

Virgil and the World of the Hero: Practice Context Question 1

Marks are awarded for the quality of written communication in your answer.

1 Read the passage and answer the questions.

“Spare yourself these fears, my lady from Cythera. The destiny of your descendants remains unchanged. You will see the city of Lavinium and its promised walls. You will take great-hearted Aeneas up to the stars of heaven. No argument changes my mind. But now, since you are tormented by this anxiety, I shall tell you more, unrolling for you the secrets of the scroll of the Fates. He will wage a great war in Italy and crush its fierce tribes. He will build walls for his people and establish their way of life, until a third summer has seen him reigning in Latium and a third winter has passed after the subjection of the Rutulians. But the reign of his son Ascanius, who now receives the second name Iulus (it was Iulus while the kingdom of Ilium still stood), shall last while thirty long years revolve, and he shall transfer his kingdom from its seat at Lavinium and build a city with powerful fortifications at Alba Longa. Here the rule of the race of Hector will last for three hundred long years until Ilia the royal priestess, heavy with the seed of Mars, shall give birth to twin sons. Then Romulus shall receive the people, wearing with joy the tawny hide of the wolf which nursed him. The walls he builds will be the walls of Mars and he shall give his own name to his people, the Romans. On them I impose no limits of time or place. I have given them an empire that will know no end. Even angry Juno, who is now wearying sea and land and sky with her terrors, will come to better counsel and join with me in cherishing the people of Rome, the rulers of the world, the race that wears the toga. So it has been decreed.”

VIRGIL, *Aeneid*, Book 1, 257 – 283

- (a) How has Virgil made this a powerful and authoritative speech? [25]
- (b) Using this passage as a starting point, how does Virgil emphasise the importance of Jupiter and his connection with fate in the *Aeneid*? [25]

[Total: 50 marks]

Virgil and the World of the Hero: Practice Context Question 2

Marks are awarded for the quality of written communication in your answer.

2 Read the passage and answer the questions.

'I would not give up the search but was still rushing around the houses of the city when her likeness appeared in sorrow before my eyes, her very ghost, but larger than she was in life. I was paralysed. My hair stood on end. My voice stuck in my throat. Then she spoke to me and comforted my sorrow with these words: 'O husband that I love, why do you choose to give yourself to such wild grief? These things do not happen without the approval of the gods. It is not their will that Creusa should go with you when you leave this place. The King of High Olympus does not allow it. Before you lies a long exile and a vast expanse of sea to plough before you come to the land of Hesperia where the Lydian river Thybris flows with smooth advance through a rich land of brave warriors. There prosperity is waiting for you, and a kingdom and a royal bride. Wipe away the tears you are shedding for Creusa whom you loved. I shall not have to see the proud palaces of the Myrmidons and Dolopians. I am a daughter of Dardanus and my husband was the son of Venus, and I shall never go to be a slave to any matron of Greece. The Great Mother of the Gods keeps me here in this land of Troy. Now fare you well. Do not fail in your love for our son.'

She spoke and faded into the insubstantial air, leaving me there in tears and longing to reply. Three times I tried to put my arms around her neck. Three times her phantom melted in my arms, as weightless as the wind, as light as the flight of sleep.

VIRGIL, *Aeneid*, Book 2, 771 – 794

- (a) Using this passage as a starting point, how convincingly does Virgil present family relationships in the *Aeneid*? [25]
- (b) Which writer portrays the consequences of war for families more effectively, Virgil or Homer? In your answer, you must refer to this passage and **at least one** scene from the *Iliad*. [25]

[Total: 50 marks]

Virgil and the World of the Hero: Practice Context Question 3

Marks are awarded for the quality of written communication in your answer.

1 Read the passage and answer the questions.

Venus replied: 'I am sure I deserve no such honour. Tyrian girls all carry the quiver and wear purple boots with this high ankle binding. This is a Phoenician kingdom you are looking at. We are Tyrians. This is the city of the people of Agenor, but the land belongs to the Libyans, a race not easy to handle in war. Dido, who came from the city of Tyre to escape her brother, holds sway here. There was a crime long ago. It is a long and winding story, but I shall trace its outlines for you. Her father had given her in marriage to Sychaeus, the wealthiest of the Phoenicians. They were joined with all the due rites of a first marriage and great was the love the poor queen bore for him. But the kingdom of Tyre was ruled by her brother Pygmalion, the vilest of criminals. A mad passion came between the two men. In blind lust for his gold the godless Pygmalion attacked him without warning, ambushing him at the altar. With no thought for his sister's love he killed Sychaeus and for a long time concealed what he had done. Dido was sick with love and he deceived her with false hopes and empty pretences. But one night there appeared to her in a dream the very ghost of her unburied husband. He lifted up his face, pale with the strange pallor of the dead, and, baring the sword wounds on his breast, he pointed to the altar where he had been killed and revealed the whole horror of the crime that had been hidden in their house. He then urged her to escape with all speed from their native land, and to help her on her wanderings he showed her where to find an ancient treasure buried in the earth, an incalculable weight of silver and gold. This moved Dido to plan her escape and gather followers, men driven by savage hatred or lively fear of the tyrant. They seized some ships which happened to be ready for sea. They loaded them with the gold and sailed away with the wealth Pygmalion had coveted. The woman led the whole undertaking. When they arrived at the place where you will now see the great walls and rising citadel of the new city of Carthage, they bought a piece of land called the "Byrsa", the animal's hide, as large an area as they could include within the hide of a bull.'

VIRGIL, *Aeneid*, Book 1, 335 – 368

- (a) How effectively does Virgil create sympathy for Dido in this passage? [25]
- (b) Using this passage as a starting point, assess the significance of the role played by mortal women in the *Aeneid*. [25]

[Total: 50 marks]

Virgil and the World of the Hero: Practice Context Question 4

Marks are awarded for the quality of written communication in your answer.

2 Read the passage and answer the questions.

As soon as Saturnian Juno, the dear wife of Jupiter, realized that Dido was infected by this sickness and that passion was sweeping away all thought for her reputation, she went and spoke to Venus: 'You are covering yourselves with glory. These are the supreme spoils you are bringing home, you and that boy of yours – and what a noble and notable specimen of the divine he is – one woman has been overthrown by the arts of two gods! I do not fail to see that you have long been afraid of our walls and looked askance at the homes of lofty Carthage. But how is this going to end? Where is all this rivalry going to lead us now? Why do we not instead agree to arrange a marriage and live at peace for ever? You have achieved what you have set your whole heart on: Dido is passionately in love and the madness is working through her bones. So let us make one people of them and share authority equally over them. Let us allow her to become the slave of a Phrygian husband and to hand over her Tyrians to you as a dowry!' 5 10

Venus realized this was all pretence in order to divert the empire of Italy to the shores of Libya, and made this response to the Queen of Heaven: 'Who would be so insane as to reject such an offer and choose instead to contend with you in war? If only a happy outcome could attend the plan you describe! But I am at the mercy of the Fates and do not know whether Jupiter would wish there to be one city for the Tyrians and those who have come from Troy or whether he would approve the merging of their peoples and the making of alliances. You are his wife. It could not be wrong for you to approach him with prayers and test his purpose. You proceed and I shall follow.' 15 20

'That will be my task,' replied Juno. 'But now listen and I shall explain in a few words how the first part of the plan may be carried out. Aeneas and poor Dido are preparing to go hunting together in the forest as soon as tomorrow's sun first rises and the rays of the Titan unveil the world. When the beaters are scurrying about and putting nets round copses, I shall pour down a dark storm of rain and hail on them and shake the whole sky with thunder. Their companions will run away and be lost to sight in a pall of darkness. Dido and the leader of the Trojans will both take refuge in the same cave. I shall be there, and if your settled will is with me in this, I shall join them in lasting marriage and make her his. This will be their wedding.' This was what Juno asked and Venus of Cythera did not refuse her but nodded in assent. She saw through the deception and laughed. 25 30 35

VIRGIL, *Aeneid*, Book 4, 90 – 128

- (a) Using this passage as a starting point, explain the causes of the rivalry between Juno and Venus and assess the significance of this rivalry in the *Aeneid* as a whole. [25]
- (b) "The gods of the *Aeneid* deserve more respect than those of the *Iliad*." In your answer you must refer to this passage, as well as other examples from the *Aeneid*, and **at least** one scene featuring the gods in the *Iliad*. [25]

[Total: 50 marks]

Section A: Commentary Questions

Answer *either* Question 1 *or* Question 2.

Marks are awarded for the quality of written communication in your answer.

1 Read the passage and answer the questions.

'As soon as he [Polites] reached his father and mother, he fell and vomited his life's blood before their eyes. There was no escape for Priam. Death was now upon him, but he did not check himself or spare the anger in his voice. 'As for you,' he cried, 'and for what you have done, if there is any power in heaven that cares for such things, may the gods pay you well. May they give you the reward you have deserved for making me see my own son dying before my eyes, for defiling a father's face with the murder of his son. You pretend that Achilles was your father, but this is not how Achilles treated his enemy Priam. He had respect for my rights as a suppliant and for the trust I placed in him. He gave me back the bloodless body of Hector for burial and allowed me to return to the city where I was king.' With these words the old man feebly threw his harmless spear. It rattled on the bronze of Pyrrhus' shield and hung there useless sticking on the surface of the central boss. Pyrrhus then made his reply. 'In that case you will be my messenger and go to my father, son of Peleus. Let him know about my wicked deeds and do not forget to tell him about the degeneracy of his son Neoptolemus. Now, die.' As he spoke the word, he was dragging Priam to the very altar, his body trembling as it slithered through pools of his son's blood. Winding Priam's hair in his left hand, in his right he raised his sword with a flash of light and buried it to the hilt in Priam's side.

So ended the destiny of Priam. This was the death that fell to his lot. He who had once been the proud ruler over so many lands and peoples of Asia died with Troy ablaze before his eyes and the citadel of Pergamum in ruins. His mighty trunk lay upon the shore; the head hacked from the shoulders, a corpse without a name.

Then for the first time I knew the horror that was all about me. What was I to do? There came into my mind the image of my own dear father, as I looked at the king who was his equal in age breathing out his life with that cruel wound. There came into my mind also my wife Creusa whom I had left behind, the plundering of my home and the fate of young Iulus.

Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book 2, 531 – 563

- (a) How effectively does Virgil create sympathy for Priam in this passage? **[25]**
- (b) Using this passage as a starting point, how does Virgil emphasise the importance of father and son relationships in the *Aeneid*? **[25]**

Do not answer Question 2 if you have already answered Question 1.

Marks are awarded for the quality of written communication in your answer.

2 Read the passage and answer the questions.

'Why are his cruel ears closed to what I am saying? Where is he rushing away to? Ask him to do this last favour to the unhappy woman who loves him and wait till there is a following wind and his escape is easy. I am no longer begging for the marriage which we once had and which he has now betrayed. I am not pleading with him to do without his precious Latium and abandon his kingdom. What I am asking for is some time, nothing more, an interval, a respite for my anguish, so that fortune can teach me to grieve and to endure defeat. This is the last favour I shall beg. O Anna, pity your sister. I shall repay it in good measure at my death.'

These were Dido's pleas. These were the griefs her unhappy sister brought and brought again. But no griefs moved Aeneas. He heard but did not heed her words. The Fates forbade it and God blocked his ears to all appeals. Just as the north winds off the Alps vie with one another to uproot the mighty oak whose timber has hardened over long years of life, blowing upon it from this side and from that and howling through it; the trunk feels the shock and the foliage from its head covers the ground, but it holds on to the rocks with roots plunged as deep into the world below as its crown soars towards the winds of heaven – just so the hero Aeneas was buffeted by all this pleading on this side and on that, and felt the pain deep in his mighty heart but his mind remained unmoved and the tears rolled in vain.

Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book 4, 428 – 449

- (a) Using this passage as a starting point, how successfully does Virgil present the conflicting emotions which Aeneas experiences in the *Aeneid*? [25]
- (b) Which writer portrays the power of fate more effectively, Virgil or Homer? In your answer, you must refer to this passage, as well as other examples from the *Aeneid*, and discuss **at least one** scene from the *Iliad*. [25]

Section A Total [50]