



B O A R D O F S T U D I E S
NEW SOUTH WALES

2011 Classical Hebrew Continuers HSC Examination 'Sample Answers'

When examination committees develop questions for the examination, they may write 'sample answers' or, in the case of some questions, 'answers could include'. The committees do this to ensure that the questions will effectively assess students' knowledge and skills.

This material is also provided to the Supervisor of Marking, to give some guidance about the nature and scope of the responses the committee expected students would produce. How sample answers are used at marking centres varies. Sample answers may be used extensively and even modified at the marking centre OR they may be considered only briefly at the beginning of marking. In a few cases, the sample answers may not be used at all at marking.

The Board publishes this information to assist in understanding how the marking guidelines were implemented.

The 'sample answers' or similar advice contained in this document are not intended to be exemplary or even complete answers or responses. As they are part of the examination committee's 'working document', they may contain typographical errors, omissions, or only some of the possible correct answers.

Section I — Prescribed Text – Tanakh

Part A

Question 1 (a) (i)

Sample answer:

Root שקב, *Piel*, present participle

Question 1 (a) (ii)

Sample answer:

Root לכנ, *Hithpael*, imperfect with Vav consecutive

Question 1 (b)

Sample answer:

The translation (JPS) turns a question into a statement. The Hebrew text, using the *He* interrogative, asks 'Aren't your brothers tending the sheep in Shechem?' The commentary however describes this as a rhetorical question, and writes that it is more accurately translated as a statement.

Question 1 (c)

Sample answer:

- (i) Jacob/Joseph
- (ii) The man or the stranger or Gabriel/Joseph
- (iii) Joseph/Joseph's brothers

Question 1 (d)

Answers could include some of the following:

There are a number of words in this extract that convey movement:

- וכליו (v.12) from the verb ללה to go
- הכל להשאור (v.13) from the verbs להלה to go and להשל to send
- אנלדל (v.14) from the verb להלה to go
- ינבשהו דבר (v.14) from the verb בוש to return
- וההלשו (v.14) from the verb להשל to send
- אביו (v.14) from the verb אוב - to come
- העת (v.15) from the verb העת to wander around
- ועסנ (v.17) from the verb עסנ to travel
- הכלנ (v.17) from the verb להלה to go
- דליו (v.17) from the verb להלה to go
- ברקי (v.18) from the verb ברק to come close.

These verbs convey a rapid change of pace and location, perhaps implying the rapid changes affecting Joseph's life.

From living in a relatively happy home environment with his father and family, Joseph is sent on a mission to find his brothers and bring word of their progress back to Jacob. Meeting a stranger, he obtains further directions until he eventually finds them. This extract precedes more drastic changes in his life; how he is captured and imprisoned by his brothers, who then sell him as a slave to traders en route to Egypt.

The number and variety of such verbs in this extract convey Joseph's rapid change of fortune at this stage of his life.

Question 2 (a)

Sample answer:

There are three possible reasons why charges were levelled against the servants of the king:

- 1 Pharaoh was angry due to the fact that there was a fly in his wine and a pebble in his bread.
- 2 They were suspected of attempting to poison the king.
- 3 They tried to seduce the king's daughter.

Question 2 (b)

Sample answer:

In spite of adversity, Joseph acted responsibly while in prison and impressed those around him, including the chief steward who assigned to Joseph's care other prisoners, namely the chief cupbearer and the chief baker. Joseph acted humbly in 'attending' to their needs.

His personality was of a friendly and helpful disposition. When, for example, he noticed that the chief cupbearer and chief baker were distraught, he intervened and asked after their welfare, saying, 'Why do you appear downcast today?'

His character reflected his unwavering belief in God and also that in some way he was God's representative. On hearing that they were worried about the rather strange dreams experienced the previous night, and that there was no one to interpret them, he reassured them by saying, 'Surely God can interpret! Tell me [your dreams].'

Question 3

Sample answer:

It is possible that the word אַבְרָהָא 'Abrekh' is a title accorded to Joseph by Pharaoh. If so, it might convey the meaning – viceroy. It may come from the two words *av* and *rekh* meaning 'father of the king' or 'arch-ruler'. It may also be related to the Akadian word, *abrakhu*, denoting the chief steward of the royal house. Others suggest it means 'merciful father'. Some suggest it was the public name given to Joseph, while Tzaphnath Paaneach was the private name used in the palace.

Tzaphnath Paaneach, the Egyptian name given to Joseph might mean 'revealer of secrets'. In Egyptian, Tzaphnath means 'the Neth speaks' or 'the god speaks'. Paaneach is *pa-anakh* meaning 'the life'. Hence the name can be translated as 'Lord of life', 'Neth speaks life' or 'The god speaks and [this man] lives'.

Asenath, the wife of Joseph was, according to tradition, Dinah's daughter by Shechem and adopted by Poti Phera in Egypt. Some say that the name Asenath is related to the Hebrew word *sneh*, a bush, since she was hidden under a bush. Others suggest that it is Egyptian, meaning – 'Belonging to God' or 'Belonging to Neth' where Neth is an Egyptian goddess. Some say that Asenath was an Egyptian.

Joseph's sons are named Menasheh and Ephraim. The etymology of these names is given in the extract:

- Menasheh – because God made me forget (*nasheh*) all my troubles, even my father's house
- Ephraim – because God has made me fruitful (*p'ri*) in the land of my suffering.

Question 4 (a)

Sample answer:

Vayitzpor means to *turn back* or fly away, that is, retreat from battle (root tz.p.r). Ve'etzrefenu (root tz.r.f) means *to be tested*. Commentary says that they are similar words and God wants to test the troops so that none will fly away from the battle like birds. The commentary also says (verse 4) that God wanted to test the soldiers meaning to refine them in order to remove the idol worshippers. The commentary makes an analogy to the way a smelter refines ore to remove impurities.

Question 4 (b)

Sample answer:

In verse 2 God wants Israel to realise that their victory is through God's intervention and not because of their large army numbers. In verse 3, God wanted to get rid of the timid soldiers so they would not adversely affect the morale of those remaining because they were afraid of battle. Verse 5 commentary also suggests that kneeling was symbolic of Baal worship so these soldiers would not have been suitable (kneeling was also a sign of laziness). In verse 7, God says that he will save Israel from the Midianites using only 300 soldiers so they will understand the power of God.

Question 5**Sample answer:**

The origin of the *ephod* (verse 27) that Gideon made was modelled on the *ephod* worn by the *Kohen Gadol* when consulting the *urim* and *tummim* (described in the commentary of the Ramban: Genesis 31:19). Gideon's *ephod* was made to commemorate his victory over the Midianites. Another commentary suggests that it was used for divination. Gideon's *ephod* was made from 1700 golden shekels given as booty by the Ishmaelites who the commentaries state were closely allied with the Midianites. Gideon set up this *ephod* (in his town of Ophrah), but it became a stumbling block for Gideon and his household.

Question 6 (a)**Sample answer:**

Meaning: Guard Root רמז *Niphal* imperative

Question 6 (b)**Sample answer:**

The angel tells the wife she is barren but will conceive and tells the wife not to drink wine or eat anything unclean while she is pregnant. The angel then explains to the wife that her son should be brought up as a *nazir* all his life, with the same restrictions. In addition, his hair must not be cut. The commentary (verse 4) states that the boy should not drink any intoxicating beverages made from grapes. The commentary points out (verse 4) that being brought up as a Nazirite would train the boy in matters of purity as he would otherwise become a 'womanizer'. When the wife relates the incident with the angel to her husband, she omits that the son will save Israel from the Philistines because she is concerned that the Philistines will attempt to kill her and her son (verse 7 commentary). Also, she does not repeat the words of the angel that she is barren, because she is concerned that her husband will divorce her.

Question 7 (a)**Sample answer:**

Initially, Haman was happy and light-hearted as he had been invited to Esther's feast. When he left through the royal gate, Mordechai was sitting there and did not rise or move for him and he became enraged. Commentary tells us that the first time this happened, when Mordechai would not bow or prostrate himself, he was 'filled with rage'. This refusal could be seen as a religious scruple against idolatry, but this time it was more a show of Mordechai's personal contempt for Haman.

Question 7 (b)***Sample answer:***

Esther had a number of considerations in mind when inviting Haman, including:

- to lay a trap for him
- to lull him into a false sense of security
- to keep an eye on him
- to allay any suspicion she was Jewish
- to accuse him to his face
- so that Heaven/God would have mercy on her because of the unpleasantness she was going through
- to arouse Ahasuerus' jealousy over Haman's political ambitions
- to elevate Haman so that his downfall would be greater
- because the wicked often suffer a downfall while feasting
- so that the Jews would not count on her alone, nor neglect their own penitence and prayer
- to arouse Ahasuerus' jealousy over her friendliness to Haman
- so that if Ahasuerus agreed to execute Haman, it could be carried out immediately.

Question 8***Sample answer:***

Esther denounced Haman as the oppressor and the enemy and Haman cringed in fear. The enraged king went out into the garden and Haman pleaded with Esther for his life. The final letters of the words 'had resolved to punish him' spell out God's name and with this Haman realised that not the king Ahasuerus but the King, God Himself, was going to punish him. Haman then threw himself on Esther (to plead with her) and when the king returned and saw this, Haman's face paled. Or his face was covered, as it was customary in ancient Persia to cover the face of one the king was angry with. Or it was the custom to cover the face of those sentenced to death.

Section I — Prescribed Text – Tanakh

Part B

Question 9

Answer could include:

The extract from Genesis demonstrates the extent to which Egypt was dependent on an Israelite, namely Joseph and how his contribution helped save the entire nation, and many people beyond its border, from starvation. How Joseph, in spite of his alien background, was rewarded by the king of Egypt and elevated to a high position – Viceroy of Egypt.

In the 2nd extract, from Judges, the text describes Samson and his relationship with a Philistine woman. This is in spite of the hostility that existed between the two nations.

The final extract from Esther describes how Mordechai the Jew saved the king of Persia's life and was rewarded. This was in spite of the fact that the political leader of Persia at the time, was vehemently anti-Mordechai and consequently anti-Jewish.

These three passages reveal various interactions between the Israelites (Jews) and other nations during biblical times. The underlying attitude of the other nations towards the Israelites (Jews) was generally one of the hostility and/or suspicion. It is therefore surprising, or at best unusual, when the relationship warmed and the hostility dissipated.

Israel (the Jews) had a most distinctive culture, with unique religious and national obligations. Inter-marriage and normal socialising was frowned upon from time to time.

When Israel inhabited its own land it needed to defend its borders and, in the case of the Philistines, they felt threatened to the point of losing their autonomy. It is understandable that a marriage between an Israelite and a Philistine woman would be regarded by both sides as dangerous.

The conflict with the Philistines was replicated in regard to other neighbouring nations (eg Midianites) who either threatened Israel's national and religious independence, or felt threatened by Israel's military dominance.

In the case of Pharaoh and the Israelites, the Israelites were a band of nomadic shepherds without land and without military power. As such, they formed no threat to the might of Egypt and it was therefore not difficult for Pharaoh to welcome Joseph (and later his family), award them land and entitlements in Egypt and, in general, be magnanimous towards them.

In the case of Persia and the Jews – the Jews by that time had lost their land and independence. Although the story of Esther revolves around Haman's hatred of Mordechai and the Jews, we nevertheless find that the newly crowned queen to King Ahasuarus was a Jewess named Esther. In the Book of Esther, we nonetheless find a reluctance on the part of Esther to reveal her origins, although ultimately, to save her people, she did exactly that.

These various examples demonstrate the tenuous and fragile relationship that existed between the Israelites and the other nations at the time.

Section II — Prescribed Text – Mishna

Question 10 (a)

Sample answer:

Le-hazkir refers to praising God by 'mentioning' the rain that will fall after *Sukkot*, in its due season. The full phrase is inserted into the 2nd blessing of the *Amidah* (the Blessing of the Resurrection of the Dead) from *Sukkot* until Passover. The phrase in Hebrew is *Mashiv Ha-ruach Umorid Hageshem* (*The One who makes the wind to blow and the rain to fall*).

By contrast, *Lish'ol* (lit. to request) refers to a prayer for rain, which is inserted into the weekday *Amidah*. This prayer, which is inserted in the blessing of *Birkat Hashanim* (The Blessing of the Years), is recited through the winter months (in Israel), commencing some weeks after *Sukkot*. The prayer in Hebrew is *Ve-ten Tal Umatar* (Grant us dew and rain).

Question 10 (b)

Answer could include:

Rabbi Yehoshua and Rabbi Eliezer are debating when to begin reciting *Mashiv Haruach Umorid Hageshem*. Rabbi Eliezer suggests from the first day of *Sukkot*, Rabbi Yehoshua suggests from the last day of *Sukkot*.

Rabbi Yehoshua argues that it would be wrong to mention God as the provider of rain during the festival since the Jews would not have wanted the rain to fall during their pilgrim festival. However, Rabbi Eliezer answers that he is not suggesting one prays for rain from the first day of *Sukkot*, only mention that God sends it in its proper season (still to come).

It was in response to this that Rabbi Joshua says, ריכזמ אהי מלועל נכ םא – if so, one should always mention God as the provider of rain, even during the summer months. Rabbi Eliezer concurs with this view, as expounded elsewhere in a *braitha* – suggesting however, that while one may recite *Mashiv Haruach* at any time in the year, it was only from *Sukkot* that one had to recite *Mashiv Haruach* in order to placate God before formerly requesting rain. Because, on this point, he was in agreement with Rabbi Yehoshua – that *Mashiv Haruach* could in fact be said at any time through the year – he did not feel the need to reply again.

Question 10 (c)**Sample answer:**

There are a number of features found in this extract that may be described as typical of Mishnaic literature:

- Language – style
Phrases such as *ו... בוט* etc are regularly found in Mishnaic texts.
Greater use of the present tense. Regular use of quotations either from Biblical texts or liturgy, eg *mashiv haruakh umorid hageshem*.
- Language – vocabulary
Words such as *ומיס/יתמיאמ/יבר/גה* with the specific meaning of *Sukkot* – enter the Hebrew language via the Mishna.
- Language – grammar
Mishnaic texts can be identified via certain grammatical features, such as the use of the final *nun* in *mazkirin*, or the use of the present tense as per *omer*. The use of the independent possessive pronoun – *לש*.
- Sages
The sages mentioned in this Mishna, Rabbi Yehoshua and Rabbi Eliezer are known as *Tannaim*, that is teachers of the Mishna.
- Debate
The Mishna often contains arguments between the *Tannaim* on points of Jewish law – see for example: *יבר עשוהי רמוא ... ריב רזעילא וארמ*.
- Halakhic material
The Mishna does not contain as much historical or ethical material as the Bible, nor terse statements of Jewish law – but rather a more intricate and detailed discussion on the finer and more practical aspects of *Halakha*.

Question 11 (a)**Sample answer:**

The Ark with a Torah scroll was taken into a public square at a time of fasting due to drought, where the people said, 'We cried out in private (in the synagogue) and we were not answered, therefore we will humble ourselves in public.' It was hoped that this public display of humility would lead to their prayers being answered.

Another possible answer is that the outside service symbolised the national condition of exile.

Question 11 (b)**Sample answer:**

To make them feel utterly shamed and humiliated.

(These leaders were used to the great respect of the people. Consequently, when other people placed ashes on their heads it caused them to feel an even greater degree of shame and humiliation. In the case of common people, they would feel the same whether they did it themselves or had others do it for them.)

Question 11 (c)**Sample answer:**

The Mishna states that the 'eldest among them says words of admonition before them'.

The quotations from Jonah 'And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way' and Joel 'And rend your hearts not your garments' formed part of his words of admonition, warning the people that repentance and good deeds as opposed to externals, such as the wearing of sackcloth, or the rending of garments, are desired by God and would result in His forgiveness and blessing.

Question 12 (a) (i)**Sample answer:**

Because of the enormity of the disasters that occurred during this month.

Question 12 (a) (ii)**Sample answer:**

Conducting transactions, building and planting, weddings.

Question 12 (b)**Sample answer:**

Five bad things occurred on 17 Tammuz:

- 1 The Tablets were broken by Moses after the sin of the golden calf.
- 2 The daily *tamid*/offering during the siege of Jerusalem ceased as there were no more sheep available.
- 3 The city walls were breached in the time of the 2nd Temple (on the 9th Tammuz re: the 1st Temple)
- 4 Apostomos burned the Torah and ...
- 5 either placed an idol in the 2nd Temple or an idol of Menasheh was placed in the 1st Temple.

Five bad things occurred on 9 Av:

- 1 It was decreed at the time of Moses, that the Israelites should not enter the Promised Land, but wander in the wilderness for 40 years.
- 2 The 1st Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians.
- 3 The 2nd Temple was destroyed by the Romans.
- 4 Betar was captured at the time of the Bar Kochba revolt against the Romans.
- 5 Jerusalem was turned into a ploughed field by the gentiles.

Section III — Unseen Text – Tanakh

Question 13 (a)

Sample answer:

Subject: God
Direct object: the kingdom

Question 13 (b)

Sample answer:

- 1 Pausal form
- 2 Inseparable preposition including the definite article and *dagesh* in the next letter ך.
- 3 Dagesh in ך due to the rule of דגב תפכ, following a closed syllable or at the beginning of a word.

Question 13 (c)

Sample answer:

Saul replied to Samuel's question that he was in great trouble as the Philistines were about to attack, that he was calling on God, but He was not responding either by prophets or dreams and that he needed advice on how to proceed.

Question 13 (d)

Sample answer:

The woman, in spite of the fact that her life had been endangered, acted respectfully and compassionately towards Saul. She spoke to him gently, she saw he had no strength and so made an elaborate meal of stall-fed calf and cakes of unleavened bread. Saul accepted her offer eventually and, together with his men, ate the meal.

Question 13 (e)**Sample answer:**

Saul behaved in this way (by flinging himself to the ground etc) because Samuel told Saul that God had turned against him and became his enemy/adversary. He had taken the kingdom away from him, given it to David because he had not obeyed God and brought the anger of God on the Amalekites. The Lord would deliver Saul, his sons and the Israelite army, the following day, into the hands of the Philistines. Perhaps as a result of hunger there was no strength in him and he collapsed.

Question 14 (a)**Sample answer:**

The syntactical problem is that there is no preposition or locative ה with the word ןדריה.

Question 14 (b) (i)**Sample answer:**

Root בוק *Hiphil* imperfect

Question 14 (b) (ii)**Sample answer:**

Root הרב *Kal/Pa'al* infinitive construct

Question 14 (b) (iii)**Sample answer:**

Root רבק *Niphal* imperfect with *Vav* consecutive

Question 14 (c)**Sample answer:**

David reigned for 40 years: 7 in Hebron and 33 in Jerusalem.

Question 14 (d)**Sample answer:**

Solomon would 'become a man', by being a strong king, living by his principles and having the courage of his convictions. The extract refers to the principles he should live by, namely the teachings of Moses, including the laws of the Torah. In addition, Solomon would 'become a man' by carrying out David's wishes regarding David's friends and enemies, as detailed in the extract. Direct mention may be made of Joab, the sons of Barzillai and Shimi ben Gera.

Question 14 (e)**Sample answer:**

- Verse 1 וברקין ימי דוד תומל
When David's life was drawing to a close.
(Lit. And the days of David were getting nearer to death)
Death comes about naturally through old age or illness.
- Verse 2 איכנ דלה דרדב לכ קראה
I am going the way of all the world.
A reference to the fact that death is inevitable.
- Verse 5 מגרהיו
Murder
A violent, abrupt end to life caused by another human being
- Verse 6 אלו דרות ותביש מלשב לאש
Do not allow his white hair to descend into Sheol peacefully.
A command to bring someone's life to a premature end.
- Verse 9 תדרוהו תא ותביש מדב לואש
Send his grey hair down to Sheol in blood!
As per verse 6, Sheol being the grave.
- Verse 10 בכשיו דוד מע ויתובא
And David lay down (slept) with his fathers.
Perhaps a reference to an afterlife. On dying, one is not alone but with the spirit world.