

VCE Classical Studies

Written examination – End of year

Sample questions

These sample questions are intended to demonstrate how new aspects of Units 3 and 4 of VCE Classical Studies may be examined. They do **not** constitute a full examination paper.

SECTION A – Individual study

Question 1 (20 marks)

Homer, *The Iliad*, Book 6

translated by Robert Fagles with an introduction and notes by Bernard Knox, Penguin Classics, 1998, Book 6 (lines 163–190), pp. 200 and 201

Nor did the man live long, not with the hate
[...]
all in secret.

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full extract. Instead, the opening and closing words of the extract have been provided.

- a. Explain the context of this extract. 4 marks
- b. Analyse the techniques used to express ideas in lines 171–175. 6 marks
- c. Using evidence from Book 6, evaluate the importance of this extract to Book 6 as a whole. 10 marks

Question 2 (20 marks)

Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*

translated by Rex Warner with an introduction and notes by MI Finley, Penguin Classics, 1972, Book 7, sections 84 and 85, pp. 534 and 535

When day came Nicias [...] and captured them as well.

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full extract. Instead, the opening and closing words of the extract have been provided.

- a. Explain the circumstances that have led to the events portrayed in this extract. 4 marks
- b. Describe the techniques that Thucydides uses to portray the demise of the Athenians. 6 marks
- c. Evaluate the importance of this extract in relation to other prescribed extracts from the text. 10 marks

Question 3 (20 marks)

Virgil, *The Aeneid*, Book 10

translated and with an introduction by David West, Penguin Classics, 2003 (revised edition), Book 10, pp. 217 and 218

Duty allowed

[...]

with its rim of gold given you by the God of Fire himself.

Due to copyright restrictions, the VCAA is unable to reproduce the full extract. Instead, the opening and closing words of the extract have been provided.

- a. Explain what has occurred in Book 10 prior to this extract. 4 marks
- b. Analyse the key ideas presented in this extract. 6 marks
- c. Evaluate the importance of this extract in relation to Book 10 as a whole. 10 marks

Question 4 (20 marks)

Roman portraits

Image A



Source: Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Rome;
CC-BY-NC-SA 3.0 IT

Image B



Source: Museum of Fine Arts, Virginia, 71.20;
CC-BY NC 4.0

- a. Explain who is depicted in Image A and in Image B, and the sociohistorical context of each work. 4 marks
- b. Analyse the techniques used in the portrayal of these two figures. 6 marks
- c. Evaluate the ideas presented in Image A and in Image B. Use evidence from **two** other portraits prescribed for study this year to support your argument. 10 marks

The sample tasks below indicate possible tasks that may be expected for Section B. The task for each question will be common to all questions in this section. However, the wording may change from year to year.

SECTION B – Comparative study

Question 1 (40 marks)

In ‘The Persians’ and *The Histories*, Aeschylus and Herodotus aim to show Greek superiority.

Sample Task 1

Evaluate this statement using evidence from both works.

Sample Task 2

To what extent do you agree?

Sample Task 3

Evaluate this statement by comparing the ideas expressed in the works and the techniques used to present them.

Question 2 (40 marks)

Livy and Tacitus wrote to improve their fellow Romans.

Sample Task 1

Evaluate this statement using evidence from both works.

Sample Task 2

To what extent do you agree?

Sample Task 3

Evaluate this statement by comparing the ideas expressed in the works and the techniques used to present them.