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Examiners' Report June 2010

GCE Greek 6GK02

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Introduction

A good number of candidates produced competent responses, especially in the first two sections of the examination. There was a noticeable pattern of trying to express meaning in one's own words and breaking away from copying from the text verbatim. Translations into Greek were of high quality, ranging from good to excellent.

With regard to Section C: Topics and Texts, there was an obvious preference for the History of Cyprus, the Cavafy and Ioannou questions. As is often the case in this section, candidates displayed fair knowledge of the topic but not always satisfactory understanding of the question or evidence of independent thinking. Despite obvious linguistic competence, some candidates did not manage to exploit their skills in order to gain full marks. It is absolutely essential that candidates practise the art of writing pertinent answers which pay attention to rubric and observe the word limit, and are able to discriminate between what to include and what to exclude.

Individual Comments On Questions

Section A

Question 1

Many candidates provided pertinent details in a concise manner, in order to address the questions. Some provided answers, which were lengthier than necessary, with sentences spilling over to the margins of the page or extending to different pages in the answer book. On several occasions, the candidates provided answers which were lengthier than the source text itself. Responses have to target the information required and should not be inclusive of almost all the information contained in the text. Answers may be to the point and concise at the same time. Published mark schemes are a good source of guidance for this. For example, a possible, correct answer to question 1 c is: Πως είναι λάθος.

Some candidates included extraneous information not drawn from the source text. There were several examples whereby candidates inappropriately brought up the Facebook as a social facilitator or as something young people “do” better than adults.

Question 2

With regard to question 2, many candidates showed excellent transfer skills and only very few did not have adequate language skills to produce satisfactory transfer of meaning.

The majority of candidates translated competently. Some areas of difficulty related to isolated words such as “director” “government” and “destination”. A grammatical structure that posed some difficulty related to the adjective διεθνής, which was often rendered incorrectly, not in agreement with its accompanying noun. The opening phrase “not many people know” was often awkwardly and incorrectly rendered literally as: όχι πολλοί ξέρουν

Section C

Question 3(a)

Many candidates offered well balanced and pertinent responses to the questions. The level of linguistic achievement was high and communication ranged from excellent to very good, on many occasions. Very few candidates displayed lack of linguistic knowledge and inability to manipulate structures to suit purpose.

There was a noticeable trend of extremely lengthy, all-inclusive essays that gave really painstaking summaries of the plot of the stories of Ioannou without enough evidence of ability to analyse or substantiate points. Similarly, a large number of candidates offered a survey of the role of the Church in question 4(b), without making the link to describing relations with the colonial rulers.

Questions 3 and 4

Many of those who attempted the popular questions on History gave good perceptive accounts, inclusive of important details, as well as clearly expressed. There were few cases of consistent omissions when some candidates, obviously prepared for a question on the role of the Church during the period of the English rule of Cyprus, answered question 4(b) by focusing entirely on the Church's influence (on matters of education and national consciousness) and omitted to refer to how Church policies were at odds (or not) with the actual policies of the Colonial government. Some candidates focused inordinately on the pre 1925 period, which is no longer included in the time frame under study.

Similarly, many candidates who chose 3(a) described the political situation during the first 7 years of the decade, without expanding to address and comment on the particular role of the monarchy regarding elections and political developments.

Question 5(a)

The few candidates who attempted the Geography questions, 5(b) in particular, gave the weakest answers. Some of the better answers focused on 5(a), giving detailed accounts of cultural landmarks and their importance, especially in relation to Epirus, Crete and Cyprus.

Many essays did not address the question and offered generic descriptions, which were mostly outside the requirements of the question. Many responses for 5(b), which tried to establish a link between the climate and local economy, focused largely on one-dimensional platitudes drawn from personal experience of holidays, restricting the information to "sun", "beaches" and "tourism".

One important caveat:: Candidates cannot fully address questions on the Geography of Cyprus if they do not move beyond a focus on one single city or village.

Question 6(a)

The majority of the candidates who attempted this topic showed very good knowledge of the prescribed films, with impressive attention to accurate and pertinent detail. Many answers made the link between their knowledge of the topic and the requirements of the question, moving away from unnecessary plot and character summaries.

Some of the candidates who addressed 6(b) demonstrated capacity for independent thinking and gave original and individual responses.

Question 7(a)

This was one of the most popular questions of this section. The quality of responses varied from clearly expressed and largely relevant to less than satisfactory responses, which contained material that either did not address directly the question posed or consisted of a selection of poems which was not entirely appropriate, in order to substantiate the points raised.

Many candidates' attempt to link poems such as "Ιγνάτιου Τάφος", "Μύρης Αλεξάνδρια, 340 μ.Χ." or "Η αρρώστεια του Κλείτου" to Cavafy's treatment of "old age" seemed forced and lacked conviction.

A number of set, memorised phrases were used by many students, who had obviously little or no knowledge of the primary texts, and ended up confusing the titles of the poems, discussing the stories of Ioannou as poems written by Cavafy or quite often confusing Ioannou with Cavafy and making unnecessary, ill-placed references to the sexuality or biographical details of these authors.

Many candidates preferred 7(b) and did quite well in describing the ideals/worldview emerging from Cavafy's poetry, singling out "art", "beauty" and "integrity/self respect" and substantiating their points with suitable textual support.

Question 8(a)

Many of the candidates, who chose to study the short stories of Ioannou, showed good knowledge of the stories and ability to narrate persuasively and with good detail. Occasionally, narrative was at the expense of analysis, when students showed sound knowledge of the text but not convincing enough understanding of the question.

Many accounts addressing 8(a) offered lively portraits of the main characters and showed good familiarity with the stories but occasionally, description won over analysis and the reason why these characters are representative, was not analysed or addressed in a sound or conclusive manner.

Candidates' attention is drawn to the presentation of their work. Many candidates presented essays that were hardly legible, the writing not only being hard to read but also marked by smudges and asterisks and words being crossed out over and over again. Candidates are advised to write clearly, restrict themselves to the point in question, observe the word limits and write their answers in the space allocated in the answer book.

Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	N	U
Raw mark boundary	80	70	61	52	44	36	28	20	0
Uniform mark scale boundary	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	0

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