

GCSE (9-1)

Examiners' report

LATIN

J282

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Contents

Introduction	3
Paper 5 series overview	4
Question 1 (a)	5
Question 1 (b)	6
Question 2 (a)	8
Question 2 (b)	8
Question 3 (a)	9
Question 3 (b)	9
Question 3 (c)	10
Question 3 (d)	10
Question 4	11
Question 5 (a)	13
Question 7	13
Question 8	14



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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates. The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report. A full copy of the question paper can be downloaded from OCR.

Paper 5 series overview

This paper focuses on Latin Verse Literature, specifically selections from the story of Dido and Aeneas in Books 4 and 6 of Virgil's Aeneid. Candidates are expected to have studied the specified text in detail; they should have a good knowledge of the contents of the text and be able to analyse some of the literary techniques used by the poet; they should also be able to discuss some of the themes and issues which arise from the text.

The questions range from straightforward factual information from a quoted portion of the text, through a deeper analysis of some specific literary effects to more extended answers which give a considered response to wider aspects of the text as a work of literature.

This paper targets two assessment objectives. AO2 requires the candidate to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the literature. AO3 requires the candidate to analyse, evaluate and respond to literature. The Mark Scheme indicates which of the two objectives is being examined in each question but the two are, of course, interdependent: no successful analysis, evaluation or response can be made unless the basic knowledge and understanding are already there.

'Understanding' is just as important a feature of AO2 as 'knowledge'. Candidates should try to answer the question that is being asked rather than simply relying on a literal translation of the lemma. Very often such a literal translation does provide the answer that is needed for the marks, but this is not always the case.

The overall standard on both objectives in this paper was very high. A great many candidates displayed an impressive degree of accuracy in their textual knowledge as well as familiarity with a wide range of literary techniques. Candidates were able to draw on a wealth of technical terms, usually (although by no means always) correctly used. Candidates are not in fact required to use technical terms and will do just as well if they explain their points adequately without them. There is no penalty for using technical terms incorrectly but there were occasions when a term was wrongly used but it was just not clear what point the candidate was trying to make: no credit could be given in an instance such as this.

Even where candidates displayed limited knowledge of the specifics of the text, they often wrote full and interesting answers in the final essay question. They had clearly engaged closely with the story of Dido and Aeneas and had strong opinions about the characters and where their own sympathies lay. There is every opportunity on this question for candidates to make their own personal response and the question this year asks for a personal judgement. All views are treated as valid by the examiners if they are supported by sound references to the text.

Legibility

Once again examiners have battled with a substantial number of scripts which were on or beyond the borderline of legibility. This was the case throughout the paper and not confined to longer answers where candidates might have been pressed for time. If examiners cannot read a script, or can only do so with extreme difficulty, there is a real danger that candidates will not receive a fair assessment. Both candidates and those who prepare them for the examination need to be aware of this.

Question 1 (a)

1 Read the passage and answer the questions.

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Virgil, *Aeneid* 4, lines 298–303

(a) *eadem ... parari* (lines 1–2): what **two** pieces of information did Rumour bring to Dido?

-
- [2]

Most correctly identified the two points but there was some confusion. 'Prepared' was accepted for both *armari* and *parari* and a range of expressions accepted for the *cursum parari*.

Question 1 (b)

(b)

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Translation:

She rages, helpless in mind, and inflamed runs wild through the whole city, like a bacchant aroused by the moving of the sacred objects, when at the sound of Bacchus the rituals of alternate years spur her on and Cithaeron by night calls her with shouts.

How does Virgil, by his style of writing, emphasise Dido's frenzied state of mind? Make two points and refer to the Latin.

. [4]

Candidates find this type of question quite difficult and need a good deal of guidance about what is required and how to answer it. They must give two examples and 2 marks are available for each. To gain 2 marks the candidate must give a relevant example, a correct Latin reference and an explanation of how it emphasises Dido's frenzy. The Latin reference may be as little as a single word if it exemplifies the point being made; if the reference is too lengthy it may fail to identify the key point and, in this way, gain no credit.

The examples **must** be points of style and the wording of the question makes this clear: merely matching a bit of Latin with the translation provided cannot score any marks. Plenty of possible stylistic examples are suggested in the Mark Scheme. ‘Choice of vocabulary’ is a valid stylistic device but the candidate needs to show that there is something particularly significant about their chosen word, rather than another word of similar meaning.

Exemplar 1

- The use of *incensa* (on fire) emphasises how angry she is. The association with fire highlights her raging state and we see the similarity of her anger with a burning flame

This answer scored 2 as it highlighted the 'fire' imagery in *incensa* as being particularly effective.

Exemplar 2

- Dido is described as "helpers in mind", ~~✓~~ "chaps animi", which shows how Dido has been driven crazy.

This answer did not score any marks as there is nothing here to suggest that the choice of the phrase *inops animi* adds any emphasis beyond its basic meaning. Where a candidate did provide a convincing account, examiners gave credit even though the example is not on the Mark Scheme.

Many candidates mentioned the comparison of Dido to a bacchant (for which either *bacchatur* or *qualis ... Thyias*' was accepted as the Latin reference). As the term 'bacchant' is not self-explanatory candidates need to give some explanation as to why this comparison highlights Dido's frenzy. Examiners did not look for anything very detailed here and it was a point on which many candidates were extremely vague.

The few candidates who used aspects of the extended simile as one of their examples tended to run into difficulties as the details refer to the bacchant rather than specifically to Dido. Some thought that it was Dido that Mt Cithaeron was calling, for example, and spoke of hallucination, or the like.

Question 2 (a)

2 Read the passage and answer the questions.

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Virgil, *Aeneid* 4, lines 304–311

(a) *tacitusque ... terra* (line 3): what does Dido accuse Aeneas of trying to do?

.....
.....

[2]

It was important to include reference to *tacitus* here. Although there was no penalty on this occasion for including reference to *dissimulare*, it is outside the lemma and candidates should stick strictly to the lemma that is provided for each question.

Question 2 (b)

(b) *nec te noster ... Dido* (lines 4–5): how does Dido try to put emotional pressure on Aeneas?
Make **two** points.

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.....

[2]

Nearly all candidates gained 2 marks here. Examiners did accept a literal translation of the two lines, but the literal translation does not, in fact, answer the question. Candidates should be encouraged to pick out the specific information which answers the question rather than relying on an unmediated translation to do the work.

Question 3 (a)

3 Read the passage and answer the questions.

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Virgil, *Aeneid* 4, lines 350–359

(a) *et nos ... regna* (line 1): what does Aeneas say it is right for the Trojans to do?

..... [2]

extera was not always known but otherwise the question was very well answered.

Question 3 (b)

(b) *me patris ... imago* (lines 2–4): in what ways were Aeneas' dreams of his father disturbing?
Make **two** points.

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.....
.....
•
.....
..... [2]

The great majority of candidates scored 2 here but 'his father's being a ghost' was not accepted. Not all candidates understood that *quotiens ... terras* means that they occurred every night and that it was this that was troubling rather than the darkness or dampness.

Question 3 (c)

(c) *me puer ... arvis* (lines 5–6): what injury is Aeneas doing to his son by staying in Carthage?

..... [1]

Nearly all candidates were given the mark for “translation” or “interpretation”, but a few candidates spoke of head injuries.

Question 3 (d)

(d) *nunc ... hausi* (lines 7–10): Aeneas claims that he has received a message from the gods.
How does he try to convince Dido that this really happened?

Make **two** points and refer to the Latin.

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-

..... [4]

This is the same type of question as Question 1(b) and again candidates need considerable help and guidance in how to tackle it successfully. The requirements for 2 marks are given in the comment on Question 1(b) and are also on the Mark Scheme. There were many very good answers. Some candidates did not have a precise enough understanding of the text. Others did not give a clear enough explanation of how Aeneas is hammering home the reality of Mercury's visit.

No translation is provided here so examples that focus on the content of the passage can score 2 marks; points of style are equally acceptable. *testor ... caput* was a popular example and usually very well explained as Aeneas ‘betting his life’ or something similar to convince Dido. There are many diverse opinions as to what Virgil meant by the phrase and those who opted to translate *testor* as ‘I call to witness’ did have a harder time explaining Aeneas’ point.

Amidst many good and well explained examples, some answers were invalidated by confusion of *ipso* and *ipse* and who is referred to in each case. Some were not clear which god Aeneas saw. *Manifesto ... vidi* tells us it was broad daylight (so no possibility of mistake) rather than that Aeneas saw Mercury ‘with his own eyes’. There were some valid and imaginatively explained references to *his auris* and how this emphasises that Aeneas heard the god (rather than relying on some second-hand account, for example).

Question 4

4* Read the passage and answer the question.

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Virgil, *Aeneid* 4, lines 381–391

How does Virgil make this a dramatic scene?

In your answer you may wish to consider:

- what Dido says to Aeneas
- how she leaves him.

You should refer to the **Latin** and discuss a range of stylistic features such as choice, sound and position of words. [8]

In this 8-mark literary analysis question (AO3) candidates are expected to formulate a coherent answer to the question which focuses on specific details of the text. Examiners annotate this answer by using tick+ and tick?

Tick+ indicates a valid and well understood textual reference with a full explanation of how it makes the scene dramatic.

Tick? indicates an example that is relevant but is minor or slight, or the explanation is not fully developed.

These annotations show the parts of the answer that deserve credit but the mark for the **whole** answer is assessed in accordance with the Marking Grid for the 8-mark extended response on page 10 of the Mark Scheme.

It must be stressed that ticks, of whatever variety, do not equal marks. However, as a rough guide, Examiners would expect to see **at least** 4 tick+ points (or 3 tick+ and some tick? points) to award a mark in Level 4, and there would need to be some level of overall coherence in the answer, together with some stylistic observations and correct Latin references. Not all points made need to be stylistic but the complete absence of points of style brings the answer (however good in other ways) down to a maximum of 4 (Level 2 on the Marking Grid).

Exemplar 3

...i, sequere ita illam ventis, pete ~~hunc~~...
 regna per umbras'. The abrupt 'Go' (i) expresses how Dido ~~na~~ has stopped begging Aeneas to stay she is now just angry. This makes the scene more dramatic as ~~the~~ we start to see a change in her emotions, she is pure anger and has developed a hatred towards him.

This is a developed (tick+) point. It is simply expressed but provides a good example, with a slight but pertinent stylistic observation ("abrupt 'Go'... ") and a full explanation of how it is dramatic. The contrast between Dido's previous feelings and her present attitude is well made. The point could be improved by showing the meaning of the rest of the quoted Latin, or by mentioning the triplet of imperatives.

Exemplar 4

The short imperative "i" (go) at the beginning of the speech makes the scene very dramatic as it shows Dido's rapid change of mind.

Exemplar 4 makes essentially the same point as the previous exemplar but does not fully explain what Dido's change of mind was and how this is dramatic.

The opening line of imperatives was a very popular point with candidates and was well understood. Many also went on to deal vigorously and cogently with Dido's passionate desire for Aeneas' destruction at sea and her threats to haunt him. There were some uncertainties and misconstructions. Many were uncertain about the point of *atris ignibus*: references to the Furies were well made but alleged foreshadowing of her death on the funeral pyre was unconvincing. *frigida mors ... artus* can as well refer to Aeneas' death as Dido's and the word order here is a point of significance; *seduxerit*, however, is not a 'violent' verb as it means just 'separate' not 'sever' or 'tear away'. This is just one example of the importance of ensuring that candidates are using correct translations of the text.

Quite a few candidates had so much to say about Dido's words to Aeneas that they did not get on to her departure (this was entirely acceptable). From those that did there were some good observations about the list of verbs of very similar meaning, the emphatic position of *aegra* and the pathetic condition of Aeneas, mumbling (possibly) and too shocked to speak. Again, there were some serious misconceptions. There are on the page a lot of words beginning with the letter A, but these make at least four different sounds, so it is inappropriate to speak of assonance/alliteration. The repeated prefix (*ab...*, *a...*, *au...*) would be a more acceptable point. There is also no 'tricolon' of participles in the penultimate line as *linquens* is the action of Dido while *cunctantem* and *parantem* are those of Aeneas (who is not 'in much fear').

Question 5 (a)

5 Read the passage and answer the questions.

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Virgil, *Aeneid* 4, lines 393–396

(a) *at pius ... amore* (lines 1–3): what does this passage tell us about Aeneas' feelings at this point? Make **three** points.

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-
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-
-
- [3]

Candidates were rather uncertain about this question and referred to his 'dutifulness' (not a feeling) or his returning to the fleet (outside the lemma). The *magno ... amore* could be that of Dido rather than Aeneas but there are at least four other points available to answer the question and a straight translation would get them.

Question 7

7 Read the passage and answer the question.

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Virgil, *Aeneid* 6, lines 461–464

Translate this passage into English.

.....
..... [5]

This is a challenging passage which many candidates nevertheless translated well. Failure to translate *has* in line 1 was an inconsequential error which, on its own, did not prevent a candidate from getting full marks. There was some confusion between 'ordering' and 'forcing/driving' and the occasional word did tend to go missing: this is treated as a more serious error. Among those who understood the passage quite well overall, a surprisingly common error was in translating *iussa deum* as 'The gods commanded me'. This immediately brought the mark down to 3, especially as it usually entailed leaving out *cogunt*.

Question 8

8* 'Aeneas deserves our sympathy just as much as Dido.' Do you agree?

In your answer you may refer to the passages printed in this question paper, but you should also refer to other parts of *Aeneid 4* and *Aeneid 6* that you have read. [10]

The 10-mark extended response provides candidates with an opportunity to show their overall understanding of the text they have studied and the personal response that they have made to it. The marking is based on the guidance on page 15 of the Mark Scheme. This makes clear that the marks are equally weighted between AO2 (knowledge and understanding) and AO3 (analysis, evaluation and response to literature). An argument, however good, must have detailed textual support to achieve the higher levels of marks and knowledge of the text, however detailed, will only score so far if no conclusions are drawn from it.

Exemplar 5

On the other hand, Aeneas wanted to find the best situation to address Dido, so he carefully chose his words and waited for the most favourable times to speak on what was right for the whole matter. Aeneas didn't want to tell Dido, however, he never found the best time, if there was any, to address her.

Here the candidate gives a correct and detailed description of Aeneas' behaviour but gives no indication at all how it relates to the question or what argument the candidate is using it to support. The paragraph begins 'on the other hand', suggesting the continuation of an argument, but the previous paragraphs equally made no gesture toward the question set.

Exemplar 6

Furthermore, Aeneas not only had 'the orders of the gods and the Trojan refugees' to consider but he also had to consider the ^{people} lives of his family. His father warned him in his sleep and Aeneas could not disobey his dead father's wishes. Also, Aeneas' son Ascanius was counting on Aeneas to bring him the fated lands. Aeneas could not ruin his son's life just for Dido and so had to prioritise his family over her. I think he deserves our sympathy here as he was forced to make the difficult decision between his family and Dido.

This exemplar establishes a point of argument, provides two textual examples to support it and finishes with a summative sentence stating just how, in the candidate's opinion, this arouses sympathy for Aeneas. It is pretty much a text-book example of a good approach to the topic.

There were many outstanding answers to the question of whether Aeneas deserves as much sympathy as Dido and just about every possible point of view was taken by someone. Almost all candidates had interesting things to say on the subject and some wrote pertinently at very great length. It was, it must be stressed, entirely possible to score full marks without straying onto the Additional Answer Space.

The most successful answers gave some evidenced reasons why Aeneas does (or does not) deserve sympathy followed (or indeed preceded) by reasons to sympathise (or otherwise) with Dido. A conclusion was then drawn giving the writer's own opinion as to whether Aeneas does or does not deserve as much sympathy as Dido.

Some answers, often reasonable but scoring less highly, in effect listed several 'on the one hand', 'but on the other hand' points but didn't develop a coherent argument. In conclusion they plumped, almost randomly it seemed, for one character or the other as the more deserving of sympathy.

It was very rare for a candidate to write only about Aeneas, and it is perhaps difficult to score at the top level without giving any consideration to Dido, but nearly all thought that Aeneas deserved at least some sympathy and many thought he deserved just as much, or even more. Examiners were very impressed with the level of engagement shown by candidates in this question.

There were a few candidates who appeared to be answering a different question, such as whether Aeneas handled the situation well or badly (the question that was asked last year). To gain a high mark, candidates do need to keep the question in the forefront of their minds and show throughout how the arguments and material they are using help to answer the question set.

The most common defect was lack of detailed textual evidence. This was sometimes found in candidates who clearly had a very good overall understanding of the text but apparently just didn't see the need to put in concrete detail; concrete detail is vital, however. In other essays the textual references were too slight, generalised or downright wrong. In addition, those who prepare candidates should strongly discourage them from using Latin quotation or points of style in an essay which requires a survey of the whole set text: these almost never supply the kind of support that the argument requires and they usually mean that the candidate doesn't get round to giving the more substantial evidence.

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