



Shrewsbury
School

SHREWSBURY SCHOOL

SIXTH FORM ENTRANCE EXAMINATION 2023 ENTRY

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION (1 Hour)

Instructions to candidates:

- Answer QUESTION 1 and QUESTION 2.
- Answer on lined paper

I. Read the following passage and answer the questions.

On the trail of his long lost father, Telemachus visits Menelaus:

When young Dawn with her rose-red fingers shone once more, the lord of the war
cry Menelaus climbed from bed and dressed; over his shoulder he slung his well-honed
sword, fastened rawhide sandals under his smooth feet, stepped from his bedroom,
handsome as a god, and sat beside Telemachus, asking, kindly, “Now, my young prince,
tell me what brings you here to sunny Lacedaemon, sailing over the sea’s broad back.
A public matter or private? Tell me the truth now.”

And with all the poise he had, Telemachus replied,

“Son of Atreus, King Menelaus, captain of armies, I came in the hope that you can tell
me now some news about my father. My house is being devoured, my rich farms
destroyed, my palace crammed with enemies, slaughtering on and on my droves of
sheep and shambling longhorn cattle. Suitors plague my mother - the insolent,
overweening ... That’s why I’ve come to plead before you now, if you can tell me about
his cruel death: perhaps you saw him die with your own eyes or heard the wanderer’s
end from someone else. More than all other men, that man was born for pain. Don’t
soften a thing, from pity, respect for me - tell me, clearly, all your eyes have witnessed.
I beg you—if ever my father, Odysseus, pledged you his word and made it good in
action once on the fields of Troy where you Achaeans suffered, remember his story now,
tell me the truth.”

HOMER, *Odyssey* IV. 306-331

- a) *Menelaus* (line 2): name his wife. [1]
- b) Pick out a stock epithet from the first paragraph (lines 1-6) [1]
- c) *Lacedaemon* (line 5). What is the other name for this city? [1]
- d) ...*my mother*... (line 11) Name her. [1]
- e) *Son of Atreus* (line 8) Name the other ‘son of Atreus’. [1]
- f) How effectively does Homer portray Telemachus’ frustration and desperation in lines 8-18? Refer closely to the text in your answer. [20]

TOTAL: [25]

2 Read the following passage and answer the questions.

The Roman historian Tacitus, writing about 50 years after the events happened, describes the efforts of the Emperor Nero to perform on stage.

Nero was driven by a desire growing keener by the day for appearing on public stages. For up until then he had sung in private houses or gardens, but these he now scorned, as not being busy enough and too cramped for so great a voice. Not daring to start in Rome, he chose Neapolis*, as it was a Greek city. His starting point would be from here, as a crossing into Greece, and after winning the well-known and sacred garlands of old, he would stir up, with increased fame, the enthusiasm of Roman citizens. So a crowd of townfolk was assembled, with those from the nearby towns, and those who escorted the emperor to pay him honour and also companies of soldiers filling the Neapolitans' theatre.

In that place there occurred something which most people thought unfortunate but which the emperor regarded as provident and from the kind gods. For after the departure of the audience, the empty theatre collapsed without harm to anyone. Therefore, through composed songs, he thanked the gods, celebrating the good fortune of the recent collapse, and as he was about to make for the crossing of the Adriatic Sea, he rested for a while at Beneventum, where a crowded gladiatorial show was being put on by Vatinius. Vatinius was among the foulest things in Nero's court, brought up in a shoemaker's shop, with a twisted body and a vulgar wit, taken in at first as a target for insults. After this he grew so powerful by accusing all the best men, that in influence, wealth, and ability to harm, he surpassed even the bad ones.

TACITUS *Annals* XV 33-34

* *modern Naples*

- a) From reading this passage, **briefly** describe what you think the attitude of the writer is towards Nero. [5]
- b) How skilful are Tacitus' powers of description and characterisation in this passage? Refer closely to the text in your answer. [20]

TOTAL: [25]

END OF QUESTIONS