? [1]
- 2 'The full Assembly' (line 6). During the period in which the Old Oligarch was writing, where in Athens did meetings of the Assembly take place? [1]
- 3 The author has been nicknamed the 'Old Oligarch'. Explain how this passage shows that this nickname is justified. [10]

Source B

At the start of the 6th century BC there were major problems in Athens. Solon was appointed to the post of Archon because people of all classes knew his opinions. He made a wide range of economic, political and legal reforms and introduced several new laws.

- 4 Give the year in which Solon's Archonship began. [1]
- 5 How did Solon make his opinions known to the Athenians?
Make **two** points. [2]
- 6 Explain how the economic reforms made by Solon benefitted Athenian citizens. [10]
- 7* Solon was regarded as one of the wisest men who had ever lived.

Assess how far you think Solon's political and legal reforms and subsequent events support this view. [20]

[Section A Total: 45]

Section B

Answer **one** question from this section.

Use classical sources, and secondary sources, scholars and/or academic works to support your argument. You should also consider possible interpretations of sources by different audiences.

Either

- 8*** 'Plato is the only Greek author to make serious criticisms of Athenian democracy.'

Evaluate to what extent you agree with this statement. In your answer you should discuss the works of Plato **and at least 2 other** authors you have studied. **[30]**

Or

- 9*** Evaluate to what extent Athenian citizens participated effectively in 5th century Athenian public affairs. In your answer you should include details from **at least 3** of the authors you have studied. **[30]**

[Section B Total: 30]

END OF QUESTION PAPER

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