

Classical Studies – Sample 2009 Examination Question for 90511

This style of question format will also be followed for AS90247.

Topic B - Virgil

There are five questions for this Topic.

Choose **THREE** questions and answer **all** parts of these three questions.

Write your answer in the space provided at the end of each question.

You must support each answer with evidence from *The Aeneid*.

QUESTION ONE

Refer to **Extract A** in the Resource Booklet to answer this question.

In extract A, Aeneas tells how two giant sea-snakes attacked the priest Laocoon.

Discuss the importance of this episode in the story of Troy's destruction and the literary techniques used by Virgil to make this scene one of high drama.

In your answer you must analyse in detail:

- the reasons for the snakes' attack on Laocoon and his sons
- at least **THREE** techniques used by Virgil **in this extract** to make the scene powerful and emotional. You should identify each technique, give an example from this extract, and explain how and/or why it is effective.

QUESTION TWO

Read **Extract A** in the Resource Booklet to answer this question.

Laocoon is one of the many Trojans who loses his life when the Greeks sack Troy. Discuss the death of another Trojan on the night that the city falls and comment on the ways in which this death adds to the sombre atmosphere in much of Book 2.

In your answer you must:

- describe the exact circumstances of the death of the Trojan man or woman you have chosen
- analyse in detail the contribution that this death makes to the mood of tragedy in this part of Aeneas' story. Your discussion should include comment on both the tragic elements of your chosen character's death and the impact of this death on the reader/listener.

QUESTION THREE

Refer to **Extract B** in the Resource Booklet to answer this question.

In extract B Dido is preparing to commit suicide. Discuss the characteristics she displays as she is about to end her life. You must analyse in depth at least **FOUR** characteristics and provide detailed evidence **from the extract** to support your answer.

QUESTION FOUR

At the end of her speech in Extract B Dido expresses a wish that “the heartless Trojan” might suffer. How fair is Dido’s description of Aeneas as “heartless”? Support your answer with evidence from Book 4 as a whole.

In your answer you must analyse in detail:

- at least THREE actions of Aeneas that might be considered heartless, giving reasons in each instance for this judgement
- possible justification(s) for Aeneas’ behaviour in Carthage.

QUESTION FIVE

In Book 6 of *The Aeneid*, Anchises reveals to Aeneas “souls of renown who will be ... [his] descendants”. Discuss the pageant of famous Romans whose souls await their future in the Underworld.

In your answer you must:

- identify and give details about TWO famous Romans who appear to Aeneas
- explain the importance of each of these historical figures, in the context of the themes of the poem as a whole or Rome’s history
- analyse the impact that the pageant of famous Romans has on Aeneas, with specific reference to the end of Book 6.

From Resource Booklet

Topic B - Virgil

Extract A

‘But now to our distress a far more momentous and frightful experience befell us, and the unexpected shock of it disordered our minds. Laocoon, who had been chosen by lot to be priest of Neptune, happened at this moment to be sacrificing a fine bull at the altar of the cult, when, and I sicken to recall it, two giant arching sea-snakes swam over the calm waters from Tenedos, breasting the sea together and plunging towards the land. Their fore-parts and their blood-red crests towered above the waves; the rest drove through the ocean behind, wreathing monstrous coils, and leaving a wake that roared and foamed. And now, with blazing and blood-shot eyes and tongues which flickered and licked their hissing mouths, they were on the beach. We paled at the sight and scattered; they forged on, straight at Laocoon. First each snake took one of his two little sons, twined round him, tightening, and bit, and devoured the tiny limbs. Next they seized Laocoon, who had armed himself and was hastening to the rescue; they bound him in the giant spirals of their scaly length, twice round his middle, twice round his throat; and still their heads and necks towered above him.’

Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book 2

Extract B

But Dido, in trembling haste and frantic at her desperate design, burst through the doorway into the inner room. Her eyes were reddened and rolling, her cheeks quivered under a flush, and she was pale with the pallor of imminent death. In a mad dash she climbed the high funeral pile, and unsheathed the Trojan sword, a gift never meant for such a use as this. Her sight rested on the garments which had come from Troy, and on the bed with its memories. She paused a little for tears and for a thought; and she cast herself down on the bed, and there spoke her last words: "Sweet relics, sweet so long as God and Destiny allowed, now receive my life-breath, and set me free from this suffering. I have lived my life and finished the course which Fortune allotted me. Now my wraith shall pass in state to the world below. I have established a noble city. I have lived to see my own ramparts built. I have avenged my husband and punished the brother who was our foe. Happy, all too happy, should I have been, if only the Dardan ships had never reached my coast!" With this cry she buried her face in the bed, and continued: "I shall die, and die unavenged; but die I shall. Yes, yes; this is the way I like to go into the dark. And may the heartless Trojan, far out on the deep, drink in the sight of my fire and take with him the evil omen of my death."

Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book 4

Sample generic schedule statements for 90511

Achievement	Merit	Excellence
<p>The candidate explains literary features by identifying, describing, clarifying, giving reasons for, and/or placing in context aspects of passages from a work of literature.</p> <p>The candidate provides a general explanation of the literary features. Knowledge and interpretation of textual detail is at a basic level and specific references may be lacking. One or more parts of the questions is underdeveloped.</p>	<p>The candidate analyses literary features by discussing methodically and demonstrating understanding of passages from a work of literature.</p> <p>The candidate incorporates an analytical element in answers and draws conclusions based on sound knowledge of textual detail. Most parts of the question is covered, but treatment may be unbalanced. Relevant supporting evidence is included, but may not be consistently provided.</p>	<p>The candidate analyses literary features in detail by discussing methodically and demonstrating an informed understanding of passages from a work of literature.</p> <p>The candidate's answers are analytical and focussed. They are based on thorough knowledge of textual detail and show awareness of literary and historical context as appropriate. All parts of the question is answered and most in depth. Supporting evidence is relevant, accurate, and consistently provided.</p>