

LATIN

Paper 0480/01
Language

General comments

The number of candidates taking the subject this year fell just short of last year's pleasing figure. There was the usual wide spread of marks across the range in this paper, but the overall level of performance remains high, with healthy numbers at the top end and relatively few in the weakest category. Candidates in general performed better in **Section A** (Translation) than in **Section B** (Comprehension), where significantly more achieved less than half marks. It did not help in this connection that a small group of candidates used up valuable time copying out the Latin as part of their rough work and so were unable in most cases to complete **Section B**. Disappointingly too, a fair number continues to ignore the rubric in **Section A** about writing on alternate lines.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Candidates rose well to the challenges of the Latin passage and there were several virtually faultless versions. Constructions such as purpose and indirect statement were often well handled, and though more than might have been expected did not know the meanings of *sperabant* and *profectus est*, vocabulary was not a serious problem for the majority.

olim ... obsidebat (line 1).

This short opening sentence eased candidates gently into the passage and full marks were often obtained. Weaker candidates, however, tended to render *urbem Romam* 'the Roman city'.

Romani ... importare (lines 1-2).

Many scored well here, but with *omnes pecudes* occasionally taken as subject instead of *Romani*, the verb *coacti sunt* often not recognised and the infinitive *agere* mistranslated as a consequence, full marks were achieved by relatively few. The meaning of the second half of the sentence, *et prohibiti sunt frumentum importare*, was more frequently grasped.

mox ... capturos esse (lines 3-4).

Apart from some candidates mistaking *inopia* for *copia*, the opening part of the sentence as far as *in urbe* was well translated. Thereafter it depended largely on candidates' interpretation of *sperabant*. Those who knew it, or made an intelligent guess such as 'thought', usually coped well with the following accusative and infinitive, though *capturos esse* was sometimes taken as passive and *eam* left out. However, the not insignificant number who rendered the word as 'spared' inevitably ran into problems. Most picked up marks for *brevi tempore*.

sed ... interficere (lines 4-5).

Full marks were often obtained here and most candidates dealt competently with the purpose clause *ut patriam servaret*. Many, however, took *servaret* to mean 'serve' instead of 'save', and some faltered over the meanings of *inter* and *constituit*.

veritus ... ivit (lines 6-7).

The structure of this sentence, with the conditional following *veritus ne*, posed a considerable challenge and many coped admirably. Weaker candidates, however, who did not help themselves from the outset by taking

ne as a negative with *veritus* ('having not feared') and misunderstanding or omitting *si*, were not successful with individual phrases such as *extra urbem*, *a custodibus Romanis* and *ad senatum*. A few translated *consulum iniussu* correctly with most taking *consulum* as singular or else confusing *consilium*.

transire ... in animo (lines 7-8).

These two short sentences, quoting Mucius' words to the senate, were found straightforward by the vast majority and full marks were often obtained. The most frequent errors here were to confuse *adiuvant* with *audiunt* and *dei* with *dies*.

senatores ... profectus est (lines 8-9).

Few failed to translate *senatores consilium adprobaverunt* correctly, but the short sentence beginning *ille* proved much more testing and only the strongest candidates recognised the ablative absolute *celato gladio* for what it was. Among a variety of errors here, *celato* was frequently confused with *celeriter*, *intra* taken for part of *intrare* and the verb *profectus est* not recognised.

ubi ... stetit (lines 9-10).

Candidates scored well here and full marks were often achieved. Most coped readily with the infinitive after *veritus* and the indirect question following *rogare*, and the irregular form *stetit* was well recognised. Some, however, made *regis* its subject, and the meaning of *prope* was occasionally mistaken.

ibi ... faciebat (lines 10-12).

Many scored well here without obtaining full marks. In *stipendium militibus dabatur*, the verb was frequently taken as active, and there was a tendency among weaker candidates to say 'when the king was sitting' for *cum rege sedebat*. A number of candidates were also fazed by *multa* in *multa diligenter faciebat*, with some taking it closely with *diligenter* to mean 'very diligently' or, far worse, mistaking it for *multi* and making it subject of *faciebat*.

Mucius ... interfecit (lines 12-13).

The final sentence did not prove as challenging as it sometimes has, and few did it badly. The accusative and infinitive after *credebat* was notably well handled, but many failed to recognise the form *sumpto*, so missing the ablative absolute, and *quod* in *quod credebat* was often translated as if it were *qui*.

Section B

The weakest candidates tended to lose their way in the later stages of the Latin passage, but the majority diligently worked their way through and picked up marks even where they did not have a full understanding. It was in their accurate grasp of detail and the avoidance of loose paraphrase that the ablest candidates stood out.

- (a) Most referred correctly to Chares being an Athenian general, but errors were made in answering what he was trying to do. These included taking *insulas quasdam* as singular and variously misconstruing *quae ab Athenis defecerant*. A fair number, however, answered correctly that he was trying to capture (certain) islands that had defected from Athens.
- (b) Most were able to quote *summa difficultate* from the Latin, but in translating it the majority failed to bring out the superlative force of *summa* ('utmost').
- (c) (i) Most answered correctly that Timotheus and Iphicrates were sent to help Chares.
(ii) Almost everybody rightly pointed out that Timotheus was an old man at the time.
- (d) Though a few did not know the meaning of *tempestatas*, the vast majority referred correctly to a great storm arising.
- (e) Most, rightly, had Timotheus and Iphicrates holding back their fleet, but, in saying why, some clearly did not know the meaning of *optimum* in *hanc evitare optimum esse arbitrati*. A great many, however, were able to explain that Timotheus and Iphicrates thought it best to avoid the storm.

- (f) Full marks were not often obtained here. Most saw that the answer lay in the *quod* clause of the passage, but tended to confuse *cedere* with *cadere* and occasionally translated *edere* as *edere* were *eius*. A number of candidates did, however, give the correct answer that Chares was unwilling to submit to their authority.
- (g) A few had trouble with the phrase *sine mora*, but the vast majority saw that Chares was sending word to Timotheus and Iphicrates to follow without delay.
- (h) Some answered vaguely or did not know the meaning of *amisit*, but most pointed correctly to Chares' loss of several ships.
- (i) A number of weaker candidates could not make sense of the Latin in lines 9-10 of the passage, but most were able to pick up marks here. Many, rightly, had Chares claiming that he could easily have taken Samos and that he had been deserted by Timotheus and Iphicrates, but by misunderstanding or ignoring *nisi* they failed properly to link the two. Relatively few gave the fully correct answer that Chares could have taken Samos if he had not been deserted by Timotheus and Iphicrates.
- (j) Only the ablest candidates gave the full answer here. Most mentioned the Athenians accusing Timotheus and Iphicrates of treason, but clearly had difficulty understanding *domum revocatos* in line 11 of the passage, which tells us that the Athenians first called them back home.
- (k) Again, there were many only partially correct answers here. Timotheus' reason for leaving Athens was contained in the final sentence of the passage, where candidates' answers often failed to take into account *ingratorum* or *coactus*. They were, of course, allowed to take *ingratorum civium* as either an objective or subjective genitive (i.e. he was forced to leave because of his hatred of the ungrateful citizens or because of the ungrateful citizens' hatred of him).
- (l) The derivations were, as usual, very well done, and full marks were often obtained.

LATIN

Paper 0480/02

Literature

General comments

The general standard at this session was good, with some really beautiful translations of Virgil and many candidates showing an excellent grasp of the language. The majority of candidates were able to translate the prescribed texts fluently and tended to perform well on most questions, although there were those who were not able to translate the Latin. These candidates could not answer questions based on the Latin text rather than the story, such as those requiring comment on style. To judge from the general level of response from candidates, both the verse and prose selections were well understood and candidates were able to produce personal responses to the literature. Most candidates' answers reflected good examination technique.

Comments on individual questions

Section A: Virgil, *Aeneid IV*

Question 1

- (i) Generally answered well.
- (ii) Generally answered well with candidates producing thoughtful answers and showing a thorough knowledge of the text.
- (iii) Generally answered well although some candidates who clearly understood the passage missed *sic fatus* from the beginning.
- (iv) Generally answered well.
- (v) Generally answered well.
- (vi) Generally answered well: there were very few candidates at this session who were unable to scan.
- (vii) Generally answered well with most candidates referring to the alliteration rather than the metre.
- (viii) Generally answered well.

Question 2

- (i) Generally answered well, although some candidates lost marks by not mentioning Dido's desertion by Aeneas.
- (ii) Generally answered well.
- (iii) Generally answered well.
- (iv) Generally answered well with some delightful translations. There were many interesting and equally valid interpretations of *monstrata* in line 8.
- (v) Generally answered well.
- (vi) Generally answered well even by candidates who lacked knowledge in other areas.

Question 3 *Do you consider that Virgil encourages in his readers greater sympathy for Dido or Aeneas?*

This longer question worth 10 marks was generally answered well. There were some excellent personal responses, which had been well thought through. Successful answers included reference to the following: Virgil's portrayal of Dido as insane; Dido not being able to sleep when every other creature was able to and the contrast between this and Aeneas fast asleep in the boat; the portrayal of Aeneas as cold and hard-hearted, or as sensible and balanced and obeying the gods' orders; the magic/ death ritual and Juno's intervention in it; the 'marriage' in the cave and Dido's possible misinterpretation of it; Dido being a victim of the schemes of Venus and Juno. The most successful answers referred to both sides of the argument and looked at the question from a Roman as well as from a modern perspective, with Dido representing the hated Carthaginians and Aeneas inspiring Roman patriotism. Some responses compared Dido as the 'silly woman' with Aeneas as the 'sensible man'.

Section B: Two Centuries of Roman Prose

Question 4

Sub-questions (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) were generally answered well, although some candidates omitted in their answer to (ii) to mention the Greek toasting custom.

In sub-question (v), few candidates used the correct technical terms and this question was generally answered wrongly. Candidates generally did not appear to understand the concept of using the same verb with two nouns to mean two different things.

Sub-questions (vi), (vii), (viii) and (ix) were generally answered well. .

Question 5

Sub-questions (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) were generally answered well, although *dabuntque operam* in line 7 caused some problems with candidates not recognizing the idiom.

Sub-questions (v) and (iv) were generally answered well, with candidates in (iv) referring to the imperatives rather than mentioning use of tricolon or asyndeton.

Question 6 *Of the three authors, Cicero, Seneca and Pliny, which have you most enjoyed reading? Give reasons for your choice.*

The longer question on the prose prescribed text was generally answered well, with candidates expressing varied opinions which were very interesting to read. Answers generally reflected the candidate's ability to relate to the author. One effective way of obtaining a good mark was for a candidate to talk about each author and to say why his work did or did not appeal and then in conclusion to say which author had been most enjoyed.

Cicero was seen by candidates as more interesting than the other prose prescribed text authors since the stories are historical and the bravery of the men described can still inspire people. At the same time, some candidates found his work less interesting because it was less personal than that of Seneca and Pliny.

Pliny's founding of a grammar school was appreciated as a community-spirited gesture and because education is important. Some candidates, though, found the Pliny text mundane compared with bravery in the face of death or fears about a watchtower landing on you.

Seneca's philosophy was appreciated by some candidates and some also enjoyed his humour and ability to laugh at himself when talking about the tunnel incident.

The fact that certain themes addressed by the prescribed prose authors are still relevant today was a popular point, for example people still face death, go to school and misuse charitable donations. Many candidates referred to the authors' use of language and to how they enjoyed the imagery, metaphors, and persuasive techniques, for example, that they used. The three authors all seemed to be equally popular/unpopular with candidates.