GCSE (9–1)

Classical Greek

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J292**

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

Reviews of results

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Grade boundaries

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It allows you to:

- Review reports on the **performance of individual candidates**, cohorts of students and whole centres

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- Identify areas of the curriculum where students excel or struggle and help **pinpoint strengths and weaknesses** of students and teaching departments.

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OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

J292/01 Language

General Comments:

This was the first examined year of this new specification and this paper had a good balance, enabling all grade ranges to be able to answer.

1,304 candidates entered for the examination this year. There was no evidence that any candidate struggled to finish the examination within the allotted time; indeed, many candidates had time to write out a neater version of their translation and some attempted both of the optional sections instead of just one.

This was the first time that this paper had a choice of questions; of the two options available the vast majority of candidates were prepared to answer the grammar questions rather than the English to Greek sentences (less than 10% tackled these), although some candidates did attempt both.

It was pleasing to see some very good translations and good comprehension of the different stories. Candidates must be reminded to read the introductions to the passages and also read other details provided. This may have helped those candidates who were unsure whether the Arcadians were Greeks or that the Thracians were non-Greeks.

Common problems were: mixing up words, which look alike; for example: 'men/brave' and 'city/citizen'. Strong aorists were a problem for many; candidates should learn the principal parts of verbs. Tense of and co-ordination of participles also caused issues, as did recognition of superlative adjectives.

Centres should be commended for the thorough preparation of candidates; there were some very impressive candidates on display.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Q1   Almost all candidates found this to be a positive first question on the paper. Some errors did occur where candidates translated the adjective ἰσχυρὸν as 'brave' or 'strong'.

Q2   Almost all candidates answered this question correctly.

Q3   A few candidates missed the superlative in μέγιστον and some also did not include sufficient detail for 3 marks; candidates should be reminded to check the mark allocation.

Q4   Most candidates answered this question correctly but some did not translate μάλιστα appropriately, with some trying to make it agree with τοὺς πολίτας. Also, τοὺς πολίτας was sometimes mistranslated as 'city'.

Q5(a)   Virtually all candidates answered this question correctly, although a small number answered 'to kill the Hydra'.

Q5(b)   The strong aorist participle ἔφαγεν caused some problems here, with some candidates translating it as 'killed'.

Q6   Although the best candidates answered this very well, some candidates, many of whom were clearly very strong, missed the definite article in τῷ ξίφει, with some omitting to mention 'the sword' all together. Other frequent errors included missing out the word αὖθις or translating it as 'immediately'. Finally, although infrequent, it was disappointing to see candidates become confused with numbers; τέσσαρας was occasionally mistranslated as 'three'.

Q7   Almost all candidates answered this correctly.

Q8   Almost all candidates answered this correctly.

Q9   This year candidates needed to ensure their derivation was linked to the Greek word or otherwise credit was not awarded for the English word or the meaning of the English word. Most candidates dealt with θεόν correctly but for γην some candidates provided words which were not derivatives such as 'genesis', 'genetics', 'gentrification' and 'ground'.

Q10(a) Most candidates answered this question correctly.

Q10(b) Most candidates were able to identify the correct case but some struggled to explain why it was used, sometimes resulting in convoluted descriptions.

Q10(c) Most candidates were able to answer this question correctly. The most common errors occurred when candidates thought that the tense was the imperfect. Candidates should remember not to give more information than asked for as harmful additions can occur.

Q10(d) Almost all candidates answered this correctly.

Q10(e) Most candidates were able to identify the tense of ἔφαγεν correctly. The second part of the question caused some difficulties but many made good attempts at the correct form of the present tense. We have adjusted the mark scheme to allow for a minor issue with this question.

Q10(f) Most candidates answered this question correctly. We have adjusted the mark scheme to allow for a minor issue with this question.

Q10(g) Almost all candidates answered this correctly.

Q11   Many candidates missed breathing marks on this question and should be encouraged to remember them carefully.

Q11(a)   This was answered very well; one regular error was making the verb third person plural.

Q11(b)   This was very well-answered although sometimes there were difficulties with adjectival/noun agreement. Also, some candidates mistakenly made the verb third person singular.

Q11(c)   This was the least accurately done of the English to Greek sentences. Mistakes occurred around the word order of the genitive sandwich, the correct genitive form for 'soldier' and mistranslations of 'running' with some candidates trying to make it a participle.

Q12(a)   Most candidates gained the first two marks well but many but the best then struggled to get the final mark. The most frequent errors were either mistranslating ἐπὶ or not recognising that πόλεις is a plural noun.

Q12(b)   It was pleasing to discern how many candidates dealt with the dative of possession without difficulty, often providing literal translations. Some candidates did have difficulties around the meaning of οὐδεὶς, often choosing a wrong negative translation.

Q13   This question was a good differentiator with most candidates able to achieve the first two marks for τοὺς φύλακας ἀπέκτειναν but then struggling after that. The neuter plural πολλὰ bested a few, as did the tricky verb εἷλον.

Q14   Most candidates answered this question correctly.

Q15(a)   Most candidates acquired the first mark but the second mark was a good distinguisher, as the correct meaning of φέρειν ('bear/endure') was not often known.

Q15(b)   This question was demanding for candidates and only the best managed to answer it faultlessly. The genitive absolute after καίπερ confused many, leading to mistakes on whether the camp was being surrounded or if someone was surrounding it.

Q16   Most candidates answered this question correctly. A common error was to translate ἐκώλυσαν as 'they ordered'.

Q17   The purpose clause was answered very well.

Q18   Almost all candidates answered this question correctly.

Q19 The translation passage:

Q19(i)   This section was handled well although the meaning of ἤσθετο was not always well known leading to problems with the participle construction, which followed. Another common error was translating γέροντάς τινας as singular.

Q19(ii) The dative participle phrase ἐρομένῳ αὐτῷ caused problems for all but the very best candidates but it was pleasing to observe that most candidates did not allow this to prevent them from translating the rest of the sentence accurately.

Q19(iii) Although this shorter section may have appeared easier on the surface, in reality it proved tricky for a large proportion of candidates who misconstrued the contrast between the two discrete groups. In addition, there were often errors of tense with both verbs.

Q19(iv) This section was a good differentiator with only the best candidates scoring full marks here. The most frequent errors included τοῖς ἀνδράσιν being translated as something to do with 'brave' and the superlative πλείστους being missed or translated as either 'riches' or 'ships'. Most candidates handled the conditional element well.

Q19(v) There was confusion from a large amount of candidates over who was arriving and surrounding. Many did not recognise did not recognise τὸ περιβαλλόμενον as a passive and consequently thought that Xenophon's soldiers were surrounding or had surrounded the camp. Some candidates did not recognise σιγῇ and offered 'secretly' or 'soon' as incorrect alternatives.

Q19(vi) A short section, which caused some issues. The meaning of ἤρξαντο was often unknown and surprising amount of candidates translated πυρὰ as singular. Candidates should be reminded to look at glossed words carefully and not necessarily just translate them in the form provided.

Q19(vii) It was really pleasing to see that most candidates handled the purpose clause well. However, some candidates did not recognise the verb ὀφθῶσιν leading to some creative responses.

Q19(viii) This section was often done very well, but the meaning of the participle γνόντες did cause problems for some candidates. Candidates should be reminded that if they translate a particle as a main verb then they should insert a connective between the two clauses.

Q19(ix) There were some good translations in this section but vocabulary and construction after ἐπύθοντο caused weaker candidates to struggle. Some did not know how to translate the time phrase τῆς νυκτὸς.

Q19(x) Most candidates translated this section well but used a past tense for καταυόμενα which incurred an inconsequential error. Some students also erroneously mistranslated the indirect statement, often with a version along the lines of 'they were intending to attack the Greeks'.

J292/02 Prose Literature A

General Comments:

In this first sitting of the new specification, as in previous years, the *Tales from Herodotus* prose literature option was offered by the vast majority of Centres. There were many impressive scripts, featuring close analysis and mature literary comment: candidates had evidently been very well prepared. The overall performance was perhaps slightly below that of previous cohorts – as was to be expected, given that teachers and students are still getting to grips with the demands of the new specification. This is not a radical departure from the previous specification but the following differences are worth reiterating:

- a reduction in the amount of literature to be studied (from around 135 lines to between 110 and 120 lines); the option of offering two prose or two verse papers
- the 8-mark question requires analysis of Greek
- the essay on the whole text carries 10 marks
- one stimulus passage of Greek is accompanied by an English translation
- introduction of a point-by-point marking grid for 4/6-mark 'analysis' questions
- multiple choice questions do not feature, but context questions do

It is also worth reiterating here the advice issued during OCR training sessions (in 2016 and 2017) for teachers preparing to deliver the new Greek (and Latin) literature specifications. This advice informed the marking practices agreed with examining teams:

8-mark question:

- Aim to make at least four points supported by reference to the Greek.
- Use the whole of the stimulus passage, ideally in text order. The answer's structure should not be determined by the bullet points, which are there to give an (optional) steer, one pointing to content and the other to language or style.
- Translate any Greek quoted, or make it clear that the meaning is understood.
- Include at least two developed 'style' points.

10-mark whole text essay:

- A (brief) introduction is recommended, addressing the question and outlining an argument.
- Aim to offer at least five pieces of supporting evidence from the prescribed text, including sections not printed on the question paper.
- Reference to the text should be detailed and specific, although quotation in Greek is not expected.
- Wherever possible, link this evidence to the argument advanced; a conclusion may be appropriate.

4/6-mark 'analysis' questions'

- Refer to the marking grid

- Note the expectation of 'accurate, relevant and suitably explained reference to the Greek'

Finally, a repetition of the annual plea for more careful attention to the quality of written communication. Examiners faced a significant number of difficult-to-read scripts; indeed, it proved challenging to select a range of legible exemplar scripts for later publication. Equally, the quality of English was often so weak that meaning and sense were obscured because it was difficult to understand what the candidate was trying to say. Most candidates would benefit enormously from taking the time to check their script for errors and correcting simple omissions (there were few indications that time pressure ruled this out). As noted in previous reports, typed scripts are welcome, particularly when the Greek quotations (even in basic Σψμβολ font without diacritical marks) are incorporated into the typescript rather than hand-written and cross-referenced in the answer booklet.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Q1(a)   The opening context question was generally well answered. Specific detail was required about Lydia/Sardis/Croesus and a range of responses was accepted.

Q1(b)(i) Most candidates scored full marks (2/2). 'Travels' or 'travelling' is a more natural translation of πλάνης than 'wandering(s)', but the latter was accepted.

Q1(b)(ii) Almost all achieved the mark, although there were many ambiguous answers.

Q1(c)   This question discriminated well, with many earning only 1 mark (out of 2). Some candidates lacked the confidence to select just one phrase, offering both; others omitted the (essential) definite article in the phrase τῷ ὄντι χρησάμενος or picked out just the participle. The best responses correctly identified and translated an appropriate Greek phrase.

Q1(d)   καλοί τε κἀγαθοί drew a range of interesting translations; many omitted 'he saw' (for εἶδεν) and there was some misunderstanding about which of Tellus's descendants 'all survived' (πάντα παραμείναντα refers to his grandchildren). Nonetheless, the great majority achieved full marks, since the mark scheme offered four possible correct answers, of which three were required.

Q2   4-mark 'analysis' question with accompanying translation: since the question was specifically about Herodotus's use of language, and included a translation of the passage, Examiners expected at least one point to address style. Two content points in response to this type of question did not therefore earn full marks unless there was also some discussion of language. Candidates are advised to make close reference to the translation printed on the question paper instead of relying upon their own learned translation, and to quote the equivalent section of Greek. Although it was common to lose a mark by failing to identify the correct Greek for '45 stades' there were plenty of excellent style points made. Many commented on the use of αὐτοὶ, and the best pointed out the chiasmus in the third line (εἷλκον τὴν ἅμαξαν, ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς ἁμάξης ὠχεῖτο ἡ μήτηρ). The force of the imperfect εἷλκον rarely elicited comment.

Q3(a)   Correctly answered by almost all.

Q3(b)   5-mark translation question: the majority fared very well, although the accumulation of several inconsequential errors brought marks down to 4 or 3 (rarely lower). The intensifying prefix in περιχαρὴς was occasionally missed, so that the mother was 'glad' rather than 'overjoyed'; φήμη produced a wide range of meanings, some of which contributed to odd English; δοῦναι was quite often omitted and τυχεῖν inadequately translated as 'have'. 'God' (masculine) was accepted for τὴν θεὸν but a plural rendition ('gods') was not.

Q4   8-mark analysis question: please refer to the general comments above. There were many excellent, full responses here, showing detailed understanding and appreciation of the Greek. As advised above and in reports on the previous specification (where the equivalent question carried 10 marks), the most sensible way of tackling this question is in text order. Those who adopted a logical approach, answered the question and included at least two developed style points were easily able to access the top mark level. Less successful were candidates who wrote about the bullet points without answering the question; or started at the end of the passage and then dotted around to make their points; or listed isolated stylistic points, losing sight of the question and failing to convey understanding of the wider context. Strong responses looked at words that were not simply μὲν…δὲ or τε…καὶ and focused on the use of language, appreciating how Solon tries to butter up Croesus before expressing his views. Ambitious attempts to discuss the different connotations of εὐδαίμων / ὄλβιος or χρή / δεῖ occasionally missed the mark but earned due credit when used to illustrate the wisdom of Solon's words. More obvious illustrations of this – the variety of words for enquiry, investigation and understanding, or the gnomic aorist ἀνέτρεψε – drew comment only occasionally.

Q5(a)   This context question was mostly well answered. Some offered a vague response ('divine retribution ensnared Croesus') or confused names (Lydians for Persians; Croesus for Cyrus) but the majority earned two marked for giving specific details about the Persians' capture of Sardis and Croesus' imprisonment.

Q5(b)   Here too most candidates scored full marks (2/2). A few thought Croesus was bound by his feet rather than chains (mistaking πέδαις for Latin *pedibus* perhaps?) and 'sons of Lydia' (rather than 'sons of Lydians') sounded odd but was accepted.

Q5(c)   4-mark 'analysis' question without accompanying translation: since this question was not accompanied by a translation of the Greek, Examiners accepted two content points when applying the marking grid. There were many excellent answers here, with a range of apposite Greek quotations illustrating the pathos of the situation Herodotus describes. Mistranslation of τοσούτῳ was a common error; there were some dubious translations of ἀνενεγκάμενος ('heaving a great sigh', for example, was unconvincing); and some did not seem to understand the context of Solon's wise words (μηδένα…ὄλβιον), taking them as part of a conversation going on while Croesus was on the pyre. Nonetheless, this was largely very well answered.

Q6(a)   The majority answered this context question correctly, although Alcmaeon was frequently mis-spelled.

Q6(b)   This question required candidates to specify entertaining details in the printed extract, not to evaluate how Herodotus makes the whole Alcmaeon episode entertaining. Those who picked out three of the (many) amusing elements in the passage easily earned full marks.

Q7   10-mark whole text essay: there were many excellent responses to this question showing a sound knowledge of the prescribed text and well-developed evaluative skills. The best candidates focused carefully on the question, avoiding the temptation to re-hash a pre-prepared essay (on Croesus's character, for example). Those who associated Herodotus' perspective with Solon's found it easier to analyse the author's views on wealth, and were able to make good use of the stories of Tellus and Cleobis & Biton to support their argument. Although candidates rarely commented upon the historical implausibility of the meeting between Solon and Croesus, many appreciated how Herodotus uses Croesus as an illustration of the danger of ὕβρις, stemming from his wealth. Wider knowledge beyond the prescribed text is not required but was impressive to see: for example, how Herodotus links Croesus's wealth indirectly to the death of his son, and attributes Croesus' rescue from the fire by Apollo to his previous generosity to the Delphic oracle. Some candidates omitted to include anything from the Alcmaeon story, limiting their mark to maximum Level 4. Others tended to view this short tale as illustrative of a change of character in Croesus after his epiphany on the pyre, rather than seeing it as a further example of the pernicious effects of obsession with wealth. Candidates were free to take either angle but those who argued the former seemed much less convincing.

J292/03 Prose Literature B

General Comments:

In this first sitting of the new specification, as in previous years, the alternative prose literature option was offered by only a small number of Centres. It was evident, however, from the many excellent scripts that candidates had been very well prepared by their teachers and had enjoyed the opportunity to study Plutarch and a lesser-known work by Lucian. The overall performance was perhaps slightly below that of previous cohorts – as was to be expected, given that teachers and candidates are still getting to grips with the demands of the new specification. This is not a radical departure from the previous specification but the following differences are worth reiterating:

- a reduction in the amount of literature to be studied (from around 135 lines to between 110 and 120 lines); the option of offering two prose or two verse papers
- the 8-mark question requires analysis of Greek
- the essay on the whole text carries 10 marks
- one stimulus passage of Greek is accompanied by an English translation
- introduction of a point-by-point marking grid for 4/6-mark 'analysis' questions
- multiple choice questions do not feature, but context questions do

It is also worth reiterating here the advice issued during OCR training sessions (in 2016 and 2017) for teachers preparing to deliver the new Greek (and Latin) literature specifications. This advice informed the marking practices agreed with examining teams:

8-mark question:
- Aim to make at least four points supported by reference to the Greek.
- Use the whole of the stimulus passage, ideally in text order. The answer's structure should not be determined by the bullet points, which are there to give an (optional) steer, one pointing to content and the other to language or style.
- Translate any Greek quoted, or make it clear that the meaning is understood.
- Include at least two developed 'style' points.

10-mark whole text essay:
- A (brief) introduction is recommended, addressing the question and outlining an argument.
- Aim to offer at least five pieces of supporting evidence from the prescribed text, including sections not printed on the question paper.
- Reference to the text should be detailed and specific, although quotation in Greek is not expected.
- Wherever possible, link this evidence to the argument advanced; a conclusion may be appropriate.

4/6-mark 'analysis' questions'
- Refer to the marking grid

- Note the expectation of 'accurate, relevant and suitably explained reference to the Greek'

Finally, a repetition of the annual plea for more careful attention to the quality of written communication. Examiners faced a significant number of difficult-to-read scripts; indeed, it proved challenging to select a range of legible exemplar scripts for later publication. Equally, the quality of English was often so weak that meaning and sense were obscured because it was difficult to understand what the candidate was trying to say. Most candidates would benefit enormously from taking the time to check their script for errors and correcting simple omissions (there were few indications that time pressure ruled this out). As noted in previous reports, typed scripts are welcome, particularly when the Greek quotations (even in basic Σψμβολ font without diacritical marks) are incorporated into the typescript rather than hand-written and cross-referenced in the answer booklet.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Q1(a)   The opening context question was very well answered.

Q1(b)   Most candidates scored full marks (2/2) since there were several options allowed by the mark scheme. Many answers, however, were not particularly coherent, relying upon a very literal translation which was not necessarily understood.

Q1(c)(i)   Almost all achieved the mark.

Q1(c)(ii)   The great majority earned the mark here. 'Strength' was not accepted as a translation of τῆς κράσεως (= constitution / make-up).

Q2   4-mark 'analysis' question with accompanying translation: since the question was specifically about Plutarch's use of language, and included a translation of the passage, Examiners expected at least one point to address style. Two content points in response to this type of question did not therefore earn full marks unless there was also some discussion of language. Candidates are advised to make close reference to the translation printed on the question paper instead of relying upon their own learned translation, and to quote the equivalent section of Greek. Many candidates earned 4 marks here by offering one content and one style point, most commonly citing the repeated use of the συν- prefix as illustration of the emphasis upon communality.

Q3(a)(i)   Almost universally correct: a range of answers was accepted.

Q3(a)(ii)   'Fighting to conquer' was a common mistranslation of νικᾶν μαχόμενον. Nonetheless, the great majority achieved full marks (2/2), since the mark scheme offered three possible correct answers, of which two were required.

Q3(b)   This question was mostly well answered. A number of candidates confused παίζειν (to play) with παιδεύω (train) but usually managed to earn three marks from the four options in the mark scheme.

Q3(c) This question proved challenging and discriminated well, with relatively few earning full marks. Some candidates offered a very long phrase, from αὐχμηροὶ to ἄπειροι (which was accepted for 1 mark) but mistranslated it. The best responses correctly identified and translated an appropriate Greek phrase.

Q4 8-mark analysis question: please refer to the general comments above. There were many excellent, full responses here, showing detailed understanding and appreciation of the Greek. As advised above and in reports on the previous specification (where the equivalent question carried 10 marks), the most sensible way of tackling this question is in text order. Those who adopted a logical approach, answered the question and included at least two developed style points were easily able to access the top mark level. Less successful were candidates who wrote about the bullet points without answering the question; or started with the fox story from the end of the passage before going back to the beginning; or listed isolated stylistic points, losing sight of the question and failing to convey understanding of the wider context. Strong responses commented upon the use of the passive voice in ἀναγκάζωνται and appreciated the sound effects in σπαρασσόμενος…τοῖς ὄνυξι καὶ τοῖς ὀδοῦσι. It was quite common to assume that the γλίσχρον δεῖπνον was the punishment for being caught stealing rather than the Spartan boys' usual fare.

Q5(a) This was mostly well answered. Sadly a significant number appeared to know the Plutarch text better than the Lucian passage and struggled when faced with five Lucian-specific questions on the paper.

Q5(b) 5-mark translation question: this proved to be quite a challenging extract to translate accurately. Some flexibility was agreed at Standardisation in view of the difficulty of the passage but it was nevertheless relatively uncommon to achieve full marks. Paraphrasing of τίνος ἀγαθοῦ ἂν εἴη ποιεῖν and οὐκ ἔστιν ὅστις ἂν ῥᾳδίως μεταπείσειέ με often led to translations which did not convey the potential sense of the optative verbs. Occasionally the second (vital) 'not' was omitted from the final sentence.

Q6(a) This context question was correctly answered by all who had prepared the Lucian text thoroughly.

Q6(b) 4-mark 'analysis' question without accompanying translation: since this question was not accompanied by a translation of the Greek, Examiners accepted two content points when applying the marking grid, and this proved to be how most full-mark responses earned marks. The best responses commented upon the effect of the litotes in οὐκ ἀτερπῆ and/or ἀκμὴν οὐ μικρὰν. Unfortunately, a significant number of candidates made use of the later section of the passage, beyond the designated lemma for this question. These comments could not be credited.

Q6(b) Many candidates managed to earn full marks here by showing detailed knowledge of the Greek, even if they weren't quite sure why these indicated that Anacharsis was being teased. The best responses noted that Solon repeats the very vocabulary Anacharsis has used to express his distaste for the activities he has observed.

Q7   10-mark whole text essay: there were many excellent responses to this question, showing a sound knowledge of both texts and well-developed evaluative skills. Almost all were able to martial evidence of apparently cruel practices in ancient Greek education and physical training, although some candidates did not draw a distinction between Sparta (Plutarch) and Athens (Lucian). A few referred to only one author, thereby limiting their mark to Level 3 at most. A large number did not mention the Spartan military system as the driver of the education system established by Lycurgus; such responses were unlikely to access a Level 5 mark. The best candidates avoided simply regurgitating a list and focused carefully on the question, in particular the word 'unnecessarily', to develop a reasoned argument supported by detailed evidence from the prescribed text. Many well-argued essays incorporated a personal response and drew valid comparisons with our own education system and physical activities.

J292/04 Verse Literature A

General Comments:

The overall standard on this new specification was predictably high, although it seemed that fewer candidates gained the very top marks on this paper compared with previous years, while a number of otherwise good candidates struggled to write coherently in extended answers. AO3 questions, needing a certain degree of judgement and analysis, require candidates to express ideas clearly, but unfortunately, too many answers seemed rushed and unchecked, resulting in fatal errors such as the omission of a negative in a statement or the confusion of names e.g. Alcinous/Arete, Athene/Artemis. Many such mistakes would surely have been noticed if candidates had checked through their work – the inclusion of Aeneas in the story would have been spotted! In general the standard of English was weak and shortcomings were often compounded by handwriting that was difficult to read and 'experimental' English (e.g. 'similarised', 'complimentative', 'virtuitous'), which at best unsettled examiners and at worst rendered the sense unfathomable. On the other hand, there was a strong sense that many had enjoyed studying this section of *Odyssey* 6. Many answers to Question 5 warmed to the idea of comparing Nausicaa with Artemis, and Question 9 elicited a wide range of 'interesting and engaging' aspects of the story.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Q1(a)   A straightforward first question asking what Nausicaa's mother was doing. The vast majority of candidates scored full marks (2), although it would seem from the phrasing of answers that some did not understand what a 'hearth' was, and a few had Nausicaa 'spinning a distaff' etc. with no mention of wool; apparently some candidates had difficulty picturing the scene. Weaker candidates only offered one detail rather than two (see MS).

Q1(b)   Most candidates included at least two of the three elements (see MS): Alcinous leaving the palace (1 mark) to attend a meeting (1) with his illustrious lords (1). However, some answers got bogged down with a literal translation of θύραζε (e.g. 'towards the door'), while others were unsure as to how μετὰ κλειτοὺς βασιλῆας fitted into the picture, suggesting that candidates were unclear and confused about what was going on.

Q2   This question, about Nausicaa's persuasive appeal, was not always handled well. Too many answers lacked clarity, a shortcoming exacerbated by candidates not referring to the Greek or by quoting the Greek inaccurately or by failing to show an understanding of the Greek quoted (e.g. by translation). It was the exception rather than the rule to find answers that (a) quoted and translated a relevant phrase and (b) used the Greek effectively to answer the question. A few candidates were, wrongly, under the impression that Nausicaa was persuading her father to let her wash her own clothes.

Q3   Many candidates scored 5/5 on this translation question. Unnecessary paraphrasing in line 1 (e.g. 'a golden flask filled with liquid olive oil') was penalised, whereas translations that deviated from the awkward Greek structures in line 4 were received more

sympathetically e.g. 'she used the whip to drive them on' or 'the (two) mules made a clattering noise'. The most serious/common errors included: δῶκεν translated as e.g. 'poured'; ὑγρὸν omitted – did candidates think it translated as 'olive'?; μάστιγα translated as 'whips'; ἐλάαν either inadequately translated as e.g. 'go', or omitted altogether; the last half-line (καναχὴ δ' ἦν ἡμιόνοιϊν) was occasionally omitted. 'reins' (line 3 ἡνία) was often misspelled as 'reigns' (or even 'rains') – an example of the poor spelling and English that marred a lot of scripts.

Q4   Any reasonable answer was accepted here. 'Modesty' (or similar) and 'protection from the sun' were the most frequently offered reasons. Some candidates, perhaps short on ideas, tried (unsuccessfully) to extract 2 marks from essentially one point e.g. modesty & decency, tradition & custom. Answers not accepted included 'to protect their heads during the ball game' and 'so they didn't get their hair wet doing the washing'.

Q5   There were lots of good answers to this question on the Artemis simile. The best candidates showed an accurate understanding of the passage by picking out short phrases or even individual words for discussion rather than simply copying out whole lines or even whole sentences. However, too many candidates assumed that the whole passage referred to Nausicaa (rather than Artemis), and while this perspective worked up to a point e.g. Nausicaa is indeed meant to be seen as 'head and shoulders' above her maidservants, ideas such as 'the maidservants are the daughters of Zeus' or 'Leto rejoiced to see Nausicaa at play' were clearly wrong. Quality and clarity of English often determined whether a point deserved credit; for example, weaker candidates struggled to argue a credible connection between Nausicaa and 'Ἄρτεμις … ἰοχέαιρα'. Some failed to develop valid points, simply quoting and translating the Greek e.g. ῥεῖά τ' ἀριγνώτη πέλεται – 'Nausicaa is easily recognisable', spurning the opportunity to comment on the emphatic position of ῥεῖά and/or overlooking the connection with the second half of the line (καλαὶ δέ τε πᾶσαι). And even the most eloquent candidates were hard-pushed to persuade examiners that τερπομένη κάπροισι καὶ ὠκείης ἐλάφοισι (line 3) was evidence that Nausicaa loved animals.

Q6(a)(i) Most candidates successfully picked out εὐώπιδα and gave an acceptable translation.

Q6(a)(ii) Most candidates had a clear understanding of what Athene had in mind and thus scored full marks. A few chose 'showed' as the translation of ἡγήσαιτο rather than 'led', which opened the way for the false idea of Nausicaa showing Odysseus the city (a guided tour?) rather than showing/leading/taking him *to* the city. Candidates occasionally lost a mark by making only two points instead of three.

Q6(b)   Most candidates recalled accurately the events around the ball game. Any marks lost were usually because not enough points were made rather than because of wrong information.

Q7   Many candidates were unsure how to answer this question ('How does Homer emphasise the anxiety and confusion of Odysseus?') and in particular seemed to be wary of the English translation supplied, sometimes preferring to quote their own learned translation (occasionally wrong!) or failing to reference the English at all and

thus running the risk of clouding the sense of any Greek quoted. Some made life difficult by ignoring the wording 'close reference to the Greek', while others chose to give examples of Odysseus' 'anxiety and confusion' without showing how the idea was emphasised. A typically inadequate answer would be to mention the polysyndeton in line 2, quote the Greek (τε καὶ ... οὐδὲ), but omit to state the negative points that indicated Odysseus' anxiety ('insolent and wild and not just'). Marks were occasionally lost by significant misquoting of the Greek. δίκαιοι (rather than οὐδὲ δίκαιοι) was sometimes quoted for 'unjust'.

Q8(a)   Very few problems on the question about Odysseus keeping his distance, although some were inaccurate with the meaning of χολώσαιτο e.g. 'upset', 'frightened'.

Q8(b)   The question about Odysseus' tone towards Nausicaa proved to be very straightforward, although a few answers tried to cover themselves by offering several different tones and thus risking the 'harmful addition' (HA) annotation for a tone that was clearly inappropriate.

Q9   A number of candidates seemed not to have given the 'interesting and engaging' aspect of the text much prior consideration and thus found it difficult to write constructively. Too many adopted a narrow focus either by merely referring to epithets or mentioning similes (with scant development) or presenting one or two instances of descriptive detail – all often without much conviction. Some tried to offer the lifestyle of the Phaeacian royal palace as an interesting topic, but few were able to make their points effectively. Surprisingly few explored the involvement of the gods, and not enough was made of the engaging character of Nausicaa. More successful were those who explored the tension generated in the build-up to the meeting between Nausicaa and Odysseus, although it was important to support the idea with well-chosen details rather than dealing in general terms (such as 'Nausicaa is on the point of returning home when Odysseus suddenly wakes up') and thus missing an opportunity to analyse the effects of e.g. the powerful lion simile or the part played by Athene. Now that the mini-essay is worth 10 marks, candidates would be well advised to write a short introduction (and a conclusion if time allows), if only to encourage forethought and planning. They should also bear in mind that examiners are looking for candidates to show an accurate and detailed knowledge of the whole text, not simply using examples/quotations from the passages in the question paper.

J292/05 Verse Literature B

General Comments:

Numbers opting for this paper were small. There were some excellent candidates who showed an accurate and detailed knowledge, and the mini-essays on Admetus suggested that the text had sparked much interest and discussion on a variety of apposite themes. However, there was also a significant minority of weaker candidates who seemed to struggle with the language of the text (both Greek and English), which limited understanding and led to confusion over some elements of the storyline.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Q1(a) Most candidates had no problem getting across the idea that Alcestis (had chosen to die because she) could not bear to *live* separated from Admetus and with fatherless children. However, weaker candidates were under the impression that Alcestis could not bear to *die* and thus leave her children orphaned.

Q1(b) A straightforward question, with the answer taken directly from the passage (οὐδ' ἐφεισάμην ἥβης – I did not begrudge/mind losing my youth), although again weaker candidates did not seem to understand 'begrudge' from their learned translations and gave a somewhat garbled answer which in extreme cases failed to secure the mark.

Q1(c) Most candidates came up with a suitably negative feeling for Alcestis and a sound reason for this feeling e.g. 'Alcestis feels annoyed/bitter *because* they (Admetus' parents) were close to death anyway'. However, those who chose the answer format e.g. 'Alcestis feels that they have betrayed Admetus' stopped short of giving an explanation and so forfeited a mark.

Q2 Lots of perfectly acceptable translations, scoring full marks. Common errors included: wrong tense for αἰτήσομαι; frequent omission of σ'; οὔποτε translated as 'not' rather than 'never'; δίκαια was often rendered awkwardly, again suggesting candidates did not understand their translation.

Q3(a) This seemed to be a very straightforward question (about Alcestis' concerns for the future) for most, with many candidates following the MS almost *verbatim*. However, some answers bordered on the nonsensical as a result of a failure to understand the literal translation e.g. 'hurl/throw some shameful reputation'.

Q3(b) Most candidates gained full marks here, giving the two ways in which Alcestis recommends a mother should support her daughter.

Q3(c) Again full marks for most candidates. A few wrongly picked out αὔριον.

Q4(a) Almost all candidates identified Admetus' tone (e.g. reassuring) and used/translated the Greek appropriately. A few candidates lost a mark by failing to reference the Greek or by including a 'harmful addition' (HA) among a range of possible tones.

Q4(b) The answer to this question (re: Admetus' comments on the future) could be lifted straight from the passage. Marks were usually only lost if a candidate tried to paraphrase the sense and ended up writing a careless (e.g. omission of a negative) or confused answer.

Q5 Candidates seemed unsure how/whether to use the English translation in answer to this question about the sadness of Admetus. A typical answer would mention the polysyndeton in lines 1–2 and give the Greek (θ' ... τε ... θ'), but stop short of mentioning any of the actual pleasures Admetus intended to give up. A few excellent answers picked out οὐ ... ποτ' οὔτ' ... ἔτι (line 3) and/or οὔτ' ... οὔτ' (lines 3–4) and explained the point by giving the context. Some omitted any reference to the Greek. A few misunderstood the positioning of τε and for example gave κώμους συμποτῶν as one of the pursuits to be abandoned.

Q6 Most candidates were able to find some points from the passage to illustrate Admetus' desire to be with his wife. However, answers were often poorly composed, and weak English ('reunition'; 'repetion'; 'piouty' = pity/piety?) did not help to convey points clearly. Weaker candidates were reluctant to show they understood (e.g. by translating) the Greek quoted or even failed to reference any Greek at all. For style/language points, most resorted (lamely) to word position, although too many confused line-ending and sentence-ending and compounded the error if they failed to give the relevant Greek word. It was a pity that more did not pick out the two imperatives (προσδόκα and ἑτοίμαζ') in the final sentence, although some candidates seemed unsure as to what was going on here, talking about Alcestis building a new house in the underworld and Admetus claiming that he could not wait to die. Most candidates would have benefited, especially with this question and with Question 9 (the mini-essay), from reading through their paper to check for careless writing and unclear English.

Q7(a) This proved to be an awkward question because a number of candidates wrongly assumed that the words of the Chorus are addressed to Alcestis and not to Admetus. Thus, the Chorus are not sympathising with Alcestis here, but joining with Admetus in his grief for his wife.

Q7(b) A much more straightforward question, with most candidates simply translating the appropriate lines from the passage to describe Admetus' promises. More than one script claimed that Admetus promised to dishonour his wife – surely the careless omission of a negative that could have been corrected if the candidate(s) had found five minutes to check through at the end of the exam.

Q8 There were plenty of examples to illustrate 'distress' in this passage. Candidates on the whole handled this question well, as long as they remembered to refer to and show an understanding of the Greek. ὦ τέκν' (line 1), οἴμοι (line 2), πρὸς θεῶν (line 4), ὦ δαῖμον (line 6) were all frequently cited, as was the repetition of the imperative ἄγου (line 4).

Some answers were too brief: for example, $\overset{\Large\sim}{\omega}\ \tau\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\nu'$ need not *per se* indicate distress, and some context/development of the point was needed to secure the second mark. Examiners did not insist on one point for each character.

Q9   The mini-essay question on Admetus elicited a wide range of responses, with many supporting Admetus and praising him for his demonstrations of love for his wife and children. Views were often expressed strongly, which suggested that the text had generated some lively classroom discussion. However, too many answers fell down on the technique required to secure a high mark for this type of question. Now that the mini-essay is worth 10 marks, it is a good idea to include an introduction (and also a conclusion if time allows); this will encourage candidates to plan their answer and give it some structure. Candidates should remember that the question is concentrating on 'the text you have studied', and while it is interesting and even impressive to see candidates talking about other parts of the play, references and ideas drawn from beyond the prescription are unlikely to earn much credit. Too many answers got carried away with the moral argument surrounding Admetus' decision to let his wife die in his place, and these lengthy generalisations sometimes rambled on for half a page without a single specific reference to or quotation from the text. It should be noted that examiners are looking for an accurate and detailed knowledge of the text, especially of those sections outside the passages printed in the question paper.

J292/06 Literature and Culture

General Comments:

This 2018 Literature and Culture paper was the first under the new specification, and it was excellent to see how well the vast majority of the candidates coped – both with the challenges of the questions themselves and with the unknown nature of the examination. It was clear that centres had prepared their candidates well, as they showed a strong level of understanding of the ancient Greek world and were also skilled in responding to sources that they had not previously studied.

Candidates tended to write at length, which was excellent, and were able to refer to a range of written and archaeological sources with accuracy and maturity. In some questions, certain candidates showed the ability to compare the ancient world with the modern, and the best answers were those, which tried to avoid modern bias, focusing instead on gaining a greater understanding of the ancient Greek way of life. Those candidates who could refer to a number of sources based on their wider reading, and not just those in the examination insert, tended to score more highly than those who used the evidence they were given but no more.

In terms of the structure of longer questions (6-mark and 8-mark), candidates are not expected to include an introduction or a conclusion as there is simply insufficient time for this in a 60-minute examination. However, those who did well on these questions made use of the PEEL framework that they will have met in other essay subjects: they made a **P**oint, gave an **E**xample from the source (i.e. quoted a relevant phrase or cited a particular artefact), **E**xplained what the quotation showed and **L**inked it back to the question, and then repeated this structure. Examiners expected that 12-mark answers would normally include a brief but relevant introduction and conclusion to add weight to the candidates' points.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Q1   The examiners were looking for a range of responses to this broad question, which focused on a citizen's responsibilities to the state – candidates responded well, referring primarily to political and legal duties but also military ones.

Q2   This question was answered accurately and all candidates showed a good understanding of the tasks expected of an Athenian woman within her household, giving a selection of different responses.

Q3   Candidates found this question more challenging than the previous two, mainly because the range of available answers was more limited and focused purely on the Spartans' reasons for encouraging women to do sport. The examiners were looking for answers that considered the benefits to girls in terms of health and strength that would enable them to withstand the demands of pregnancy and birth as well as promoting the idea that strong mothers would produce strong children. Many candidates had clearly studied the source taken from Plutarch's '*Life of Lycurgus'* and made valuable use of it, but to gain

full marks on this question they needed to focus on sport rather than on the girls' participation in wider Spartan society, such as processions or festivals.

Q4   This was a straightforward question for those candidates who knew that the Lysias source was an extract from a legal defence speech; a few responses indicated that some thought that the evidence was taken from a play.

Q5   The range of responses to this question was fascinating, and the examiners found the process of marking them highly rewarding. Some candidates felt that the couple's relationship was good (by ancient Greek standards) while others considered that it was totally loveless; the fact that Euphiletus' wife had embarked on an affair with another man was sometimes overlooked even though it must surely be a factor in any assessment of the relationship.

When answering questions like this, candidates need to do more than simply quote a phrase from the source and add *'…this shows that they had a good relationship';* they must explain *why* the quotation shows that they had a good relationship. Candidates who used phrases such as *'we can infer from this quote that…'* or *'we can tell this from the extract where he says….'* were able to show evaluation in their responses and could thus access the available AO3 marks more easily.

Strong candidates were able to include additional factual information into their responses to the source, such as details about the age that a girl would typically be when she got married, or other relevant facts about ancient Greek domestic life. This enabled them to show a good level of understanding of the source, as they were able to apply their knowledge to Lysias' speech.

Q6   Again, the range of different responses was interesting and personal, and it was evident that centres had prepared candidates well – arguments were generally balanced and carefully structured.

Strong candidates spoke about political as well as social freedoms and many included detailed reference to Sparta as a comparison to the lifestyle of Athenian women, although in some cases candidates omitted to mention the many restrictions faced by Spartan women, preferring instead to consider them as extremely modern and western in outlook, which was not the case.

The examiners were pleased to see references being made to archaeological artefacts as well as written sources as a means of supporting essay points – examples included a *pyxis* showing a marriage scene or the Parthenon frieze depicting women and girls taking part in a religious festival. Those answers that commented on a wide range of sources tended to score more highly than those that focused entirely on the information available in the examination insert, as candidates were successfully demonstrating their ability to draw the strands of information from different pieces of evidence together to reach cohesive conclusions. Comments that considered the limitations of certain pieces of evidence were credited, but not necessarily expected in this question.

Q7   Many candidates found this question difficult. It focused on why a Greek master might want to have Hecuba in particular as his slave, rather than any other woman. Not all candidates were clear who Hecuba was in Greek mythology, but there were sufficient clues in the source to work out that she had been royal and the mother of someone prominent, but was now elderly and vulnerable. Weaker candidates gave generic answers about the work done by household slaves, while stronger answers recognised that owning a former Trojan queen, as a slave would give a Greek master cause to gloat.

Q8   This question was answered very well by the vast majority of candidates, most of whom were able to quote the source and explain the relevance of the reference to their point. The focus of the question was very much on the treatment of slaves, and vague comments such as *'They were not treated like people'* needed to be supported by examples from Source E or further explanation.

Q9   All candidates found it easy to provide two factors that influenced the price of slaves based on the evidence provided.

Q10   This question was generally well answered, but candidates were expected to focus on the source given rather than make three general, unsubstantiated comments. A number of answers made reference to the Carian infant in the source, and the terrible fact that even very young children were considered suitable to buy and sell as slaves.

Q11   The wording of the question aims to make it clear that candidates are expected to respond to the extract of Plutarch's '*Pericles'* as a piece of literature and to comment on the persuasive nature of his writing. Candidates who quoted from the source and evaluated its style scored more highly than those who simply reiterated what Plutarch had written. It was not enough to simply state *'Plutarch uses extensive lists for each aspect of the building project'* and follow this sentence with a quotation from the source – again, the use of PEEL structure is particularly valuable in a 6-mark question like this one: candidates need to explain the effect of the stylistic feature they quote such as the use of lists. There is much to be said about the Plutarch source, and generally, those candidates who wrote more were rewarded for their inclusion of detail.

Q12   Most candidates found this question straightforward and were able to refer specifically to the Delian League; those who made mention of allies being forced to pay Athens for protection or defence were also credited with the mark.

Q13   An essay question such as this should be well supported by a clear introduction that signposts the reader to the salient features of the candidate's response; similarly, a suitable and meaningful conclusion helps to sum up the ideas that have been put forward in the main body of the essay. As ever, answers that were detailed and well-argued scored more highly than those that were brief and lacked evaluation or examples.

The examiners found the wealth of different responses extremely interesting to read, particularly those essays that made reference to a number of archaeological and written sources rather than simply those that had already been commented on elsewhere in the examination. Some excellent answers compared the ancient world with modern life,

demonstrating a high level of understanding of the topic and an ability to apply this knowledge in different ways. However, the question looks at the relative advantages and disadvantages of 5th Century Athens rather than a comparison with modern British life and it was important that candidates did not stray too far from the original focus of the essay title.

Popular topics for discussion included the advantages of a democratic system of government and the relative control that it offered its citizens, the beauty and power of Athens as a dynamic centre for trade and culture, as well as a comparison between the lifestyles enjoyed by relatively few citizen men and the many more women, metics and slaves that inhabited the city in the 5th Century; most candidates recognised clearly that the quality of a person's life depended on their gender and social status in Athens. A number of answers also focused on the advantages of ostracism.

It is important that candidates are specific in defining their terms within the essay – simply stating *'democracy also allowed you to make decisions on how the city was run'* lacks clarity: it should be made clear precisely who had the right to make decisions and who was exempt from such advantages.

Stronger candidates were able to comment on the validity and provenance of the sources they mentioned, which served to add to the weight of their arguments.

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