



Shrewsbury School

SHREWSBURY SCHOOL

SIXTH FORM ENTRANCE EXAMINATION 2014

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

(Time: 1 hour)

Instructions to candidates:

- Answer QUESTION 1 and QUESTION 2. Each is worth 25 marks.
- Answer on lined paper.

I. Read the following passage and answer the questions.

At dinner, Odysseus tells his host King Alcinous of his adventures, including his visit to the Underworld; there he encounters an old comrade, whose death Odysseus was unaware of.

'I called across to him with winged words, 1
"Elpenor! How did you come here, to the land of shadows? You have been quicker
on foot than me in my black ship."
'I heard him groan, and then his answer came, "Son of Laertes, favourite of Zeus, 5
Odysseus of the nimble wits, the malicious decree of some god and too much wine
were my undoing. I had lain down to sleep on the roof of Circe's palace, and forgot
to go to the long ladder and take the right way down, and so fell headlong from the
roof. My neck was broken and my soul came down to Hades. And now, I beseech you,
by all the absent friends we left behind, by your wife, by the father who looked after
you as a child, and by Telemachus, your only son, whom you left at home – since I 10
know for certain that when you leave this kingdom of the dead you will put in with
your good ship at the Isle of Aea, Circe's isle – I beg you, master, to remember me
and then and not to sail away and forsake me utterly nor leave me there unburied and
unwept, in case I bring down the gods' curse on you. So burn my body there with all 15
the arms I possess, and raise a mound for me on the shore of the grey sea, in memory
of an unlucky man, so that men yet unborn may learn my story. Do this for me, and on
my barrow plant the oar I used to pull when I was alive and with my comrades."
'To which I answered, "All this, my poor Elpenor, I will do. Nothing shall be forgotten.'

HOMER *Odyssey* XI. 56-80

- a) How does Homer, through his use of language, maximise the pity we feel for Elpenor in this passage? [15]
- b) How effective are the devices Elpenor uses to persuade Odysseus to help him? [10]

TOTAL: [25]

2 Read the following passage and answer the questions.

The early life of Gnaeus Julius Agricola, Governor of Britain, by his biographer (and son-in-law) Tacitus.

He served his military apprenticeship in Britain to the satisfaction of Suetonius Paullinus, a hard-working and sensible officer, who chose him for a staff appointment in order to assess his worth. Without the recklessness with which young men often make the profession of arms a mere hobby, and without laziness, he never took advantage of his tribune's rank or his inexperience to procure enjoyment or to escape from duty. Instead, he got to know his province and made himself known to the troops. He learned from the experts, and chose the best models to follow, and would attempt nothing for display, would avoid nothing from fear. He acted always with energy and a sense of responsibility.

Never indeed had Britain been more disturbed, or in a more critical condition. Veterans had been massacred, colonies burned to the ground, armies cut off. They had to fight for their lives before they could think of victory. The campaign, of course, was conducted under the leadership and direction of another – the commander to whom belonged the decisive success and the credit for recovering Britain. Yet everything combined to give the young Agricola fresh skill, experience, and ambition; and his spirit was possessed by a passion for military glory – a thankless passion in an age in which a sinister construction was put upon distinction and a great reputation was as dangerous as a bad one.

From Britain Agricola went to Rome, to go through the regular course of office, and married Domitia Decidiana, a lady of illustrious birth. They lived in singular harmony, through their mutual affection and unselfishness. Appointed quaestor, the ballot assigned him Asia as his province, and Salvius Titianus for his proconsul. Neither the one nor the other corrupted him, though the province was rich and invited abuses, and the proconsul, a man inclined to every type of greed, was prepared to indulge his subordinate to any extent; 'You wink at my offences, and I will wink at yours.'

TACITUS *Agricola* 5-6 (adapted)

a) How would you rate Tacitus as a historian, on the evidence in this passage? [15]

b) What may we deduce about the political and military times Agricola grew up in, based on this passage? [10]

TOTAL: [25]