

Markscheme

May 2026

Classical Greek

Higher level and standard level

Paper 2

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Markbands for Option A, question 2 / Option B, question 4 / Option C, question 6 / Option D, question 8

The extended response questions are marked using the criteria and markbands below. These have been reproduced from the *Classical languages guide*.

Paper 2—Extended response

Criterion A: Knowledge, understanding, and use of evidence

In relation to the prompt, how much knowledge and understanding of the prescribed core text does the response demonstrate?

How meaningfully and relevantly does the response incorporate evidence from sources beyond the prescribed core text?

Marks	Description
0	The response does not meet the standard described below.
1–2	- The response demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the core text and its contexts in relation to the prompt. - The response does not meaningfully incorporate evidence from sources beyond the core text.
3–4	- The response demonstrates some knowledge and understanding of the core text and its contexts in relation to the prompt. - The response incorporates evidence from sources beyond the core text with some relevance to the prompt.
5–6	- The response demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the core text and its contexts in relation to the prompt. - The response meaningfully incorporates evidence from sources beyond the core texts; examples have direct relevance to the prompt.

Criterion B: Analysis and evaluation

To what extent does the response include analysis and evaluation of how the choices of language, technique, style, and/or broader authorial choices shape meaning and create effect?

Marks	Description
0	The response does not meet the standard described below.
1–2	- The response is descriptive and/or contains little relevant analysis of textual features and/or the broader authorial choices. - The response contains no meaningful evaluation of how such features and/or choices shape meaning or create effect.
3–4	- The response contains some appropriate analysis of textual features and/or broader authorial choices but is reliant on description. - There is some evaluation of how such features and/or choices shape meaning or create effect.
5–6	- The response contains appropriate and at times convincing analysis of textual features and/or broader authorial choices. - There is effective evaluation of how such features and/or choices shape meaning or create effect.

Option A

Prescribed core text: Verse — Homer, *Iliad* 22.99–125

1. (a) Polydamas urged Hector to lead the people inside the city (ἐκέλευε Τρωσὶ ποτὶ πτόλιν ἡγήσασθαι) [1]; Hector was not persuaded/did not comply (οὐ πιθόμην) [1]
- (b) Hector believes he destroyed his people [1]; he is ashamed in front of the Trojans [1]; someone worse than him might say that he had destroyed his people [1]
- (c) Award [1] up to [3] for any of the following: Hector could meet Achilles in combat/face-to-face and kill him (ἄντην ἢ Ἀχιλῆα κατακτείναντα); or be killed gloriously (by Achilles) (ὀλέσθαι ἐὺκλειῶς); put down his shield and helmet (ἄσπίδα μὲν καταθείομαι καὶ κόρυθα) **or** lean his spear against the wall (δόρυ δὲ πρὸς τεῖχος ἐρείσας); go up to Achilles (Ἀχιλῆος ἀντίος ἔλθω)
- (d) Helen [1]; her property [1]; everything from Paris/Alexander's ships/that Alexander had taken [1]; and that which lies hidden inside Troy [1]
- (e) Homer portrays Hector as feeling shame about the choices he made but, in the course of the passage, also recognizing that the alternatives would not have been better.

Accept a range of varied and substantiated answers, awarding [1] up to [4] for each plausible point of analysis and [1] up to [4] for a relevant supporting quotation.

Points may include, but are not limited to:

- Hector's uncertainty highlighted with conditional sentences (εἰ μὲν κε πύλας καὶ τείχεα δύω) (εἰ δέ κεν ἄσπίδα μὲν καταθείομαι ὀμφαλόεσσιν καὶ κόρυθα βριαρὴν ... Ἀχιλῆος ἀμύμονος ἀντίος ἔλθω ... οἱ ὑπόσχωμαι)
- Expresses his hopelessness/feeling that there are no good choices (ἀλλὰ τί ἤ μοι ταῦτα φίλος διελέξατο θυμός;) through rhetorical question
- Word choices that suggest that he blames himself: "my wickednesses" (ἄτασθαλίησιν ἐμῇσιν); "I am ashamed" (αἰδέομαι)
- Repetition of the claim he destroyed his people: "I destroyed my people" (ῥάλεσα λαόν); "Hector destroyed his people" (Ἐκτωρ ... ῥάλεσε λαόν)
- Repetition of the phrase "it would have been a lot better/more profitable" (ἂν πολὺ κέρδιον ἦεν) (ἂν πολὺ κέρδιον εἴη)
- Simile comparing himself to a woman to highlight his dishonour (ὥς τε γυναῖκα)
- Expression of fear; even if he goes to Achilles, Achilles won't have mercy (μή μιν ἐγὼ μὲν ἴκωμαι ἰών, ὃ δέ μ' οὐκ ἐλέησει / οὐδέ τί μ' αἰδέσεται)

2. (a) Mark in accordance with the markbands on page 3.
2. (b) Mark in accordance with the markbands on page 3.

Option B

Prescribed core text: Verse — Euripides, *Alcestis* 343–368

3. (a) he will stop having parties/revels/company/music [1]; he won't play music on his lyre [1]; he won't sing along to the pipes [1]
- (b) he will have a crafted likeness of her in his bed [1]; and he will see her in his dreams [1]
- (c) he would charm Demeter's daughter (Persephone) or Persephone's husband (Pluto/Hades) with song (κόρην Δήμητρος ἢ κείνης πόσιν ὕμνοισι κηλήσαντά) [1]; he would take Alcestis from Hades (σ' ἐξ Ἅιδου λαβεῖν) [1]; he wouldn't be stopped by Charon or Pluto's dog (μ' οὐθ' ὁ Πλούτωνος κύων οὐθ' ... ἄν Χάρων ἔσχον) [1]; he would restore her life/bring her back to the light (ἐς φῶς σὸν καταστήσαι βίον) [1]
- (d) to wait for him in Hades (ἐκέῖσε προσδόκα μ') [1]; to prepare their house (δῶμ' ἐτοίμαζ') [1]; so she can dwell with him (συνοικήσουσά μοι) [1]
- (e) The speech contains many elements that verge on the ridiculous which one could argue points to how deeply Admetus loves Alcestis and will mourn her, or that suggests we are not expected to take him seriously.

Accept a range of varied and substantiated answers, awarding [1] up to [4] for each plausible point of analysis and [1] up to [4] for a relevant supporting quotation.

Euripides uses language to convey Admetus's sincerity and grief:

- Provides a list of things he will not do, highlighting all the good things that he will lose when he loses Alcestis (παύσω δὲ κώμους συμποτῶν θ' ὁμιλίας στεφάνους τε μουσάν θ' ἢ κατεῖχ' ἐμούς δόμους. οὐ γάρ ποτ' οὐτ' ἂν βαρβίτου θίγοιμ' ἔτι οὐτ' ἂν φρέν' ἐξάραμι πρὸς Λίβυν λακεῖν αὐλόν)
- Equates Alcestis with the joy of his life (σὺ γάρ μου τέρψιν ἐξείλου βίου)
- Will miss her so much, he will have a likeness of her created (σοφῇ δὲ χειρὶ τεκτόνων δέμας τὸ σὸν)
- Wishes he were like Orpheus who was able to go to the underworld in an attempt to save his beloved (εἰ δ' Ὀρφέως μοι γλῶσσα καὶ μέλος παρήν)

Euripides uses language to convey Admetus's insincerity:

- In providing a list of things he will not do, Admetus is highlighting all the good things that Alcestis will have to miss which would not be comforting to her (παύσω δὲ κώμους συμποτῶν θ' ὁμιλίας στεφάνους τε μουσάν θ' ἢ κατεῖχ' ἐμούς δόμους. οὐ γάρ ποτ' οὐτ' ἂν βαρβίτου θίγοιμ' ἔτι οὐτ' ἂν φρέν' ἐξάραμι πρὸς Λίβυν λακεῖν αὐλόν).
- Admetus focuses on himself throughout the speech: tells Alcestis she's taking the joy from his life (σὺ γάρ μου τέρψιν ἐξείλου βίου); imagines he will feel better if she visits him in his dreams ("ἐν δ' ὀνείρασιν... φοιτῶσά μ' εὐφραίνοις ἄν").
- Admetus imagines replacing Alcestis with a crafted likeness of her (σοφῇ δὲ χειρὶ τεκτόνων δέμας τὸ σὸν).

- Admetus alludes to Orpheus who travelled to the underworld to save his wife, highlighting that Admetus is not willing to do the same (εἰ δ' Ὀρφέως μοι γλῶσσα καὶ μέλος παρῆν; use of alliteration adds rhetorical flourish (Λίβυν λακεῖν), (προσπεσοῦμαι ... περιπτύσσων), (ἔχων ἔχειν)).

4. (a) Mark in accordance with the markbands on page 3.
4. (b) Mark in accordance with the markbands on page 3.

Option C

Prescribed core text: Prose — Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War* 2.51.3–6

5. (a) They gave themselves up (more easily) (to the disease) (προΐεντο σφᾶς αὐτοὺς) [1] and did not resist (καὶ οὐκ ἀντεῖχον) [1]
- (b) They caught the infection [1] when taking care of each other [1]
- (c) If men were afraid to visit each other (δεδιότες ἀλλήλοις προσιέναι) [1], the sick people died alone (ἀπώλλυντο ἐρήμιοι) [1]; if they dared to visit (εἴτε προσίοιεν) [1], they were destroyed (διεφθείροντο) [1].
- (d) People went to visit their friends' houses moved by shame [1], while the members of the family were worn out by the moans of the dying/succumbed to the force of the disaster [1].
- (e) Award [1] up to [3] for any of the following: They felt pity for the dying/suffering; they were safe/confident; they were considered blessed; they had the hope that they were for the future safe from any disease.
- (f) Thucydides constructs the horror of the human experiences related to the plague through a variety of devices. Accept a range of varied and substantiated answers, awarding [1] up to [4] for each plausible point of analysis and [1] up to [4] for a relevant supporting quotation.
- Contrasting language (ἰσχύος vs. ἀσθενείας) highlighting the unpredictability of who could be struck down (and thus also highlighting how frightening the disease is)
 - The relentlessness of the plague in the face of different types of people (σῶμά τε αὐτάρκες ὃν οὐδὲν διεφάνη πρὸς αὐτὸ ἰσχύος πέρι ἢ ἀσθενείας)
 - Reaction of people to the sickness of others: kindness (μάλιστα οἱ ἀρετῆς τι μεταποιούμενοι), worn-out (τελευτῶντες καὶ οἱ οἰκεῖοι ἐξέκαμνον ὑπὸ τοῦ πολλοῦ κακοῦ νικώμενοι.)
 - Repetition of forms of πᾶς (πάσῃ, παντὸς) to highlight the totally destructive nature of the disease
 - Sensation of omnipotence from those survivors of the plague (καὶ ἐς τὸν ἔπειτα χρόνον ἐλπίδος τι εἶχον κούφης μηδ' ἂν ὑπ' ἄλλου νοσήματός ποτε ἔτι διαφθαρήναι)
 - The psychological aspect of the plague as well as the physical (Δεινότατον δὲ παντὸς ἦν τοῦ κακοῦ ἢ τε ἀθυμία/ (πρὸς γὰρ τὸ ἀνέλπιστον εὐθὺς τραπόμενοι τῇ γνώμῃ πολλῶ μᾶλλον προΐεντο σφᾶς αὐτοὺς καὶ οὐκ ἀντεῖχον)
 - The fact that human contact generated the spread of the plague (καὶ ὅτι ἕτερος ἀφ' ἑτέρου θεραπείας ἀναπιμπλάμενοι ὥσπερ τὰ πρόβατα ἔθνησκον·/ εἴτε προσίοιεν, διεφθείροντο)
 - Simile “dying like sheep” (ὥσπερ τὰ πρόβατα ἔθνησκον) highlights the feelings of helplessness/ defenselessness
6. (a) Mark in accordance with the markbands on page 3.
6. (b) Mark in accordance with the markbands on page 3.

Option D

Prescribed core text: Prose — Antiphon, *On the Murder of Herodes* 53–56

7. (a) A note (γραμματείδιον) [1] stating that Euxitheus had killed Herodes (ὡς ἀποκτείναιμι τὸν ἄνδρα) [1], which he had intended to send to Lycinus (ὃ ἔπεμπον ἐγὼ Λυκίνῳ) [1].
- (b) He is innocent/the content of the note is fabricated [1], since the messenger could have simply relayed the message / was his accomplice [1].
- (c) The slave would have told the story more clearly in his own words [1], it would have been unnecessary to conceal the message from him [1], a long message would have had to be written down [1].
- (d) The slave stated that he had committed the murder himself (αὐτὸς ἔφη ἀποκτεῖναι) [1], whereas the note revealed that Euxitheus was the murderer (γραμματείδιον ἀνοιχθὲν ἐμὲ τὸν ἀποκτείναντα ἐμήνυν.) [1].
- (e) They thought the note would incriminate Euxitheus [1] but the slave contradicted it [1] or they wouldn't have devised the note [1] if they had realised the slave would lie [1]
- (f) Antiphon discredits the prosecution through a variety of devices pointing to the lack of proof from the prosecution and contradictory evidence. Accept a range of varied and substantiated answers, awarding [1] up to [4] for each plausible point of analysis and [1] up to [4] for a relevant supporting quotation.
- Weight of the note as a proof, through the repetition of the term, so that it cannot be ignored (γραμματείδιον) and through other allusions to the importance of writing (γράψαι, ἔλεγε)
 - Doubts on the truth of both proofs stated through the rhetorical question (καίτοι ποτέρῳ χρή πιστεῦσαι;)
 - Stable and permanent character of writing (ταῦτ' ἂν τις μάλιστα συγγράψας πέμψειεν / ἵνα ταύτην ἔχοιεν ἐμοὶ τὴν αἰτίαν ἐπιφέρειν), which contrasts with the oral testimony of the slave, discrediting both
 - Suspicion on the circumstances in which the note was found, expressed through the use of enumeration of different moments (τὸ μὲν γὰρ πρῶτον οὐχ ἡῦρον ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ ζητοῦντες τὸ γραμματείδιον, ὕστερον δέ)
 - Explicit accusation to the prosecution about framing (τότε μὲν γὰρ οὕτω οὕτως ἐμεμηχάνητο αὐτοῖς)
 - Suspicion on the function of the note, expressed through a rhetorical question (καίτοι τί ἔδει με γραμματείδιον πέμπειν, αὐτοῦ συνειδότος τοῦ τὸ γραμματείδιον φέροντος;)
 - Evidence of the contradiction in the prosecution through the explicit exposition of their ploy (ἀνεγνώσθη τὸ γραμματείδιον καὶ ὁ ὕστερος βασανιζόμενος οὐ συνεφέρετο τῷ γραμματείδιῳ, οὐκέθ' οἷόν τ' ἦν ἀφανίσαι τὰ ἀναγνωσθέντα)
8. (a) Mark in accordance with the markbands on page 3.
8. (b) Mark in accordance with the markbands on page 3.