



# Constructing a National 5 Classical Studies Question Paper

## Section 1 (Life in classical Greece) and Section 3 (The Roman world)

- ◆ The content to be studied for each section is divided into four areas. For example, the areas for Section 1 are Religion, Citizenship, Democracy and Daily Life. At least one question must come from each of these areas in order to ensure that a range of content is covered.
- ◆ For the same reason, do not ask two questions in any section on exactly the same issue.
- ◆ Care must be taken to ensure that each question is free-standing and does not depend on the candidate's answer to a previous question.
- ◆ A candidate should be able to attain full marks in a question without having to give every detail possible about the issue.
- ◆ The sources used in the source-based questions should not provide information which could be used by a candidate to answer any other question.
- ◆ If you think one question is extremely challenging, do not set an 'easy' question in the same section to balance it, rather make appropriate adjustments to the 'difficult' question.
- ◆ Greek and Latin words may be used in teaching and some appear, with English equivalents, in the lists of course content. In a question, always give the English term first and add the Greek or Latin in brackets afterwards. For example, 'Describe the marketplace (agora) in classical Athens'.
- ◆ English vocabulary used in questions should be appropriate for National 5 candidates.
- ◆ Follow the model shown in the specimen paper and current published question papers.

### Describe (4 marks)

- ◆ Must have the stem 'Describe ...'.
- ◆ The issue must not be too narrow or too wide.

### Explain the reasons why (6 marks)

- ◆ Must have the stem 'Explain the reasons why ...'.
- ◆ The issue must be wide enough, with enough aspects, to allow candidates to draw on a reasonable spread of knowledge.

### **To what extent (8 marks)**

- ◆ Must have the stem 'To what extent ...'.
- ◆ The issue must be wide enough, with enough aspects, to allow candidates to draw on a reasonable spread of knowledge.

### **Compare (4 marks)**

- ◆ Must have the stem 'Compare ... in classical Greece/classical Athens/Pompeii/Roman Britain with ... in the modern world'.
- ◆ The issue chosen should allow candidates to give both similarities and differences.

### **Explain a written source – Section 1 (4 marks)**

- ◆ Must have the stem 'Explain what Source X tells us ...'.
- ◆ Must be based on a primary or secondary source of approximately 70-90 words.
- ◆ The source should contain more than the minimum of four words, phrases or ideas relating to the issue which the candidate can explain.
- ◆ Introduce the source as by a modern writer or by an ancient writer. Do not name the writer or give details about the type of source or its date as this may encourage candidates to evaluate rather than explain.
- ◆ It may be necessary to edit a source to make it more appropriate/accessible for N5 level, for example by omitting an irrelevant part or making vocabulary clearer.

### **Explain a picture source and a written source – Section 3 (4 marks)**

- ◆ Must have the stem 'Explain what Sources A and B tell us ...'.
- ◆ Both the picture source and the written source should deal with the same issue.
- ◆ A coloured picture source can be chosen, but it should be in black and white when presented to candidates, as the question paper is not printed in colour.
- ◆ The picture may be of an archaeological object or site, or of an archaeological reconstruction.
- ◆ The picture should show at least four clearly identifiable things that a candidate can explain.
- ◆ The picture source should be introduced as simply as possible, unless it is also going to be used for an evaluation question, in which case state the type of source, date and any other necessary information in the introduction.
- ◆ The written source should be dealt with in the same way as for Section 1 above.
- ◆ The written source should be introduced as simply as possible, unless it is also going to be used for an evaluation question, in which case state the author, date and any other necessary information in the introduction.

### **Evaluate a written source (4 marks)**

- ◆ Must have the stem 'Evaluate the usefulness of Source X for ...'.
- ◆ Must be based on a primary source of approximately 70-90 words.
- ◆ Technically, a secondary source could be used, but that has never been done. Evidence from assignments show that candidates handle evaluation better with a primary source.

- ◆ State the author, type of source, date and any other necessary information in the introduction.
- ◆ While the introduction should be as concise as possible, it must contain the facts about the source necessary to answer the question. Candidates are not expected to have prior knowledge of classical writers.
- ◆ It may be necessary to edit a source to make it more appropriate/accessible for N5 level, for example by omitting an irrelevant part or making vocabulary clearer.
- ◆ In Section 3, it must be the same written source as the one used for the 'Explain a picture source and a written source' question.

### General hints on sources

- ◆ Really suitable primary sources are not always easy to find. When constructing a whole section or paper, it is probably best to begin with the source questions. In that way, you have the freedom to select any issue you like for them and are not restricted by having already set a question on a particular issue.
- ◆ A useful source to use is the Perseus Digital Library of Tufts University, as it allows you to search by key words as well as author <https://www.perseus.tufts.edu>.
- ◆ For example, entering 'water clock', 'klepsydra' or 'jury' might lead you to a suitable source for Athenian law courts.
- ◆ It is a good idea to use a modern author for the 'Explain a written source' question in Section 1. That way you are not using up a primary source that would be ideal for evaluation. As a modern author yourself, it allows you to write a tailor-made source.

## Section 2 (Classical literature)

- ◆ Two of the five themes must be sampled. The themes are leadership, fate versus free will, heroism, conflict and women in society.
- ◆ If there is a question on women in Section 1 (Life in classical Greece), it is best to avoid setting a question on Women in the literature section. If it cannot be avoided, take care that candidates will not be able to use material from their Section 1 answer, or from any source there, when writing answers on Women in Section 2.
- ◆ As there can be an overlap between the themes of Leadership and Heroism, avoid setting questions on both these themes together in Section 2. Having both these themes in one paper tends to lead to repetition by candidates.
- ◆ There are no prescribed texts, so questions should be worded in a way that allows them to be answered using any suitable text, even if you know which texts your own candidates will actually use in their answers.
- ◆ Although literature questions are generic, it is good practice to introduce an angle to make candidates think and not merely repeat or produce a prepared answer.
- ◆ The different parts of a Classical literature question (a, b, c/a, b) are not free-standing. (c) must follow on from (b) and (b) must follow on from (a).

### Describe (5 marks)

- ◆ Must have the stem 'Describe ...in a classical text (...)'.

- ◆ In the 2018 and 2019 question papers, ‘... in a classical text(s) ...’ was used in order to follow the wording in the Higher question paper. The wording in the National 5 question paper has now returned to ‘text’, as it is better for candidates to use a single text in their response to a question of this length.

### **Explain (3 marks)**

- ◆ Must have the stem ‘Explain what this ...in the classical world’.
- ◆ What is asked should require candidates to relate points made in their answer to the previous part of the question to the wider classical world.

### **Comparison with today (2 marks)**

- ◆ Must have the stem ‘Do we still ... today/in the modern world’ or an appropriate variation on this stem.
- ◆ This question should require candidates to build on points made in their answers to the previous parts of the question and not be entirely free-standing.

### **Combined ‘Explain’ and ‘Comparison with today’ (5 marks)**

- ◆ Must have the stem ‘Explain ...in the classical world compared to today/the modern world’.
- ◆ What is asked should require candidates to relate points made in their answer to the previous part of the question to the wider classical world and to the modern world.

## **Using past question papers as a source of questions**

- ◆ Question papers which have been published are in the public domain and can be seen by candidates. They may also be used as a teaching resource.
- ◆ However, it is still possible to use past papers as a source for developing valid centre-based assessments.
- ◆ An existing question can be adapted by changing the wording. For example:
  - The 2015 question ‘Explain the reasons why slaves were necessary to the people of classical Athens’ could become ‘Explain the reasons why slaves were important to the people of classical Athens’ or ‘Explain the reasons why slaves were highly valued by the people of classical Athens’.
- ◆ An existing question can be adapted by changing the issue. For example:
  - The 2018 question ‘Compare the working conditions in a bakery in Pompeii with the working conditions in a bakery in the modern world’ could become ‘Compare the working conditions in a laundry/fullery in Pompeii with the working conditions in a laundry in the modern world’.
- ◆ A question of one type can be converted into a question of another type. For example:

— The 2018 question ‘To what extent did men in classical Athens have better lives than women?’ could be converted into ‘Describe some of the factors that meant men had better lives than women in classical Athens’.

- ◆ A primary source used in an ‘Explain’ question could be used to create an ‘Evaluate’ question.
- ◆ A primary source used in an ‘Evaluate’ question could, if the content allows, be used to create an ‘Explain’ question.

In relation to the last two points, below are the primary written sources from the 2014 and 2015 papers. Later papers are available through a link on the [SQA subject page](#).

## 2014

Plato’s *Symposium* – ‘Explain what the source tells us about Athenian parties’

After this, when Socrates had taken his place and dined with the others, they poured out an offering of wine and sang a hymn to the god as custom demands; then they started drinking. All agreed not to drink too much, but just what each man pleased. Eryximachus proposed that the flute-girl, who had just come in, should be sent away to pipe to herself or to the women-folk, if she liked, and that the men should seek their entertainment in conversation.

*The Constitution of Athens*, Xenophon (5<sup>th</sup> century BC) – ‘Evaluate the usefulness of the source for the study of slavery in classical Athens’

Slaves are extremely undisciplined here at Athens. You are not allowed to hit other people’s slaves, and a slave will not get out of your way. If it were allowed for a free man to strike a slave he might easily hit an Athenian citizen by mistake, thinking that he was a slave. For the ordinary citizens here are no better dressed. In Sparta my slave would fear you, but in Athens there is more equality between slaves and free men because the slaves are so important to our economy.

Pliny the Younger’s Letters – ‘Explain what sources A and B tell us about the dangers of the eruption of Vesuvius’

The courtyard outside, from which the room was entered, was full of ash and pumice stones. The level of the fallen material was rising so, if there was any further delay in the room, the escape would have been blocked.

Note: This source is rather short and would be better expanded.

The Roman historian Tacitus’ description of the Roman attack on the British Druids – ‘Evaluate the usefulness of Source B for understanding the native religion of the Britons’

The Druids were lined up for battle, with their hands lifted high, calling on their gods, and screaming out horrible prayers. The Roman soldiers were shocked and terrified at the strangeness of the Druids. Their Roman general spurred them on and the Britons were defeated. The island fell in flames. The woods, dedicated to the British superstition and barbarous ceremonies, were completely destroyed. In these places, the natives had

poured the blood of their sacrificed prisoners over their altars and had looked for signs from their gods in the entrails.

## 2015

Plato's Protagoras – 'Explain what source A tells us about education in classical Athens'

Parents send their boys to school and instruct the teachers to pay much more attention to their good behaviour than to their letters and music. They are given the works of good poets to read at their benches and are made to learn them by heart. Parents also send their boys to the trainers to exercise and improve their bodies. The parents who do these things are the wealthiest. Their sons begin to go to school at the earliest age and finish their schooling latest.

The play *Medea*, by Euripides (5<sup>th</sup> century BC) – 'Evaluate the usefulness of Source B for studying the lives of women in classical Athens'

Of all living creatures, we women are the most unfortunate. First a large dowry must be paid for us to get a husband and master for our bodies. Our happiness depends on whether he is good or bad, for divorce is shameful for a woman and it is not possible to refuse marriage. Men say we live free from danger while they go off to war. How wrong they are! I would rather fight three battles than give birth once.

A letter written by Seneca describing a visit to the amphitheatre in Rome (1<sup>st</sup> century AD) – 'Evaluate the usefulness of Source B for telling us about the experience of going to the amphitheatre'

It was pure murder. The men have no way to protect themselves. They leave their bodies wide open, and every blow counts. There's no helmet or shield to interfere with the swordplay. Who needs armour? Who needs skill? Such things only postpone the moment of death. In the morning they throw men to the lions and the bears, at noon they throw them to the crowd.

The Roman historian Dio Cassius (2<sup>nd</sup> century AD) – 'Evaluate the usefulness of Source B for teaching us about the way of life of the native Britons'

The Maeatae live near the wall which divides the island in two, and the Caledonians beyond them. Both tribes inhabit wild and waterless mountains and marshy plains, and possess neither walls, nor cities, nor farms. They live in tents without clothes or shoes; they share their women and bring up all their children in common. They choose their boldest men to be their leaders. They go into battle both in chariots with small swift horses, and on foot.