



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

2012 HSC Classical Greek Continuers '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

Question 2 (a) (i)

Answers could include:

- Failure of the attack on Epipolae has demoralised the troops
- Sickness has broken out
- It was still possible to sail back to Athens

Question 2 (a) (ii)

Answers could include:

- Nicias did not want to advertise Athenian weakness
- He believed that persisting in the siege was likely to weaken the enemy
- The Athenians had naval superiority
- There were hopes Syracuse would be betrayed to the Athenians

Question 2 (b)

Answers could include:

- Contrast between defensive and attacking actions, eg same verb in active and passive forms (line 2); actions of helmsmen (lines 4–5)
- Confusion caused by crowding and din, eg many things on all sides (lines 5–6); noise from crashing ships caused consternation (lines 6–7)
- Orders could not be heard (lines 7–9)
- Exhortations on both sides emphasising dangers and consequences (line 8 to end) with contrast between Athenians and Syracusans (lines 11–14) emphasising what is at stake for each side

Question 2 (c) (i)

Sample answer:

Demosthenes had been in command of the Athenian forces at Pylos when they captured Spartan soldiers on the island of Sphacteria.

Question 2 (c) (ii)

Answers could include:

- Identification of the judgement that Thucydides makes here about Nicias
- The initial portrayal of Nicias in Book VII may be seen as negative because of the difficulties he describes in his letter to Athens (8–15) and the criticism of his delay by Demosthenes (42, 47–49)
- Thucydides describes Nicias as ‘over-superstitious’ in his response to the eclipse of the moon (50)
- Even in desperate circumstances, however, Nicias rallies the troops with positive encouragement (61–64, 69, 76–77)
- When he finally surrenders (85) his concern is more for his troops than himself
- Assessment of the consistency of the judgement here with the earlier portrayal

Question 3

Answers could include:

- The morale of participants on both sides of the conflict in Book VII is a strong feature of Thucydides' account.
- Success in battle increases morale, whereas failure demoralises. Morale is also increased by the arrival of reinforcements
- Examples:
 - 1–7 Arrival of Gylippus encourages the Syracusans and leads to a victory (5–6)
 - 42 Arrival of Demosthenes and Eurymedon improves Athenian morale, but initial success at Epipolae is not carried through to victory
 - 21–25 Naval success at Plemmyrion encourages the Athenians but the capture of their land forts, supplies and provisions demoralises them
 - 36–41 Further battles by land and sea increase Syracusan and decrease Athenian confidence
 - 59–74 So successful for the Syracusans is the great battle in the harbour that the Athenians are left with no option but to retreat by land
 - 75–87 The contrast in morale between the two sides is made very clear in the account of the Athenian retreat and their eventual surrender
- Morale is also a factor in Thucydides' presentation of Demosthenes and Nicias
 - 8–15 Nicias' letter to the Athenians emphasises the difficulties he is facing and the overall tone is not at all confident
 - 47–49 When Demosthenes first arrived (42) he was eager for action, but after the defeat at Epipolae he proposed returning to Athens rather than wasting any more time and resources at Syracuse

Nicias, however, still clung to some hope of success and was unwilling to withdraw without approval from Athens
 - 50–56 The arrival of reinforcements for Syracuse convinces even Nicias to withdraw, but his reaction to an eclipse of the moon delays departure and leads to eventual disaster

Section II — Prescribed Text

Question 5 (a) (i)

Sample answer:

Philoctetes has just referred to people who have come to the island, expressed sympathy and left food and clothing, but have not been willing to take him home.

Question 5 (a) (ii)

Sample answer:

The Atreidae had given the armour of Achilles to Odysseus, disregarding Neoptolemus' claim as Achilles' son.

Question 5 (b)

Answers could include:

- Neoptolemus, having observed the attack of pain afflicting Philoctetes, is having second thoughts about tricking him into sailing to Troy
- Lines 895, –7, –9 express his perplexity
- Lines 902–3 show him aware that his planned actions are contrary to his own nature and therefore shameful
- This shows that he has a level of self-awareness and responsiveness to the pain of others

Question 5 (c)

Answers could include:

- Identification of the attitude Philoctetes displays here
- Philoctetes remains resolute in his distrust of the Atreidae and refusal to go to Troy
- The continuation of his suffering is preferable to compromise
- His desire throughout has been to find a way to get home; this has consistently been of greater importance to him than a cure
- His attitude towards Neoptolemus has undergone change in the course of the play
- Assessment of the consistency of Philoctetes' attitude throughout the play

Question 6

Answers could include:

- The conventions of ancient Greek drama include:
 - No more than three actors
 - A chorus present during most of the action
 - Resolution by a *deus ex machina*
 - Unity of time and place
- The moral dilemma at the heart of the play can be defined as the conflict between the rights of the individual and the demands of the community.
- The chorus engages at times in dialogue with the actors, offering support and commenting on the action, reinforcing the dilemma for the audience.
- The appearance of Heracles as *deus ex machina* provides a resolution in keeping with the myth. Heracles commands Philoctetes to go to Troy, whereas the attempt at persuasion by Neoptolemus has failed.
- The unity of time and place concentrates attention on the suffering and intransigence of Philoctetes, as well as the urgency of Odysseus and Neoptolemus.

Section III — Unseen Texts

Question 7 (a)

Sample answer:

Verb

Question 7 (b)

Sample answer:

Participle

Question 7 (c)

Sample answer:

To express purpose

Question 7 (e)

Sample answer:

Menelaus' first words are abrupt and authoritative but he is prepared to explain his intransigence.

Question 8 (a)

Sample answer:

Adverb

Question 8 (b)

Sample answer:

λαβόντες

Question 8 (c)

Sample answer:

Noun

Question 8 (e)***Sample answer:***

The Athenians initially panic when the attack is made, but when the enemy withdraws they realise the need to strengthen their defences close to home to avoid being taken by surprise again.