



# Cambridge International AS & A Level

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## CLASSICAL STUDIES

9274/42

Paper 4 Classical Literature: Sources and Evidence

October/November 2020

1 hour 30 minutes



You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

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### INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **one** question.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

### INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 50.
- Each question is worth 50 marks.

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This document has 4 pages. Blank pages are indicated.

You are advised to spend 20 minutes reading and thinking about the three passages in the question you have chosen to answer, and then 10 minutes planning your answer. Answers need to make use of all three passages given for the question you are answering.

## 1 Drama: the idea of tragedy

Read the following passage and answer the question that follows:

The tragedians evidently did not have any objection to portraying suffering characters who have done nothing at all to deserve their own suffering...Tragedians are interested in human choices and actions, so when characters suffer misfortune for which they bear no responsibility, the tragedy is about how they respond.

R Scodel, *An Introduction to Greek Tragedy* (2010) (with omissions)

**Explore critically the idea that it is the fate of the characters ‘who have done nothing at all to deserve their own suffering’ that makes tragedy so moving. In your answer you should consider the passage above and your wider reading of tragedy, as well as the two passages below:** [50]

MESSENGER: *describing the reaction to the death of Glauke by her father:*  
Not one among us dared to touch  
Her body. What we'd seen was lesson enough for us.

But suddenly her father came into the room.  
He did not understand, poor man, what kind of death  
Had struck his child. He threw himself down at her side,  
And sobbed aloud, and kissed her, and took her in his arms,  
And cried, 'Poor darling child, what god destroyed your life  
So cruelly? Who robs me of my only child,  
Old as I am, and near my grave? Oh, let me die  
With you, my daughter!' Soon he ceased his tears and cries,  
And tried to lift his aged body upright; and then,  
As ivy sticks to laurel-branches, so he stuck  
Fast to the dress. A ghastly wrestling then began;  
He struggled to raise up his knee, she tugged him down.  
If he used force, he tore the old flesh off his bones.

Euripides, *Medea*, 1201–1217

CASSANDRA: *speaking to the chorus about her past and her future:*  
I went from door to door,  
I was wild with the god, I heard them call me  
'Beggar! Wretch! Starve for bread in hell!'

And I endured it all, and now he will  
extort me as his due. A seer for the Seer.  
He brings me here to die like this,  
not to serve at my father's altar. No,  
the block is waiting. The cleaver steams  
with my life blood, the first blood drawn  
for the king's last rites.

We will die,  
but not without some honour from the gods.

Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, 1292–1301

## 2 Gods and Heroes: the importance of epic

Read the following passage and answer the question that follows:

An epic hero is normally of superior social status, often a king or leader in his own right. He is usually tall, handsome and muscular. He must be preeminent, or nearly so, in athletic and fighting skills. This latter ability implies not just physical skill, but also the courage to utilize it. The epic hero is sometimes outstanding in intelligence. Yet there seems to be more to the heroic character than is conveyed by such simple depictions. To display his heroic abilities the hero needs some form of crisis.

P Toohey, *Reading Epic* (1992) (adapted)

**Explore critically the extent to which a hero needs some form of crisis to display his heroic abilities. In your answer you should consider the passage above and your wider reading of epic, as well as the two passages below:** [50]

*Calypso comes to Odysseus to tell him of his release:*

The Nymph at once went to the valiant Odysseus, for the message from Zeus had not fallen on deaf ears. She found him sitting on the shore. His eyes were wet with weeping, as they always were. Life with its sweetness was ebbing away in the tears he shed for his lost home. For the Nymph had long since ceased to please. At nights, it is true, he had to sleep with her in the vaulted cavern, cold lover, ardent lady. But the days found him sitting on the rocks or sands, torturing himself with tears, groans and heartache, and looking out with streaming eyes across the watery wilderness.

The goddess came and stood beside him now. 'My unhappy friend,' she said, 'don't go on grieving, don't waste any more of your life on this island. For I am ready with all my heart to help you leave it. Come now, fell some tall trees with an axe, make a wide raft and fit half-decks on top so that it can carry you across the misty seas.'

Homer, *Odyssey*, 5. 149–164

*Lausus intervenes in the battle between his father and Aeneas:*

But Lausus was in full cry and his madness knew no check. At this the anger rose even higher in the heart of the leader of the Trojans and the Fates gathered up the last threads for Lausus. Aeneas drove his mighty sword through the middle of the young man's body, burying it to the hilt, the point going straight through his light shield, no proper armour to match the threats he had uttered. It pierced, too, the tunic his mother had woven for him with a soft thread of gold and filled the folds of it with blood. Then did his life leave his body and go in sorrow through the air to join the shades.

But when Aeneas, son of Anchises, saw the dying face and features, the face strangely white, he groaned from his heart in pity and held out his hand, as there came into his mind the thought of his own devoted love for his father ...

Virgil, *Aeneid*, 10. 814–824

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