

Practice Examination Paper: Section One

Section One

Comment on the context and content of one of the following passages:

1. This is the display of the inquiry of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, so that things done by man not be forgotten in time, and that great and marvellous deeds, some displayed by the Greeks and some by non-Greeks, not lose their glory, including among others what was the cause of their waging war on each other. According to learned Persians, it was the Phoenicians who caused the conflict. Originally, these people came to our sea from the Red Sea, as it is known. No sooner had they settled in the land they still inhabit than they turned to overseas travel. They used to take Egyptian and Assyrian goods to various places, including Argos, which was at that time the most important state, in all respects, in the country which is now called Greece. Once, then, the Phoenicians came to Argos and began to dispose of their cargo. Five or six days after they had arrived, when they had sold almost everything, a number of women came down to the shore, including the Kin's daughter, whose name was Io, the daughter of Inachus. These women were standing around the stern of the ship, buying any items which particularly caught their fancy, when the Phoenicians gave the word and suddenly charged at them. Most of the women got away, but Io and some others were captured. The Phoenicians took them on their ship and sailed away for Egypt.

Herodotus, *Histories*, 1.1

2. [1] The messenger you sent to tell me of the child's death must have missed me on his way to Athens; I only heard of it from my niece when I got to Tanagra. I imagine the funeral is now over, and hope it has been done in the way that will make for least pain for you both now and in the future. If there is anything you wished to do but refrained from doing, waiting for my decision, but which you think will make things easier to bear, pray do it, without extravagance or superstition, for which I know you have no inclination.

[2] Only, my dear wife, at this sad moment, keep yourself, and me, calm. I know I can get the measure of what has happened; but if I see you grieving to excess, that will hurt me more than the less. But I am no "child of oak or rock": you know that, you have shared with me the upbringing of all our children, all reared at home by ourselves, and you know that this child was beloved by me above all, because she was the daughter you wanted after four sons and she gave me the opportunity to give her your name. There is a special savour in our affection for children of that age; it lies in the purity of the pleasure they give, the freedom from any crossness or complaint. She herself too had great natural goodness and gentleness of temper: her response to affection and her generosity both gave pleasure and enabled us to perceive the human kindness in her nature. She would ask her nurse to feed not only other babies but the objects and toys that she liked playing with, and would generously invite them, as it were, to her table, offering the good things she had and sharing her greatest pleasures with those who delighted her.

Plutarch, *A Consolation to His Wife*, 1-2

3. Oh, how I wish you were in Rome! No doubt you would have stayed if we had expected all this to happen. Then it would be easy enough for us to keep Little Beauty in hand or at least we should be able to find out what he is up to. Now the picture is as follows: he rushes wildly up and down, without any definite programme, threatening numbers of folk with this, that and the other. Apparently he will take whatever line chance puts in his way. When he notices how the present regime is detested he makes as though to attack its authors; then again, when he remembers their power and ruthlessness and the armies behind them, he turns upon the honest men. Myself he threatens sometimes with violence, sometimes with the law courts. Pompey has spoken to him, strongly, as he himself informed me (I have no other witness), telling him that he, Pompey, would be branded as a traitor and a villain if I were brought into jeopardy by one whose weapons he had himself furnished in allowing his transfer to the plebs. But both Clodius himself and Appius had given him their words in respect of me. If Clodius did not honour his pledge, he, Pompey, would so react that the pre-eminent importance of our friendship in his eyes would be obvious to all. To this and more of the same kind, said Pompey, Clodius at first made very considerable demur, but in the end capitulated and gave an assurance that he would take no step contrary to Pompey's wishes. But since that conversation he has continued none the less to use most offensive language about me. Even if he did not, I should not trust him a yard and should make all preparations, as I am doing.

Cicero, *Letter to Atticus* 42

4. Then priests who all their lives offered sacrifice in temples and were chosen to voice the people's prayer secured by their devotion the sympathy of God; their pure minds were kindled by the very presence of the powerful deity, and the god of heaven brought his servants to a knowledge of heaven and disclosed its secrets to them. These were the men who founded our noble science and were the first by their art to discern the destinies dependent on the wandering stars. Embracing long ages in unremitting toil, they assigned to each period of time its particular events, noting an individual's nativity and the subsequent pattern of his life, the influence of each hour on the laws of fate, and the great differences effected by small moments. After every aspect of the sky had been observed, as the stars returned to their customary positions, and the unvarying sequences of fate had assigned to each figuration of the planets its peculiar influence, by repeated practice and with examples pointing the way experience built up the science; and from wide observation discovered that by hidden laws the stars wield sovereign power and that all heaven moves to the eternal spirit of reason and by sure tokens distinguishes the vicissitudes of fate.

Before their times man lived in ignorance: he looked without comprehension at the outward appearance and saw not the design of nature's works; he gazed in bewilderment at the strange new light of heaven, now sorrowing at its loss, now joyful at its rebirth; nor why the Sun so often rose, putting to flight the stars, why days varied in duration and the period of darkness fluctuated, and why the lengths of the shadows differed according as the Sun retreated or drew nearer, could he understand from the true causes. Nor as yet had ingenuity taught man arts and crafts: the earth lay waste and idled under ignorant husbandmen; gold then had its abode in unvisited mountains, and the sea disturbed by non concealed the existence of unsuspected worlds, for man dared not to entrust his life to the deep or his hopes to the winds, and deemed his little knowledge adequate.

Manilius, *Astronomica*, 1.10ff