

LATIN

Paper 9788/01
Verse Literature

Key Messages

- All candidates chose the Virgil option.
- The majority of candidates opted for the Unseen Literary Criticism question rather than the theme essay.
- Most candidates showed a good knowledge of the set texts.

General Comments

Overall, the performance of candidates this year was not as good as last year. While there were some superb answers – both to commentary and essay questions – there were no answers that were quite able to sustain excellence through all questions. Most candidates knew their set texts well, and were able to answer all different types of question on the set text.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

- (i) Most candidates were able to extract relevant detail from the passage. Comment and analysis were not always so assured, however. There was a tendency among some to concentrate on sound effects (e.g. of the triple alliteration in line 6) without saying much that was creditworthy. That said, most candidates said good things about how much restraint the winds required, with even omnipotent Jupiter being afraid.
- (ii) Well answered, as a rule. Candidates were able to note Juno's mixture of flattery and bribery in various ways.
- (iii) Well translated.

Question 2

- (i) While there were many good answers, there was again a tendency for some to make spurious claims about sound effects. Much good was said about the antipathy of Pallas, the account of Hector's demise and the pathos of Priam. Fewer were able to say much about the last four lines of the section.
- (ii) Mainly well answered, though candidates needed to work a little harder to show that Aeneas's dumbstruck reaction to the reliefs on the temple contribute to the representation of Dido. Once into line 18, candidates felt more confident (*pulcherrima*, surrounded by a large number of young men, comparison to Diana).
- (iii) Well translated, though *saepta* and *testudine* caused some problems for a few candidates

Section B

Question 5

This question was not attempted by many but the answers received were for the most part fairly good. Without exception candidates wanted to disagree with the statement in the essay question, and were able to refer to various relevant episodes.

Question 6

Most candidates chose to tackle this essay. The best essays were full of relevant detail accurately recalled, with lots of good discussion of Juno, Venus, Neptune and Jupiter. The best essays also contained sound discussion of fate and its relationship to the gods.

Section C

Question 9

Most candidates chose this option with mixed success. Even candidates who wrote well on *Aeneid* 1 were tempted to write much less convincing commentary in answer to this question. The commentary was less convincing because there was an over-reliance on the analysis of stylistic features, with spurious claims about the ways in which they supported the meaning.

- (i) There were some good answers here, though there were also some errors (*neci* is not an imperative). Most commented well on *sanguinolentus*, and on the pathos of Romulus's reaction. Few picked up on the repetition of *transeat* (lines 4 and 12). There was quite a lot of inaccurately identified polytoton (the repetition must occur within the same sentence).
- (ii) There were some good answers here, with some good comments on *pietas dissimulata patet* and *oscula...suprema*. Fewer were able to comment interestingly on the problems of *invito*. Some were not able accurately to identify the other mourners (although a translation is provided), though there were some interesting points made about the rising up of Rome.

Questions 10–13

Only a few candidates tackled the theme essay. Performance was generally much better than on the Unseen Literary Criticism question. Most candidates chose either **Question 10** or **Question 12**. At best, candidates showed exceptionally good knowledge of not only *Aeneid* 1 but also book 6, and sometimes books 8 and 12. Many odes of Horace and elegies of Propertius were also referred to and analysed well. Candidates showed good knowledge of Augustan Rome, Augustan poetry and different genres of poetry.

LATIN

Paper 9788/02
Prose Literature

Key Messages

- Answers should be focused on the specific question set.
- Strong candidates analysed the texts convincingly.
- Candidates should consider the wider context in their essays.

General Comments

Livy Book 30 proved more popular than Petronius' *Satyricon* but the candidates who answered on Petronius showed enjoyment of his satire and gave detailed responses.

As in previous years, candidates scored higher marks on **Section A** than **Section B**. In the longer context answers there was still a tendency by some candidates to narrate rather than analyse and a lack of focus on the specific question asked was relatively common. It is essential that candidates do more than try to show off all their knowledge on a particular passage: selection and analysis of the salient features to answer the question is what is required.

In **Section B** there appeared to be a tendency by a number of candidates to write a previously prepared essay rather than to tackle the question on the paper head on.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Petronius, *Satyricon*

Question 1

- (i) The translation was generally very accurate.
- (ii) Answers were good but did not always include all the required details either about the accepted account of the origin of Corinthian bronze or about the historical errors made by Trimalchio.
- (iii) This was well answered by most candidates who clearly explained the tone and language used by Trimalchio and the absurd nature of the 'unbreakable glass'. The unexpected end to the story was also evaluated well.

Question 2

- (i) The translation was generally accurate: the phrase *in illius sinum demandavi* caused a problem for some candidates and more colloquial ways could have been found to render *supremum diem obiit* and *per scutum per ocream egi*.
- (ii) Candidates clearly knew the story of the werewolf well and were able to highlight key moments in the story and comment on the colloquialisms. Marks were generally high on this question.
- (iii) Candidates showed the narrator's fear but determination nevertheless to reach his destination. More could have been made of the final sentence where the narrator arrives in an almost ghost-like state: *in larvam...refectus sum*.

Livy Book 30

Question 3

- (i) There were many good answers here. A few did not explain the location or the haste with which the marriage took place. Others unnecessarily spent time analysing Sophonisba and Masinissa's motives when only facts were required.
- (ii) Most candidates focused on Scipio's leadership qualities but many did not spend sufficient time discussing the key message of Scipio's advice to Masinissa – to show more self-discipline and restrain his lusts. To achieve the highest marks, candidates needed to bring out Scipio's Stoic qualities.
- (iii) Though many achieved full marks on this question a significant proportion of candidates made a number of errors. Phrases which caused problems included *etiamsi non patrem...videremus, iudicium atque arbitrium, de ea...quae*.

Question 4

- (i) There were many detailed answers here showing how Livy uses intensifying language to mark this dramatic moment. Most answers focused on words such as *maximi, omnium* and *pares*. More could have been made of the commanders' reaction to each other *alter alterius...admiratione mutua*.
- (ii) In general this question was less well answered. Many candidates contented themselves with enumerating the various rhetorical features used by Hannibal without commenting upon whether or not they felt they were 'persuasive' or not. For many, the sheer weight of rhetorical features was enough to convince them that Hannibal is persuasive. The better answers discussed whether Hannibal's pride in his past achievements was actually likely to persuade Scipio to make peace now. Only a few candidates discussed the importance Hannibal attaches to the vicissitudes of fate in an attempt to warn Scipio against over-confidence in success in the forthcoming battle.
- (iii) Though there were many accurate translations a number did not fully understand the force of *ita...ut* and several confused *in portis* with *in portibus*.

Section B

Question 5

The candidates who attempted this essay tended to agree with the statement that Trimalchio is a tyrant and one to be mocked rather than feared. Many good examples were used of how Trimalchio treats his slaves and how Trimalchio makes a laughing-stock of himself. One or two candidates digressed from the essay title to discuss the presentation of Trimalchio as a whole rather than focussing on his 'tyrannical' attributes.

Question 6

Those candidates who answered this question tended to agree that the *Cena Trimalchionis* would make an effective play but argued that the first person narration of Encolpius would be a significant loss. Candidates effectively showed how the dinner-party is to a certain extent a 'show' in itself put on to entertain the guests and can be readily divided up into separate scenes.

Question 7

'How successful is Livy as a military historian?' Essays tended to focus on Livy's use of sources, in particular Polybius, but there was a frustrating lack of reference to military episodes in Book 30: even the Battle of Zama itself tended to be ignored. Candidates generally argued that Livy is more interested in characterisation and writing dramatic accounts than accuracy but many did not exemplify their arguments with evidence from the text. Of the four essays, this was the least successfully done, partly because many chose to ignore the word 'military'. Though candidates had clearly done some useful secondary reading they should be reminded that essay questions primarily require reference and analysis of selected passages from the text itself.

Question 8

This was less popular than **Question 7** but generally answered more effectively. Candidates tended to focus on Syphax and Masinissa rather than the Numidians as a whole and several successfully showed that Livy does differentiate between the two leaders whilst generally being negative about them in order to emphasise Roman values, as particularly exemplified by Scipio.

LATIN

Paper 9788/03
Unseen Translation

Key Messages

- Candidates should consider the style and fluency of their prose translations.
- The scansion question was well done.
- Reading a wide range of authors is useful preparation for this paper.

General Comments

The Sallust passage was well tackled, especially by those who recognised a few of his stylistic traits such as use of historic infinitives. There were several good attempts to rework the prose passage into idiomatic English but many were content to aim for accuracy rather than style and fluency.

The Ovid passage, though it contained one or two more difficult couplets, did not provide too many difficulties for the stronger candidates. Performance was similar on the prose and verse unseen passages.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

Most candidates understood the overall storyline of the Sallust passage. There were a few syntactical challenges such as the repeated use of historic infinitives and extended *oratio obliqua*. Some candidates needed to rework their translations into more idiomatic English.

lugurtha...firmat: Most candidates knew *ratus est* and realised that it introduced an indirect statement. Candidates had little problem with the series of historic presents (*potest...circumdat* etc.). A few confused *expugnare* with *oppugnare* and a number did not know *fossa*. Marks were generally high on this section.

praeterea...parare: Several candidates did not realise that *temptare...ostentare...arrigere...parare* is a series of historic infinitives which can be translated as past indicatives. A few candidates thought it to be a passage of continued *oratio obliqua*: if so, only the first infinitive was penalised. *temptare* required more than just 'attempted': e.g. 'tried to break in'. Several candidates did not know *formidinem*, confusing it with *fortitudinem* at times. *intentus* was best translated by an appropriate adverb 'intently' or 'he was intent on'.

Adherbal...delegit: Candidates coped well with the long sentence governed by *intellegit. in extremo sitas* was the kind of phrase which gave an opportunity for candidates to gain style marks e.g. 'were in extreme peril' or 'were in an extremely precarious position' would have received extra credit. *infestum* caused problems. *bellum trahi*: several candidates did not realise that *bellum* is the subject of *trahi* which is passive: 'war (could not) be prolonged/dragged out'.

eos...efficiunt: The syntax of *eos...confirmat ut* proved difficult but a few worked out that it meant 'he convinced them to...' by taking into account the ablative gerunds. *paucis diebus*: 'within a few days' was required for full marks. A number incorrectly translated *iussa* as singular.

litterae...senatores: Most candidates recognised that the auxiliary verb *sunt* is omitted after *recitatae* and many understood that 'opinion' does not really get the sense of *sententia* here. The strongest candidates saw that *sententia* means 'essence' or 'sentiment'. *non mea culpa* ('it is no fault of mine'): this idiomatic phrase in the ablative caused problems as did the supine form *oratum* to express purpose, though suitable nouns such as 'appeal' were allowed.

sed vis lugurthae...malit: *vis* was best translated as 'violence' though 'power' and 'force' were both accepted. The relative clause *quem...* required careful analysis. *exstinguendi*: this genitive of the gerund could better be translated by an infinitive in English e.g. 'to destroy'. Most realised that *in animo habeat* does not mean 'intends' here but has rather its literal meaning 'he has in mind'.

Question 2

(a) Though a few couplets caused difficulty, it was possible for most candidates to follow the argument until the end. A few candidates did not appear to use the information given in the glossary to the full, especially in the case of names.

aspice...premunt: Most candidates correctly translated *aspice* as an imperative governing *quam laudem*: 'Look at what praise...'. *nostro*: the majority realised that Ovid is referring to himself i.e. 'my'.

ille est...tremitt: the ablative absolute *Pelia mittente* caused a problem for a number of candidates and line 6 proved challenging. Many did not understand how to translate the gerundive *timendus* ('to be feared') or *fine* ('at the border'). *solis ab ortu/ solis ad occasus*: this was translated in a variety of acceptable ways including simply 'from east to west' and the strongest candidates understood that the sense is that (Augustus) Caesar is feared at both ends of the earth (in contrast to the local tyrant Pelias).

ille habuit...fuit: There were a few vocabulary problems here, notably *telluris*, *ligno* and *carina*. Several candidates did not recognise that the form *Aesonidem* denotes 'the son of Aeson'.

nec mihi...ira dei: Ovid is here arguing that Jason had advantages that Ovid himself did not such as a skilled helmsman and a prophet to help guide him on his way. Some candidates found it challenging to make sense of these lines. *laesi si gravis ira dei*: the word order caused difficulties here.

durius...onus: Few had problems with the ablative of comparison *illo*; several struggled with the compound verb *subiit* ('underwent') especially if they misunderstood *Aesone natus* ('the son of Aeson').

(b) In line 7 the caesura was best placed in the 4th foot though a 3rd foot caesura was allowed. Most candidates scored 4 or 5 marks on the scansion.

LATIN

Paper 9788/04

Prose Composition or Comprehension

Key Messages

- The majority of candidates chose the Prose Composition option.
- Candidates need a secure grammatical knowledge to do well in this paper.
- Candidates should give precise details in answer to the comprehension questions.

General Comments

Overall, the standard this year – mainly in the Prose Composition option – was not as good as last year. While there were still several exceptionally good papers, and also some solid ones, there were also more candidates than in previous years who clearly were less able to rely on secure grammatical knowledge.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

First sentence

Mainly good, though some did not know that *persuadeo* takes a dative. 'His debts' caused some problems for a few, though it was often translated in idiomatic ways.

Second sentence

The best began not only with an ablative absolute but with an ablative absolute with a connecting relative.

Third sentence

This was harder. Some knew *iens*; quite a few did not know *vicus* and tried *oppidum* instead. 'Prefer' caused more difficulties than expected.

Fourth sentence

Many candidates did not know the differences between *postea*, *post*, *postquam*; also, quite a few were troubled by 'a little' and 'for a while'.

Fifth sentence

There was some excellent translation of 'When asked, etc.', the best being – *cuida, roganti...*

Sixth sentence

This difficult last sentence was actually done very well, partly because there are a variety of ways to do the syntax. 'Ambitious' was often well done, but most impressive was the use of the genitive of characteristic in the final clause, i.e. *sapientis est*.

Section B

There were insufficient responses to this question to comment in detail. In order to attain high marks, candidates need to give precise detail in answer to the questions. Some answers revealed weaknesses in grammatical understanding and this section was, in general, less well done than Section A.