

Classics in Translation

Information for candidates: Cassandra has just disappeared into the palace, from which we and the Chorus can hear the cries of Agamemnon, as he is slain by Clytaemnestra.

The LEADER of the CHORUS rushes at the doors. They open and reveal a silver cauldron that holds the body of AGAMEMNON shrouded in bloody robes, with the body of CASSANDRA to his left and CLYTAEMNESTRA standing to his right, sword in hand. She strides towards the CHORUS.

CLYTAEMNESTRA:

Words, endless words I've said to serve the moment –
now it makes me proud to tell the truth.

How else to prepare a death for deadly men
who seem to love you? How to rig the nets
of pain so high no man can overleap them?

I brooded on this trial, this ancient blood feud
year by year. At last my hour came.

Here I stand and here I struck
and here my work is done.

I did it all. I don't deny it, no.

He had no way to flee or fight his destiny –

Unwinding the robes from AGAMEMNON'S body, spreading them before the altar where the old men cluster around them.

our never-ending, all embracing net, I cast it
wide for the royal haul, I coil him round and round
in the wealth, the robes of doom, and then I strike him
once, twice, and at each stroke he cries in agony –

he buckles at the knees and crashes here!
And when he's down I add the third, last blow,
to the Zeus who saves the dead beneath the ground
I send that third blow home in homage like a prayer.

So he goes down, and the life is bursting out of him –
great sprays of blood, and the murderous shower
wounds me, dyes me black and I, I revel
like the Earth when the spring rains come down,
the blessed gifts of god, and the new green spear
splits the sheath and rips to birth in glory!

So it stands, elders of Argos gathered here.
Rejoice if you can rejoice – I glory.
And if I'd pour upon his body the libation
it deserves, what wine could match my words?
It is right and more than right. He flooded
the vessel of our proud house with misery,
with the vintage of the curse and now
he drains the dregs. My lord is home at last.

Aeschylus, Agamemnon, 1394-1423

Beginners' Latin

Passage A (for pairs)

Information for candidates: Theuropides has returned unexpectedly to his house, where his son is having a rowdy party. The cunning slave Tranio has been given the job of stopping Theuropides from entering the house. He has hit upon the idea of pretending that the house is haunted by the spirit of a dead man.

Theuropides: quid dicis, Tranio? ecce – ianuam aperio.

Tranio: discede ab ianua! fuge!

Theuropides: tu quoque, fuge!

Tranio: fugere mihi necesse non est; me mortui non detestant.

[Pretending to be a ghost:] heus! Tranio! cur ianuam meam tangis?

[Himself again:] parce mihi! ego ianuam non tetigi!

Theuropides: quid facis, Tranio?

Tranio: ah! tu me appellavisti, Theuropide, aut homo mortuus? valde timeo! at tu, cur etiam nunc prope ianuam stas?

Theuropides: quid facere debeo?

Tranio: fuge, Theuropide, fuge, et caput noli reflectere!

Theuropides: cur non fugis tu?

Tranio: me mortui non detestant.

Theuropides: sic iam dixisti. cur igitur times?

Tranio: noli me curare – fuge, atque Herculem invoca!

Theuropides: Hercules, te invoco! *[Theuropides runs off.]*

Tranio [to audience]: ego quoque Herculem invoco! Hercules, magnum malum ad Theuropidem hodie adfer! *[Tranio leaves.]*

Translation

Theuropides: What are you saying, Tranio? Look – I'm opening the door.

Tranio: Get away from the door! Run!

Theuropides: You should run too!

Tranio: I don't need to run. It's not me that the dead hate. [As the ghost:] Oh! Tranio! Why are you touching my door? [As himself again:] Spare me! It wasn't me that touched the door!

Theuropides: What are you doing, Tranio?

Tranio: Oh! Was it you that addressed me, Theuropides, or the dead man? I'm very frightened. But why are you still standing near the door?

Theuropides: What should I do?

Tranio: Run, Theuropides, run, and don't turn your head back.

Theuropides: Why aren't you running?

Tranio: It's not me that the dead hate.

Theuropides: So you've said already. Why, then, are you afraid?

Tranio: Don't worry about me – run, and pray to Hercules.

Theuropides: Hercules, I pray to you. [Theuropides leaves.]

Tranio [to the audience]: I, too, pray to Hercules. Hercules, bring some great evil for Theuropides today!

Plautus, *Mostellaria*, 2.2, adapted

Passage B (for individual candidates)

Information for candidates: Pliny describes how his uncle attempted to rescue his friend, Pomponianus, during the eruption of the volcano Vesuvius.

iam navibus cinis incidebat, quo propius accederent, calidior et densior; iam pumices etiam nigrique et ambusti et fracti igne lapides; iam vadum subitum ruinaque montis litora obstantia. cunctatus paulum an retro flecteret, mox gubernatori ut ita faceret monenti 'fortes' inquit 'fortuna iuvat: Pomponianum pete.' Stabiis erat diremptus sinu medio - nam sensim circumactis curvatisque litoribus mare infunditur -; ibi quamquam nondum periculo appropinquante, conspicuo tamen et cum cresceret proximo, sarcinas contulerat in naves, certus fugae si contrarius ventus resedisset. quo tunc avunculus meus secundissimo invectus, complectitur trepidantem consolatur hortatur, utque timorem eius sua securitate leniret, deferri in balineum iubet.

Translation

Ash was falling onto the ships now, hotter and denser the closer they went; now it was even pumice, and rocks that were blackened and burned and shattered by the fire; now there was sudden shallow water, and debris from the mountain that blocked the shore. Having paused for a moment wondering whether to turn back, he [Pliny the Elder, the writer's uncle] soon said to the helmsman, who was advising him to do just that, 'Fortune favours the brave; head for Pomponianus'. Pomponianus was cut off at Stabiae by the middle of the bay – for the sea pours into shores that curve and turn gradually; there, although the danger was not yet approaching, it was nevertheless visible and nearby as it increased, and Pomponianus had brought his luggage into his ships, resolved on escaping if the contrary wind should die down. Having sailed in on this favourable wind, my uncle embraced the frightened man, comforted him and encouraged him; and, in order to lessen his fear by means of his own lack of concern, he asked to be taken for a bath.

Intermediate Latin

A man witnesses his friend undergo a strange transformation; when he returns home, his town has been visited by a killer wolf.

venimus intra monimenta: amicus meus stelas spectabat; ego sedebam et cantabam. deinde, ubi amicum meum circumspexi, ille omnia vestimenta prope viam posuerat. stabam immotus, tamquam mortuus. at ille minxit circum vestimenta, et subito lupus factus est. nolite me iocari putare! postquam lupus factus est, ululare coepit, et in silvas fugit. vestimenta eius, ubi inspexi, lapidea facta sunt. gladium meum strinxi et in tota via umbras cecidi, donec ad villam amicae meae pervenirem. intravit ut larva, et sudor mihi per totum corpus fluebat. Melissa mea mirabatur, et 'ubi eras?' inquit. 'lupus villam intravit et omnia pecora interfecit. nec tamen derisit, etiam si fugit. servus enim noster lancea collum eius traiecit.'

Translation

We arrived amongst the graves: my friend was looking at the gravestones; I was sitting down and singing. Then, when I caught sight of my friend, he had placed all of his clothes near the road. I stood there motionless, like a dead man. But he urinated all around his clothes, and suddenly became a wolf. Don't think I'm joking! After he had become a wolf, he began to howl, and fled into the woods. When I inspected his clothes, they turned to stone. I drew my sword and stabbed at the shadows all the way, until I reached my girlfriend's house. I went in like a ghost, and the sweat was flowing all over my body. My Melissa was astounded, and said 'Where were you? A wolf entered our house and killed all our flocks. But it didn't make a fool of us, even if he got away. For our slave pierced its neck with a spear.'

Petronius, *Satyricon*, 62, adapted

GCSE Greek

“τίς δὴ αὖ τοι, δολομήτα, θεῶν συμφράσσατο βουλάς;
αἰεὶ τοι φίλον ἔστιν ἐμεῦ ἀπονόσφιν ἔοντα
κρυπτάδια φρονέοντα δικαζέμεν· οὐδέ τί πώ μοι
πρόφρων τέτληκας εἰπεῖν ἔπος ὅτι νοήσης.”

Τὴν δ’ ἠμείβετ’ ἔπειτα πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε·
“Ἥρη, μὴ δὴ πάντας ἐμοὺς ἐπιέλπεο μύθους
εἰδήσειν· χαλεποί τοι ἔσοντ’ ἀλόχῳ περ εὐούσῃ·
ἀλλ’ ὄν μὲν κ’ ἐπεικὲς ἀκουέμεν, οὐ τις ἔπειτα
οὔτε θεῶν πρότερος τόν γ’ εἴσεται οὔτ’ ἀνθρώπων·
ὄν δέ κ’ ἐγὼν ἀπάνευθε θεῶν ἐθέλωμι νοῆσαι,
μή τι σὺ ταῦτα ἕκαστα διείρω μηδὲ μετάλλα.”

Τὸν δ’ ἠμείβετ’ ἔπειτα βοῶπις πότνια Ἥρη·
“αἰνότατε Κρονίδη, ποῖον τὸν μῦθον ἔειπες;
καὶ λίην σε πάρος γ’ οὔτ’ εἶρομαι οὔτε μεταλλῶ,
ἀλλὰ μάλ’ εὐκηλος τὰ φράζεαι ἄσσα θέλησθα.
νῦν δ’ αἰνῶς δείδοικα κατὰ φρένα μή σε παρείπη
ἀργυρόπεζα Θέτις, θυγάτηρ ἄλιόιο γέροντος·
ἠερίη γὰρ σοί γε παρέζετο καὶ λάβε γούνων·
τῆ σ’ οἶω κατανεῦσαι ἐτήτυμον ὡς Ἀχιλῆα
τιμῆσης, ὀλέσης δὲ πολέας ἐπὶ νηυσὶν Ἀχαιῶν.”

GCSE Latin

Passage A

respiciunt oculisque notant sibi quisque puellam
quam velit, et tacito pectore multa movent.

dumque rudem praebente modum tibicine Tusco
ludius aequatam ter pede pulsat humum.

in medio plausu (plausus tunc arte carebant)
rex populo praedae signa petenda dedit.

protinus exsiliunt animum clamore fatentes.
virginibus cupidas iniciuntque manus.

ut fugiunt aquilas, timidissima turba, columbae,
utque fugit visos agna novella lupos,

sic illae timuere viros sine lege ruentes:
constitit in nulla qui fuit ante color.

nam timor unus erat, facies non una timoris:
pars laniat crines, pars sine mente sedet;

altera maesta silet, frustra vocat altera matrem;
haec queritur, stupet haec; haec manet, illa fugit:

ducuntur raptae, genialis praeda, puellae,
et potuit multas ipse decere timor.

Ovid, *Ars Amatoria*, 1.109-126, from OCR Anthology pages 120-122.

Passage B

ocius adducto torquet hastile lacerto
suspiciens altam Lunam et sic voce precatur:
'tu, dea, tu praesens nostro succurre labori,
astrorum decus et nemorum Latonia custos.
si qua tuis umquam pro me pater Hyrtacus aris
dona tulit, si qua ipse meis venatibus auxi
suspendive tholo aut sacra ad fastigia fixi,
hunc sine me turbare globum et rege tela per auras.'
dixerat et toto conixus corpore ferrum
conicit. hasta volans noctis diverberat umbras
et venit aversi in tergum Sulmonis ibique
frangitur, ac fisso transit praecordia ligno.
volvitur ille vomens calidum de pectore flumen
frigidus et longis singultibus ilia pulsat.
diversi circumspiciunt. hoc acrior idem
ecce aliud summa telum librabat ab aure.
dum trepidant, it hasta Tago per tempus utrumque
stridens traiectoque haesit tepefacta cerebro.

Virgil, *Aeneid*, 9.402-419

A level Latin

`quisquis es, armatus qui nostra ad flumina tendis,
fare age, quid venias, iam istinc et comprime gressum.
umbrarum hic locus est, somni noctisque soporae:
corpora viva nefas Stygia vectare carina.
nec vero Alciden me sum laetatus euntem
accepisse lacu, nec Thesea Pirithoumque,
dis quamquam geniti atque invicti viribus essent.
Tartareum ille manu custodem in vincla petivit
ipsius a solio regis traxitque trementem;
hi dominam Ditis thalamo deducere adorti.'
quae contra breviter fata est Amphrysia vates:
`nullae hic insidiae tales (absiste moveri),
nec vim tela ferunt; licet ingens ianitor antro
aeternum latrans exsanguis terreat umbras,
casta licet patruī servet Proserpina limen.
Troius Aeneas, pietate insignis et armis,
ad genitorem imas Erebi descendit ad umbras.
si te nulla movet tantae pietatis imago,
at ramum hunc' (aperit ramum qui veste latebat)
'agnoscas.' tumida ex ira tum corda residunt.

Virgil, *Aeneid*, 6.388-407

A level Greek

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

οὐ γάρ τί μοι Ζεὺς ἦν ὁ κηρύξας τάδε,
οὐδ' ἠ ξύνοικος τῶν κάτω θεῶν Δίκη
τοιούσδ' ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ὤρισεν νόμους,
οὐδὲ σθένειν τοσοῦτον ὠόμην τὰ σὰ
κηρύγμαθ' ὥστ' ἄγραπτα κἀσφαλῆ θεῶν
νόμιμα δύνασθαι θνητά γ' ὄνθ' ὑπερδραμεῖν.
οὐ γάρ τι νῦν γε κἀχθές, ἀλλ' ἀεὶ ποτε
ζῆ ταῦτα, κούδεις οἶδεν ἐξ ὅτου 'φάνη.
τούτων ἐγὼ οὐκ ἔμελλον, ἀνδρὸς οὐδενὸς
φρόνημα δείσασ', ἐν θεοῖσι τὴν δίκην
δώσειν· θανουμένη γὰρ ἐξήδη, τί δ' οὐ;
κεῖ μὴ σὺ προῦκήρυξας. εἰ δὲ τοῦ χρόνου
πρόσθεν θανοῦμαι, κέρδος αὐτ' ἐγὼ λέγω.
ὅστις γὰρ ἐν πολλοῖσιν ὡς ἐγὼ κακοῖς
ζῆ, πῶς ὄδ' οὐχὶ κατθανῶν κέρδος φέρει;
οὕτως ἔμοιγε τοῦδε τοῦ μόρου τυχεῖν
παρ' οὐδὲν ἄλγος· ἀλλ' ἄν, εἰ τὸν ἐξ ἐμῆς
μητρὸς θανόντ' ἄθραπτον <όντ' > ἠνεσχόμην,
κείνοις ἄν ἤλγουν· τοῖσδε δ' οὐκ ἀλγύνομαι.
σοὶ δ' εἰ δοκῶ νῦν μῶρα δρωῶσα τυγχάνειν,
σχεδὸν τι μῶρω μωρίαν ὀφλισκάνω.

Marking grid for judges

Every passage should be judged on two main criteria: accuracy and performance.

Some categories offer candidates a choice of passage. The criteria grid below should assist in comparing the skill of each candidate, regardless of which passage they choose.

Accuracy	Performance and demonstration of understanding of sense
Stress placed on correct syllables.	Stress placed on key words to indicate sense.
Correct quantities of vowels, including: distinction between nominative and ablative cases for first declension nouns; correct pronunciation of –is ending according to case; correct pronunciation of –e- in vowels to indicate tense.	Interesting and appropriate use of dynamics (loud and quiet).
Other attempts at correct pronunciation, such as: c and g pronounced as hard sounds; -gn- pronounced as –ngn-; v pronounced as w.	Interesting and appropriate use of pauses and variations in speed.
Account taken of metrical requirements (for verse passages), including metrical patterns and elisions.	Conveys metrical effects that add to meaning.
	Addresses audience directly, looking up from the text at times.
	Makes appropriate use of gestures and other types of non-verbal communication to add to the performance.