

GCSE (9-1)

Examiners' report

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

J199

For first teaching in 2017

J199/12 Summer 2023 series

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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. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. 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 and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

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Paper 12 series overview

J199/12 (Women in the Ancient World) is one of two thematic studies for GCSE Classical Civilisation. This component focuses on the lives of women in ancient Greece and Rome. To do well on this paper, candidates needed to show knowledge and understanding of the roles and portrayal of life as a woman in these societies and be able to analyse a variety of source material.

Examiners were delighted to see how well most candidates had engaged with the topic material. Responses typically showed a good knowledge and understanding of the lives of women in the ancient world and a familiarity with the prescribed source material. Many candidates had gone beyond the material in the Bloomsbury coursebook with their knowledge of other sources relating to women. It is a credit to them and their teachers to see responses that frequently mentioned some of the lesser-known facts and ancient sources of the ancient world.

Examiners were aware of the pressures of time in the examination and most candidates seemed to have devoted appropriate time to each question. As ever, there were candidates whose final response seemed unfinished. Although the paper lasted ninety minutes and is worth 90 marks, candidates need to leave themselves more than fifteen minutes to do the final question. Candidates often wrote more than required for Question 27 and responses to this were sometimes as long as Question 32 and Question 33.

The short response questions in Sections A and B were very well answered on the whole. Candidates knew the myths and stories in these sections very well, although often lost marks by giving two very similar ideas when asked to make two points as in Question 4. Examiners were particularly impressed with the knowledge that candidates showed of the life of Neaira in Question 14.

Some candidates ignored the instructions when asked to make two points. Where they made two very closely linked points in one of the spaces and then added another idea in the space below, this was deemed as a genuine attempt to write points, but where three or more very distinct points were made, only the first two were marked. The underlying assumption was that candidates were trying to hedge their bets and gain an unfair advantage.

There was some misapplication of Latin and Greek terms. *Pudicitia* and *lenae* often appeared in Section A, while *hetairai* and *pornai* appeared in Section B. Candidates need to be careful in using such terms.

The majority of candidates found Section C the hardest part of the paper. They did show good knowledge of the sources relating to religion, but sometimes introduced correct but irrelevant information into responses. Examiners were very encouraged by the knowledge shown in the extended response questions. The best responses used the material well to answer the question while weaker responses tended to write all they knew without shaping their response to the particular question set.

There were some scripts that were difficult to read. Centres may be used to the nuanced handwriting of their candidates, but should think carefully about how legible scripts will be to examiners on computer screens.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• shaped their response carefully to the question that was set• used the source material for the 8-mark questions and used their own knowledge to expand on these sources• were able to show knowledge beyond the textbook• made points briefly in the 8- and 15-mark questions and did not repeat ideas• gave a conclusion in the 15-mark question that did more than merely summarised the points made in the main response.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• wrote down everything they knew on a particular topic, whether relevant or not• repeated responses to questions, especially in Section C• did not always read the questions carefully, not realising the key requirements of questions• gave unsupported views in the 8- and 15-mark question, or very vague reference to sources• over narrated in the 8- and 15-mark questions, resulting in too few points being made• spent too long on introductions and conclusions in the 8- and 15-mark questions.

Section A overview

Section A comprises 30 marks of questions on the roles and portrayal of women in ancient Greece. These include questions that require short factual responses, short analytical statements and an 8-mark detailed response question. All of these are introduced by a stimulus source.

Most candidates showed a fine knowledge of the myths of Helen and Pandora. Candidates were then generally able to pick out details from Hegeso's tombstone and analyse these and there was good knowledge of the duties of a *kyria* and some imaginative evaluation about the problems she would have had. Candidates found Question 13 more challenging with many stating that a *kyria* would have stayed inside to weave, cook, clean etc. Examiners were hoping to see more than just a repetition of the response given in Question 12. Question 14 was very well answered. Candidates used the passage well and knew impressive details about the life of Neaira and prostitution in general.

Question 1

Study Source A

1 Why was Helen's husband miserable (line 6)?

.....
..... [1]

The majority of candidates answered this question very well. A few candidates wrote that he wanted his wife back, without saying what had happened.

Question 2

2 What is another name for the city of Ilium (line 7)?

..... [1]

The majority of candidates knew this answer.

Question 3 (a)

3 (a) Helen states she is in 'Proteus' house' (line 3). Where is Proteus' house situated?

.....
..... [1]

The majority of candidates did not know this. While Rome and Sparta were given as responses several times, a very common response was that she was in the clouds. Candidates had clearly read the opening of the source and been confused by it.

Question 3 (b)

(b) Where does her husband think she is?

..... [1]

The majority of candidates got this right. Ilium was accepted as the response, even if incorrect in Question 2. With Paris was also seen as a valid response.

Question 4

4 Why is it important to Helen that she keeps her bed 'undefiled' (line 5)? Give **two** reasons.

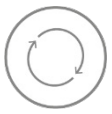
1

2

[2]

There were some fine responses seen here, with most candidates referring to Helen wanting to be loyal to her husband. Weaker responses tended to rephrase this in their other idea stating that she didn't want to commit adultery. Other scripts felt that Menelaus would more readily take her back, but this was felt to add little to the idea of her needing to be loyal. Candidates needed to make sure that they give two distinct ideas.

Assessment for learning



To make sure candidates know all the key details from a myth, when revising, ask them to speak for a minute on a character without hesitation or repetition. If they cannot, ask someone else to continue the recall. If it takes several turns, it doesn't matter; candidates will have gone over the key facts many times and built up a full picture.

Question 5

Study **Source B**

5 What is the name of the woman who opened the jar?

..... [1]

The majority of candidates knew this.

Question 6

6 What is the meaning of her name?

.....

..... [1]

The majority of candidates knew this, but many felt that her name had a negative meaning such as curiosity or evil.

Question 7 (a)

7 (a) What gifts had the gods given her, besides the jar? Make **two** points.

1

.....

2

.....

[2]

The majority of candidates gave perfect responses to this; indeed a lot of candidates named the gods who gave particular qualities, although this was not necessary. The most common incorrect response was that the gods had given her curiosity (as she opened the box). This is not the case in Greek sources and was too specific. Beauty was seen as acceptable as close enough to some of the qualities mentioned in Hesiod.

Question 7 (b)

(b) Describe how one of these gifts is significant.

.....

..... [1]

The majority of candidates who had picked a positive quality commented that it made her more attractive to men/Epimetheus. Those who referred to her deceitful nature usually stated that it made her more dangerous. Those who referred to curiosity got the mark if they made this kind of point, but not if they stated that she opened the box.

Question 8

Study Source C

8 What type of monument is shown?

..... [1]

While stele was not always spelled correctly, the majority of candidates responded to the question very well.

Question 9 (a)

9 (a) Select **two** details from **Source C** that tell us about Hegeso's social status.

- 1
-
- 2
-

[2]

The majority of candidates were able to pick out two features from the source. Many also stated what it told us about her social status, although that was not necessary and wasted time.

Question 9 (b)

(b) Why would it have been important to Athenians to put these details on a monument?

.....
..... [1]

The majority of candidates gave the correct response, but a number of candidates were simply felt to be defining the role of any tombstone in stating that it reminded people of the dead woman. Many candidates restated what they had put in the previous question.

Repeating information

Candidates should read all the questions that follow a source before starting to write a response to the first one. This should help candidates to realise what information is needed in each response which would lead to them not repeating information and saving time.

Question 10

10 Give **two** household duties of a *kyria*.

1

.....

2

.....

[2]

The key to responding correctly to this question was to focus on the idea of household. Examiners were looking for things that a *kyria* would do in the house. As a result, responses that referred to her shopping were not felt to be valid. For similar reasons, giving birth to children was also not given. A number of candidates felt that she would be in charge of the family finances, but examiners felt that she would usually not have had the education nor the trust from her husband to be asked to do this. Examiners felt a *kyrios* would typically do this.

Assessment for learning



Candidates should highlight key words on the question paper to make sure they focus on the right information. It was felt that many candidates focused purely on the idea of 'duties' rather than the key idea of 'household duties'.

Question 11

11 Why would it have been hard for a *kyria* to carry out these duties? Make **two** points.

1

.....

2

.....

[2]

Candidates who confined their response to the household tasks tended to respond to the question well, often focusing on their lack of education and the quantity of tasks they had. The majority of candidates wrote about the restrictions to a woman's movements outside the house, but this was not felt to be relevant to the problems in doing her duties within the house. Some responses, such as she had to control slaves, needed more explanation as to why this was problematic.

Question 12

12 What responsibility did a kyria have in a symposium (drinking party)?

..... [1]

While the majority of candidates correctly responded to the question, some candidates wrote that she had no responsibility or that she wasn't allowed to be there. While the latter statement is true, examiners did not feel that this was a responsibility. The minority of candidates incorrectly stated that she would serve the drinks or entertain the men.

Question 13

13 Why were Athenian women expected to stay inside? Make **two** points.

1

.....

2

.....

[2]

This question caused candidates some problems. As with Question 11, candidates would say what they did inside and examiners did not feel that relisting the duties or stating that they had to run the household was worthy of the marks. Better responses focused on what might happen if they went outside the house in terms of their reputation and chastity. Sometimes two similar responses were given, such as not to be seen and not to be seduced, but responses had to be different to get full marks.

Question 14

Study Source D

14 'Neaira was a typical hetaira.' How far do you agree with this statement?
Use **Source D** as a starting point and your own knowledge in your answer.

[8]

Examiners were very impressed with the standard of responses to this question. The candidates who knew the life-story of Neaira (and there were plenty of these) had a real chance to shine. The candidates who confined their response to the passage were usually able to pick out the key details which led to further knowledge about *hetaira* and prostitution in general.

The majority of candidates were able to comment on the ownership of *hetaira* and their social status. The term 'metic' was very regularly used and candidates knew *hetairai* belonged to this class, although the minority of candidates thought *hetairai* were slaves. The majority of candidates commented that while technically a metic, she was often treated as is a slave, and there was excellent discussion of her time with both Phrynion and Stephanus.

Candidates were usually able to state whether she was typical or not by comparing her to other *hetairai*. There were differing views on the fame of *hetairai*. Those who were able to provide other evidence to support their view (e.g. Aspasia) got the greatest credit. Many candidates talked about how Neaira was skilled in dance and music, but the evidence for this is more debatable.

The best responses were those candidates who went on to describe her life after the passage. Many candidates referred to her running away, marriage and false identity as unusual. These responses were much more likely to reach the top band than those who did not.

Exemplar 1

control of their *penes* *peno* or *pena*. Another way in which she behaves as a typical *hetaira* is that she 'worked openly.' This was common of *hetairai*, as they were usually free-women, and did not work *hisi podnai* in the shun parts of Athens- or any urban area. However, there is evidence that Neaira was not a typical *hetaira*. For example, she was owned by a *pena* called Nicanete. As *hetairai* were typically free-women, Neaira being a slave denies this social normality. In addition to this she was also bought, by Timonostidas and Euerates. This was usually a transaction that occurred with ~~poae~~ *podnai*, not *hetairai*, who would typically choose their clientele, and would charge their own sums of money. It is due to these reasons that I disagree with the statement.

Exemplar 1 contains two thirds of a response that achieved 7 marks. The response showed a consistently accurate knowledge of *hetairai* and prostitution in general. It showed a good understanding of the printed source and displayed wider knowledge in general. In particular, there was knowledge of the status of the different classes of prostitute. It was clear, well-argued and balanced in its opinions.

It did not gain full marks as it did not show any knowledge of the life of Neaira beyond the passage, which many candidates were able to do.

Section B overview

Section B comprises 30 marks of questions on the roles and portrayal of women in ancient Rome. These included questions that required short factual responses, short analytical statements and an 8-mark detailed response question. All of these were introduced by a stimulus source.

Candidates knew the facts about the Sabine women well, although did not always use their knowledge to gain the marks available for analysis. The questions on Turia and the roles of *matrona* and slaves were done very well by most candidates. It did prove a challenge for candidates to find three tasks that a rich Roman woman would do that a poor one would not. A number of ideas were given that examiners felt a typical rich woman would not do, or candidates gave ones that poor women would also do. The 8-mark question asking candidates to compare the lives of prostitutes and poorer women was done well, but did not always go into enough precise detail about what would happen to adulterous women.

Question 15

Study Source E

15 What was the 'grievance [that] had caused the war' (line 1)? Make **two** points.

1

.....

2

.....

[2]

The majority of candidates knew of the abduction of the women. However, most candidates did not gain the second mark. They wrote of how the abduction of the women led to their fathers declaring war on the Romans. This was not seen as part of the grievance, but really a consequence of their abduction. Better responses focused on the circumstances of the theft, such as that they thought they had come for a celebration rather than be victims of a theft.

Question 16 (a)

16 (a) List **two** outcomes of the action of the women described in **Source E**.

1

.....

2

.....

[2]

The majority of candidates scored full marks on here. Marks were sometimes dropped by candidates not reading the question carefully and not confining their responses to the consequences of the actions of the women. Instead, they wrote about what the women did to try to stop the war.

Question 16 (b)

(b) Describe why **one** was significant.

.....
..... [1]

The majority of candidates responded very well, highlighting the growth of Rome or the political power that women could wield. Some mistakenly saw it as the start of the Roman Empire or restated what the women had done.

Question 17

17 Who was king of Rome at this time?

..... [1]

The majority of candidates responded to this question correctly. The minority of candidates went for Julius Caesar.

Question 18

Study **Source F**

18 Why is Turia worthy of praise in this passage? Make **two** points.

1
.....
2
..... [2]

Examiners decided that candidates only needed to pick out two relevant phrases, and as a result the majority of candidates picked up both marks. A minority of candidates referred to other things Turia did in her life or gave two ideas that were virtually identical.

Question 19

19 Give **one** reason why it was important for a Roman woman to have children.

.....
..... [1]

The majority of candidates responded to this question very well. There were frequent references to inheritances, continuing the family line and the legitimacy of heirs. Examiners did not feel that women had to have children for the army as some candidates suggested.

Question 20

20 Give **one** duty of a female household slave other than cooking and cleaning.

.....
..... [1]

The majority of candidates got this correct. Where they did not, it was often because their response was too vague, such as stating they had to do what they were told.

Question 21 (a)

21 (a) Give **two** household duties of a Roman matrona. Do **not** include producing children.

1

.....

2

..... [2]

This question provided a huge variety of responses. While most responses were very good, examiners did not always feel that some responses showed typical duties. In particular, the majority of candidates stated that they were in charge of the household finances. However, examiners felt that the *paterfamilias* would control this, and a woman would only be in charge if her husband were away for extended periods (such as on campaign). Others chose managing slaves and running the household, but these were seen by examiners as too similar to get full marks.

Question 21 (b)

(b) Why was **one** of these duties important?

.....

..... [1]

The majority of candidates gave a correct response, some candidates felt educating children was important so they could do jobs around the house. Better responses focused on self-sufficiency or family profile.

Question 22

22 If a Roman married couple divorced, who had custody of the children?

..... [1]

The majority of candidates knew this, with *paterfamilias*, the father, the husband and the man all being fine. The only other response seen was the mother, which was seen relatively often.

Question 23

23 Why was it easy for a woman in a sine manu marriage to get divorced? Make **two** points.

1

.....

2

..... [2]

There were some good responses to this question. The majority of candidates knew that no dowry was involved and that the woman was still seen as part of her original family, but some mistakenly commented about her father getting the dowry back. Sometimes candidates expressed the same idea twice, in saying she wasn't part of her husband's family and was part of her fathers. Others stated that she didn't live with her husband during the marriage simply defined what *sine manu* meant.

Question 24

24 List **three** activities that a rich Roman woman could do that a poor woman would be unable to. Make **three** points.

- 1
-
- 2
-
- 3
-

[3]

This question provided a variety of ideas and quality of responses. Most candidates scored some marks, but few scored full marks. Popular correct responses included reading and going to dinner parties. Other candidates stated that she would learn to read and write. This was not given as it was felt rich women would know this already and not do this in their adult lives. Candidates wrote of attending events that were open to rich and poor, such as watching gladiators. Several candidates wrote that rich women could own businesses, but examiners felt that poor women could also run businesses, albeit on a much smaller level.

Question 25

25 What public events were Roman women allowed to attend? Make **two** points.

- 1
-
- 2
-

[2]

This question also provided a mixed response. The majority of candidates were able to give two correct responses, but other candidates chose things that were not public events, such as parties. Events such as those involving religion and shows were the most commonly seen correct responses. Unfortunately, many of the festivals that were named were Greek festivals and could not be given.

Misconception



Candidates seemed unsure what constituted a public event. Examiners were looking for things that were held openly in Rome and that anyone would attend rather than in a private space, or ones where you needed to be a close family member.

Question 26

26 What was the punishment for a married Roman woman who was found to have had an affair with a slave?

.....
..... [1]

While the minority of candidates felt that divorce, loss of dowry, loss of rights or being beaten was the punishment, the majority of candidates did get this correct. Some candidates wasted their time by stating what happened to a slave.

Question 27

Study Source G

27 'Roman women who had sexual relationships with men outside their own marriage were treated worse than prostitutes.' How far do you agree with this statement?
 Use **Source G** as a starting point and your own knowledge in your answer.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

..... [8]

Most candidates made very good use of the passage to denote how adulterous women had shameful reputations. The most perceptive noted that Clodia (referred to as Cytheris by some candidates), disappeared from the historical record after this as her reputation was ruined and that she might not represent the experiences of ordinary Roman women. There was also some good discussion of how Clodia/Lesbia was immortalised in the poetry of Catullus.

The majority of candidates wrote intelligently about *infamia* and the public shaming of prostitutes in wearing togas. Fewer candidates wrote about the conditions in brothels, and fewer still about poor treatment from a *leno/lena*. Some candidates were confused with Greek prostitutes and wrote either about *hetairai*, *pornai* or Aspasia.

The majority of candidates were unable to state what actually happened to an adulterous woman, but there was some excellent discussion from candidates who knew about this. Weaker responses spent a little too long on the idea of loss of reputation without going into any more detail.

It was pleasing to see candidates refer to other parts of the course. Some used the story of Lucretia very well to highlight the shame that would come to women from adultery.

The majority of candidates responded to this question as if it read 'who' were the women shown on the Parthenon frieze. Candidates correctly stated they were the *Ergastinai* or gave a definition of the role. *Arrephoroi* was also given as a valid response. Other candidates wrote of them walking in the Panathenaic procession. All of these comments were AO1 ideas, but only one could be given. Candidates found it harder to state why they were shown and sometimes made no attempt to respond to this part of the question. Some stated why the role was particularly important, or that they were seeking to honour Athene, but the majority of candidates simply stated what they were doing in the source.

Question 29

Study Source I

29 Explain why the women were so upset by Clodius' actions.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
..... [3]

This was the best responded to question in Section C. The majority of candidates commented on the festival being for women only and were able to say something about why this was upsetting. Candidates talked of the disrespect of the goddess and others talked about the expense and time needed to repeat the worship. The minority of candidates were able to show a good understand of the goddess in stating that the women would perhaps fear for fertility and harvests.

Question 30

Study Sources H and I

30 Explain what these sources tell us about the importance of women in religion in both Athens and Rome.

.....
.....
.....
.....
..... [6]

Candidates did not always focus on the words 'these sources' in this question. There was therefore irrelevant discussion of other festivals and also other parts of the Panathenaia. There was also a tendency, as seen in Question 28, to give as many facts as possible or references to the sources, but without analysing these to show how they highlighted the importance of the festival. Others repeated ideas from Question 28.

Candidates often wrote intelligently on the *Bona Dea* source. The majority of candidates knew that it was a fertility festival and what this meant to Rome. Other candidates highlighted that the exclusion of even the most illustrious men showed that women had a significant responsibility. Some candidates stated that for women to be included on a temple in Athens, when they were normally expected to be hidden away, showed how vital their role was. This was a clear example of where responding to the precise wording of the question was vital.

Exemplar 2

Both sources indicate that women had an important role in ~~the~~ religion. Source H demonstrates that women had a vital and fundamental role in contributing to the Panathenaia and their depiction on a frieze shows us how they were necessary and important. Equally the *Bona Dea* worship ~~was a~~ stated 'No man is allowed to attend' and ~~was~~ could only be carried out by women, thus emphasising the necessity for women in religion. Additionally at the Thesmophoria only married women could attend to worship Demeter the goddess of harvest, fertility to ensure a good harvest for the next season. Demonstrating women's vital role in religion in both Athens and Rome [6]

Exemplar 2 starts off with the AO2 idea that they had a vital role in the festival as they are depicted on the frieze (an AO1 idea). However, this idea needs to be developed for the final mark on the source, perhaps by stating that the task they are performing would be to honour or appease Athene. The *Bona Dea* source correctly identified that the festival could only be carried out by women for AO1, and there was just enough analysis in the necessity of women for the AO2 mark. The candidate chose to refer to the Thesmophoria to make the idea about the fertility festival helping to ensure a good harvest. If the candidate had made this point about the *Bona Dea*, they would have gained an extra mark.

Question 33

- 33 'Although they were despised, Medea and Cleopatra were also respected.'
Explain how far you agree with this statement.

[15]

The majority of candidates showed good or exceptional knowledge of the lives of Medea and Cleopatra. The murder of Medea's sons featured almost universally, but the other murders in the play also featured commonly. There was good knowledge of her role in the capture of the Golden Fleece and the murder of her brother, although references to the murder of Pelias were rare. Details of Cleopatra's love affairs, the battle of Actium occurred frequently and the Romans' hatred of monarchs. Weaker responses would simply retell the legends of both.

While there were many responses that wrote of the hatred and respect elements of the question, it was common for the area of sympathy to be covered. This often led to irrelevant discussion. Similarly, candidates wrote about the fear that each character created. Candidates need to make sure that they keep referring back to the precise wording of the question. There were many pleasing attempts at analysis of both key words. Candidates really worked hard to justify how both might have been respected for their intelligence and power, and there was some thoughtful discussion of how certain groups might be respectful (Cleopatra's subjects), but not others (the Roman populace). At times there was some irrelevant discussion as to whether they now deserved their reputations.

Exemplar 3

Medea was not respected due to the many crimes she committed. She had killed many people, including her own sons, this would be going severely against the ideology of a Greek ^{Kyria} ~~katarrhota~~, putting her in a bad light. She also betrayed her family and country, which was also disrespectful as Athenians and Greeks were very patriotic. The murders she committed were blood crimes, this would be seen as an act which would enrage the gods, so blasphemy. From a Greek perspective this makes her seem disrespected as she transgressed religious, maternal and feminine bounds. For a Greek audience the shocking part of her story would be the fact that she stood against her husband which would have been looked down upon in the Greek patriarchal society. From a modern perspective she is disrespected as murder is never ok and may be seen as overacting, in regards to her situation.

Exemplar 3 was part of a response that scored 11 marks. The extract starts with the common idea of Medea's crimes, but could be significantly improved with more information on the other victims of Medea, apart from the killing of her sons. This did not appear in the rest of the response. There was some excellent analysis of her going against the ideology of a Greek *kyria* and the betrayal of her homeland. This would gain good credit as AO2 is the key factor in the awarding of the mark for the extended response. However, the point is somewhat laboured; the candidate should move on. The gaps in AO1 were the main reason that it did not score a higher mark.

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