



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Biblical Hebrew (1BH0)
Paper 2 Literature

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Introduction

In this series, numbers entered remained approximately the consistent with previous years. There were many examples of better work seen, especially in the translation questions, with learners more likely to be able to achieve the top level on level based questions. Equally there were some learners who struggled to perform consistently across the paper.

QUESTIONS

Q1 was overall answered correctly, though some candidates continue to mix up translation of hundreds tens and unit.

Q2 The question asks for two details. Many candidates wrote plain translations, and it was not clear that they had understood what they were writing, such as who was or wasn't giving bread to whom.

Q3 Mostly correctly answered, though some candidates confused the treatment given to Penueel with that given to Sukkoth.

Q4 The wording of the question (to give two examples of "how questions are asked") was misunderstood by many. This was an AO2 language question, and sought wording from the text that the Hebrew uses to denote a question, namely the interrogative letter "heh" and the word "Eifo" meaning (literally) "where". Candidates wrote about *styles* of questions such as "questions that seek information" or "rhetorical questions" without any reference of the wording. Others simply wrote down large chunks of the passage without specifying whether they meant any specific words or which ones they were.

Q5 With a selection of possible explanations, this was generally well answered, though some spoke about "beating" when in fact the root Y.D.A means "broke".

Q6 This was mostly well answered. However, some candidates simply gave a literal translation, when in fact the phrase is too cryptic to be translated literally – the questions for the *meaning*.

Q7 Some failed to state that he was *at the top of* Mount Gerizim; other wrote that he was at the top of the/a mountain, without saying which.

Q8 Most identified sweetness, though some referred to honey. Some candidates were identifying "tenuvati" as oil

Q9 Generally well answered, though the niphath and piel forms were not recognised by many candidates, usually stating that one of them was a kal.

Q10 With a wide selection of examples, most candidates did well on this question. Some pointed out the Keri/Kesiv, but gave no reason as to how this affected the meaning

Q11 Many wrote that Jotham intended to *curse* the people of Shechem, The mark scheme did not include this and no mark could be awarded for this point. The MS took on that his speech here was initially intended only as a *rebuke* that they should reject Abimelech; it was only when they took no notice that the "curse" took effect – hence the chapter ends by speaking of the fulfilment of the "curse of Jotham".

Q12 Most candidates understood that they needed to make reference to the subject of ambush. However, some implied that this was a one-off event rather than an ongoing situation as the text implies. Others mentioned stealing without mentioning that it was from passers-by.

Q13 With a wide range of actions to choose from, most candidates were able to identify at least two actions taken by the people.

Q14(a) Only a very small number of candidates correctly identified this as the mem of the participle. The vast majority of those who answered wrote that this was a preformative mem.

Q14(b) Mostly correctly answered

Q15 With a wide range of explanations and language features in the passage, candidates were generally able to identify a range of correct responses, though some simply translated sections of the text and it was not clear that they were correctly conveying any understanding

Q16 Generally well translated. Some confusion over plural and singular of hand/s, and over the conjugation of the word for “strengthened”.

Q17 On the whole this question was well answered. Most identified the use of “quickly” in stressing the urgency of Abimelech’s embarrassment, and the irony of having been killed by a woman. Some took the analysis further by stating the connection between the killing of the brothers on one stone and the killing of Abimelech on one stone. Many also identified the dismissive or fearful reaction of the rest of the nation who simply “went back home” after Abimelech’s death.

Q18 a-b Well answered

Q19 Many candidates lost the mark by not mentioning that he “fled” to the Sanctuary, stating simply that he “went”.

Q20 a mixture of responses but generally correctly answered

Q21 Many candidates spent time explaining the manner of the murder of Abner and Amassa, despite this not being an explanation of why it was “innocent blood”, and hence was not in the mark scheme. Others explained that this was to do with killing Absalom. Surprisingly, many candidates wrote that he killed people who had done nothing wrong, or that he did it for no reason.

Q22a-b Both generally well answered

Q23 Generally well answered

Q24 A mixture of answers; a significant number of candidates were unable to identify both roots correctly

Q25 generally well answered. Some candidates gave plain translation as their response. Others mentioned the cedar and the hyssop without pointing out that this meant he knew everything in between too; or they mentioned the tall cedar alone (or the lowly hyssop alone) and not both. Some identified that he understood their use for the sacrificial process without specifying that this was for the cure of the leper.

Q26 The question of why Solomon was granted the gift intended candidates to explain the reason why his request was deemed as appropriate and praiseworthy. However, many candidates responded with explanations of the *purpose* of his specific requests, and could not be awarded the mark.

Q27 Generally well answered

Q28 Generally well answered

Q29 Generally well answered

Q30 Many candidates' responses did not contain sufficient information to awarded the full marks: the responses required candidates to identify and differentiate between a monetary taxation, and a levy of their physical labour. Any responses which simply stated "tax" or "levy" could not attract a mark.

Q31 The first dagesh was on the whole correctly identified as being due to the definite article. The second dagesh was often misconstrued as being due to a "missing nun" – when in fact it is due to a missing letter "yud".

Q32 Many were able to explain that these people were the stone cutters, but identification of the origin of the word as "gevul" (border) was less commonly given as an answer. Some candidates gave the answer as "Gibalites", without stating that they meant they came from a place called Gibal, and could therefore not be awarded the mark.

Q33 Generally well answered, despite some confusion over tenses and singular/plurals.

Q34 Some very good answers. Some candidates were able to identify that the premise of the question – that Bathsheba showed submission – was not necessarily the case, and were able to cite evidence for this. Candidates generally concentrated on the build up to Adonijah's request than on Bathsheba's submission, being that more detail is given on this point.

Q35 Most candidates were able to identify a range of details from the texts in which leadership is described. In terms of analysis of these points, there were some outstanding responses to this question, in which candidates were able to derive a range of valid conclusions regarding the function of successful leadership in general, such as the role of adherence to G-d, seeking the good of the people etc. provide a good overview of how leadership functions in general, and how this is seen in the different texts. However, an overwhelming majority of candidates have approached by finding isolated points from the two texts and then attempting to draw general conclusions about leadership, when in fact the points are very specific to this particular story. For example, some responses stated that G-d spoke to Solomon in a dream, and that Gideon discovered the fear of the Midianites through a dream, drawing the conclusion that G-d communicates with leaders through dreams. Whilst dreams are indeed a mode of Divine communication, this sheds little light on leadership as such; furthermore, the comparison is tenuous as it was not the dream but the mood of the people that Gideon was instructed to overhear. A significant number of responses compared irrelevant features, such as the fact that Gideon split the soldiers into 3 groups and Abimelech split his into 4 in the attack on Shechem, drawing the conclusion that leaders split their troops up in battle, but into different numbers. Others made

unqualified comparisons that were in fact incorrect, such as the fact that leadership passes from fathers to sons: in Kings, from David to Solomon; in Judges from Gideon to Abimelech! It would be helpful for candidates to be given more guidance on (a) how to identify themes, and to cite two or three proofs from across the texts, and (b) what constitutes a logical conclusion that can be drawn from the given facts.

