Stage 1 and Stage 2 Ancient Studies

Understanding the Assessment Design Criteria

Research and Analysis

RA1Research into and analysis of primary and secondary sources and perspectives.

RA2 Research into and understanding of ideas or innovations that emerged from the ancient world, and consideration of their influence

On Page 4 of the subject outline are the learning requirements for Ancient Studies:

Learning requirements

The learning requirements summarise the knowledge, skills, and understanding that students are expected to develop and demonstrate through their learning in Stage 2 Ancient Studies.

In this subject, students are expected to:

1. understand and analyse historical concepts

2. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of texts, artefacts, ideas, events, people, and institutions of the ancient world

3. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the political, social, cultural, and/or economic diversity in the ancient world

4. apply inquiry skills to analyse and evaluate sources and perspectives, and synthesise evidence

5. research and understand the ideas and innovations that emerged from the ancient world, and consider their influence

6. communicate ideas and arguments, using a range of evidence and subject-specific language.

Inquiry skills

Page 5 of the subject outline lays out 11 specific inquiry skills essential for Ancient Studies. These also are reflected in the assessment design criteria.

The following skills are essential for inquiry in Ancient Studies.

Students:

* research historical and/or archaeological materials and select information on the basis of relevance
* evaluate the authenticity, origin, reliability, usefulness, limitations, and contestable nature of sources
* analyse and synthesise evidence from different types of sources to develop an informed and persuasive argument
* pose hypotheses and/or ask focusing questions to guide inquiry and to develop a coherent plan for inquiry
* analyse texts to place events in their historical and/or literary context and appreciate that the past can be explained through a variety of narratives and perspectives
* evaluate differing perspectives on the past to understand the contestable nature of historical and/or archaeological knowledge and to draw reasoned conclusions
* analyse evidence of the historical concepts of evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, interpretations, and contestability
* communicate ideas and arguments appropriate to context, purpose, and audience
* examine and explain the contributions of past civilisations to contemporary cultural understandings and perspectives
* analyse how texts have been adapted for modern audiences in representing the past through creative works, such as film, novels, drama, visual arts, music, fiction, poetry, video games, web pages, and other texts
* practise ethical scholarship, including use of appropriate referencing techniques.

Unpacking the Assessment Design Criteria

RA1: Research into and analysis of primaryand secondary sources and perspectives.

There are so many on-line digital libraries that students can find primary source material easily. A few are listed below.

* <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/>
  + - <http://guides.library.uq.edu.au/secondary-schools/cyberschool-students/schools/ancient-history>
    - <http://libguides.library.usyd.edu.au/c.php?g=508129&p=3476519>
    - <http://libguides.library.usyd.edu.au/c.php?g=508129&p=347651>

Libraries have copies of well translated primary source texts which usually come with scholarly introductions and commentaries.

RA1: Research into and analysis of primaryand secondary sources and perspectives.

* Credible, authoritative secondary material. Wikipedia is a start point not an end in itself. Useful source material can be found in:
  + - Scholarly journals sites such as JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/>

schools might consider an annual membership for their resource centre

* + - Reputable on-line sites such as <https://www.academia.edu/>

These are academic papers, often highly specific masters and doctoral level

* + - University websites and courses
    - The Barr Smith Library. <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/library/about/libraries/bsl/>

Many resources can be used free of charge. On-line journals and borrowing privileges are available through membership. Students are able to join for a fee. Approximately $25 per year or $12:50 per semester. Information sessions and tours are given free to school groups.

* + - The Classical Studies pages of the University of Adelaide website have good reading lists <https://arts.adelaide.edu.au/classics/>
    - Text books
    - Journal articles
    - Documentaries
    - Some teacher created on-line resources

RA1: Research into and analysis of primaryand secondary sources and perspectives.

Students need to show that they are aware of some of the issues surrounding the use of primary source material. Ideas they could explore are:

* Interrogate the source material:
* What is it? An inscription, a literary genre, a political text, a letter, a ‘history’, an artefact?
* Can the student discriminate between types of source information and see, for example, that a play is a work of fiction and represents an authorial view. It might be informed by the society in which the author lived but may not be reflective of it.
* Are there any issues of reliability around the text/ item? Bias? Authenticity?
* Is it supported or contradicted by other source material?
* Is there an agenda in the source? For what purpose was it ‘written’/created.
* How distanced is it in time, and culture, from the event to which it relates? Herodotus (an Ionian Greek) was not at the Battle of Marathon observing from the sidelines. Plutarch, a Roman, was writing on Themistocles (an Athenian) almost 500 years after Themistocles’ life.
* If it is an artefact, was it found in situ or how did it come to be found? What do those issues tell us?
* If it is a site, how has its integrity been preserved? What has interfered with or influenced how we are able to approach the site- e.g.Schlimann’s approach at Troy.
* Research into a range of perspectives:
* Analyse the source from multiple perspectives:
  + Whose is the dominant voice in the source material? Why?
  + What voices are missing in the source material? For instance are women, slaves, minority groups, special interest groups, political rivals, the losing side in a war represented in the sources?

RA1: Research into and analysis ofprimaryand secondary sources and perspectives.

Students need to show that they are also aware of someof the issues surrounding the use of secondary source material.

Some ways to do this could be:

* Interrogate the source material:
  + What it is? Students should be able to show, even through the selection of their materials, that they understand the difference in purpose and quality between Wikipedia, a blog, a contemporary scholarly published journal article and a text book by a scholarly expert.
* Identify issues involved in using the source:
  + How does it throw a different light on any primary source material?
  + Does it reconcile any conflicts in the primary source material?
  + Does it throw into question any issues about the primary source material?
  + What is it offering as evidence?
  + How much information is available to the secondary source?
  + Is there a shift in contemporary secondary source view to the primary source view? Why?
  + How has time made a difference to understanding?
  + How have cultural value shifts between the past and the present made a difference to understanding?
  + How has additional evidence made a difference to understanding?
  + How does conflicting source material make a difference, even enrich, understanding?
  + Are more perspectives available in the secondary source material – doe they show an awareness of previously missing voices such as women, slaves, minority groups etc.
  + Is there a particular perspective evident in the secondary material such as a political view e.g. Marxist or a cultural view or a sexual view point.

With students who look at a virtual museum or a tour, they too need to show they are being discerning and critical in finding source material and deciding which source is best to use:

* For example, a student conducting a tour of an ancient site needs to do more than simply find an online photo of a temple and put it in a PowerPoint slide. Is a photograph the best source evidence to use to show the form and purpose of a temple, might an archaeological drawing of a reconstruction be of more use? Is there a site reconstruction drawing available which would put the temple in more perspective when considered against the full site?
* Questions need to asked of the source? Is it a holiday travel photo, is it from a website of authority such as a museum or an archaeological dig? Are the reconstruction drawings made by experts? How old are those drawings? Are there more recent ones available in a reputable journal? Drawings from Schliemann’s excavation of Hissarlik may not be as useful as current ones. Schliemann made deliberate decisions to photograph evidence, such as his wife wearing the ‘jewels of Helen’ that need to be considered when examining the perspective of the source.
* In looking a film such as *Troy*, using still frames of costume and set, the student needs to display an awareness that these are interpretations, and be asking questions such as what research has the designer done, are there other sources such as pottery illustrations or archaeological site plans that conform or contradict the filmmakers representations.
* When looking at primary source material such as coins, pottery, grave goods, jewellery were they found in situ or away from their place of manufacture? What might that tell us? What can we infer about the technology involved in their manufacture – such as the Mycenaean daggers from the shaft graves? Are there components in their manufacture that tell us about trade routes?

RA2: Research into and understanding of ideas or innovations that emerged from the ancient world, and consideration of their influence.

In addressing this standard, some key ideas to understand are:

* ‘Ideas or innovations’ does not mean that you have to discuss both an idea and an innovation as if they are two separate entities. It is meant to be a broad and inclusive term.
* An innovation can be ‘an idea, a method of doing something or a physical thing.’ It could include all, or some, aspects of that definition.
* The focus on the “understanding of idea or innovation” is to direct the student towards analysis and discussion and away from narrative/historical recount. For example,
  + A popular Inquiry topic is comparing Athenian women with Spartan women. Students traditionally give a very rich K and U 1 focused recount of the conditions under which the women lived. RA2 is directing the student to engage with the underlying ideas that created the living conditions – patriarchy, misogyny, eugenics, property rights and the notion of exclusivity within the understanding of citizenship.

RA2: Research into and understanding of ideas or innovations that emerged from the ancient world, and consideration of their influence.

* The focus on the ‘consideration of their influence’ is to direct the student away from simple comparison.
  + Drawing on the previous example, a common structure is a paragraph on the education of an Athenian girl, followed by a connective phrase such as ‘In comparison, a Spartan girl enjoyed more freedom…” and the second paragraph then continues recounting daily life for a Spartan girl in an essentially unconnected manner. The idea/innovation should form the heart of the paragraph with discussion and examples coming from both societies.
* “Consideration of their influence” should not be taken to mean that the student must evidence a direct, primary source evidence based, causal connection between the manifestation of the idea/innovation in the modern world and its source in the ancient world. They may be able to but it is more likely that they would extrapolate influence through discussion.
  + For example, it is possible to offer evidence through analytical, informed discussion of features that Trajan’s column has influenced monumental sculpture in modern western monuments. The student doesn’t need to find a quote, or a sketch, in the diary of the designer of Nelson’s column to establish that he was ‘influenced’.
  + It would likely be impossible for a student to show through a direct quote that Atwood’s portrayal of women was directly influenced by Ancient Greece, but through targeted discussion the student would be able to identify the same patriarchal constructs, similar notions of women as property, and classifications of women to show that there are manifestations of the ancient ideas still resonating in the modern world.
* “Consideration of their influence” could apply:
  + Between different ancient societies
  + Between an ancient society and a contemporary society
  + Between an ancient society and another society
  + Within an ancient society
* Students do not have to link to the modern world for their Inquiry.

RA2 and The Inquiry

Addressing this criteria will be much easier for the student if the idea/innovation is named in the framing question.

Inquiry topics such as

* Mythology
* Women

Are not helpful in setting the student up for success.

A more framed question such as

* Discuss the roles of women in Ancient Greece

or

* Compare the roles of women in Ancient Athens and Sparta with the roles of women in Ancient Rome

still does not help the students to address RA2.

A better framed focus of Inquiry would be:

The treatment of women in Ancient Athens was characterised by misogyny, patriarchal notions of women as property and the notion that women should remain almost exclusively within the home. How are these ideas played out in Atwood’s contemporary novel. *A Handmaid’s tale?*

Three key ideas from the ancient world are named and the student will be able to explore the manifestations of these ideas in the modern context.

Any of the following type of focus would enable the student to address RA2 within their Inquiry:

* To what extent did the ideas of Aristotle influence the policy, beliefs and actions of Alexander the Great? *(exploring the influence of an idea within a society)*
* How do Homer’s epics *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* reflect the influence of the Sumerian epic Gilgamesh? *(exploring the influence of the emerging methodology of the epic between different ancient societies).*
* In what ways can the ideas of Lycurgus be seen as an influence on Nazi ideology and training? *(exploring the influence of ancient ideas in a modern society)*
* Shakespeare borrowed heavily from the ancient Greeks and Roman works of Aristophanes and Plautus in both his themes and comedic conventions. *(exploring the influence of an innovative form of drama that emerged from the Greek world on another society)*
* To what extent have elements of Ancient Roman architecture influenced modern architectural structures*? (exploring ideas and innovations in architecture from an ancient society to a contemporary one).*