

HISTORY ADMISSIONS ASSESSMENT

SPECIMEN PAPER

60 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Please read these instructions carefully, but do not open the question paper until you are told that you may do so.

This question paper requires you to read a single passage and answer a related question.

You should write your answer in the space provided in this question paper. Please complete this section in **black pen**.

You can use the blank inside front cover for rough working or notes, but no extra paper is allowed. Only answers in the space indicated in the paper will be marked.

Dictionaries and calculators may NOT be used.

Please wait to be told you may begin before turning this page

This question paper consists of 11 printed pages and 1 blank page

This page is intentionally left blank for your rough working or notes.

Please read passages I and II below and write your answer to the task **in the space provided in this booklet**. You have 1 hour to complete the task and should spend up to 15 minutes reading the passages and planning your response.

The point of this task is to explore your ability to handle historical evidence and how you work with it. It is not designed as a test of knowledge, so no previous knowledge is expected or required. Please think about what these accounts tell us about democracy in this society.

TASK

In your own words, compare and contrast the characterisations of Athenian democracy offered in these two passages.

I

Now, in discussing the Athenian constitution, I cannot commend their present method of running the state, because in choosing it they preferred that the masses should do better than the respectable citizens; this, then, is my reason for not commending it. Since, however, they have made this choice, I will demonstrate how well they preserve their constitution and handle the other affairs for which the rest of the Greeks criticise them.

My first point is that it is right that the poor and ordinary people there should have more power than the noble and the rich, because it is the ordinary people who man the fleet and bring the city her power; they provide the helmsmen, the boatswains, the junior officers, the look-outs, and the shipwrights; it is these people who make the city powerful much more than the heavy-armed infantry and the noble and respectable classes. This being so, it seems just that all should share in public office by lot and by election, and that any citizen who wishes should be able to speak in the Assembly...

Again, some people are surprised at the fact that in all fields they give more power to the masses, the poor and the common people than they do to the respectable elements of society, but it will become clear that they preserve the democracy by doing precisely this. When the poor, the ordinary people and the lower classes flourish and increase in numbers, then the power of the democracy will be increased; if, however, the rich and the respectable flourish, the democrats increase the strength of their opponents. Throughout the world the aristocracy are opposed to democracy, for they are naturally least liable to loss of self-control and injustice and most meticulous in their regard for what is respectable, whereas the masses display extreme ignorance, indiscipline and wickedness, for poverty gives them a tendency towards the ignoble, and in some cases lack of money leads to their being uneducated and ignorant...

The common people do not wish to be deprived of their rights in an admirably governed city, but to be free and to rule the city; they are not disturbed by inferior laws, for the common people get their strength and freedom from what you define as inferior laws. If you are looking for an admirable code of laws, first you will find that the ablest draw them up in their own interest; secondly, the respectable will punish the masses, and will plan the city's affairs and will not allow men who are mad to take part in planning or discussion or even sit in the Assembly. As a result of this excellent system the common people would very soon lose all of their political rights...

I do not blame the common people for their democracy, for anyone is to be pardoned for looking after his own interests; but a man who is not of the common people and chooses to live in a city that is

ruled by a democracy rather than an oligarchy is preparing to do wrong, and realises that it is easier to get away with being wicked under a democracy than under an oligarchy.

The Constitution of the Athenians, anonymous pamphlet, c. 425 B.C.

II

In the same winter [431/430 B.C.] the Athenians, following their annual custom, gave a public funeral for those who had been the first to die in the war...Pericles...was chosen to make the speech. When the moment arrived...he spoke as follows:

“What I want to do is...to discuss the spirit in which we faced our trials and also our constitution and the way of life which has made us great. After that I shall speak in praise of the dead, believing that this kind of speech is not inappropriate to the present occasion, and that this whole gathering, of citizens and foreigners, may listen to it with advantage.

Let me say that our system of government does not copy the institutions of our neighbours. It is more the case of our being a model to others, than of our imitating anyone else. Our constitution is called a democracy because power is in the hands not of a minority but of the whole people. When it is a question of settling private disputes, everyone is equal before the law; when it is a question of putting one person before another in positions of public responsibility, what counts is not membership of a particular class but the actual ability which the man possesses. No one, as long as he has it in him to be of service to the state, is kept in political obscurity because of poverty...

We are free and tolerant in our private lives; but in public we keep to the law. This is because it commands our deep respect. We give our obedience to those whom we put in positions of authority, and we obey the laws themselves, especially those which are for the protection of the oppressed, and those unwritten laws which it is an acknowledged shame to break...

We regard wealth as something to be properly used, rather than as something to boast about. As for poverty, no one need be ashamed to admit it: the real shame is in not taking practical measures to escape from it. Here each individual is interested not only in his own affairs but in the affairs of the state as well: even those who are mostly occupied with their own business are extremely well-informed on general politics – this is a peculiarity of ours: we do not say that a man who takes no interest in politics is a man that minds his own business; we say that he has no business here at all...

Taking everything together then, I declare that our city is an education to Greece, and I declare that in my opinion each single one of our citizens, in all the manifold aspects of life, is able to show himself the rightful lord and owner of his own person, and to do this, moreover, with exceptional grace and exceptional versatility. And to show that this is no empty boasting for the present occasion, but real tangible fact, you have only to consider the power which our city possesses and which has been won by those very qualities which I have mentioned...”

Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War, c. 400 B.C.

A series of 25 horizontal dotted lines spanning the width of the page, intended for writing.

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing.

A series of 25 horizontal dotted lines spanning the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice.

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing.

A series of 25 horizontal dotted lines spanning the width of the page, providing a template for handwriting practice.

A series of 25 horizontal dotted lines spanning the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice.

