

**CSS 2022 Exercise 42: Make a précis of the given passage and suggest a suitable title for it.**

The fear of human beings when faced with the mysteries of life and their weakness by comparison with the vastness of nature created in them a need to communicate with the divine, with the superior powers which they believed regulated the universe and determined their own fates. Knowledge of the wishes of the gods was always a sure guide for human behaviour. In ancient Greece, the precise nature of these wishes was 'decoded' by the art of giving oracles, practised by soothsayers who had the gift of understanding the signs or signals sent by the gods.

The soothsayers uttered their oracle by interpreting flashes of lightening, rolls of thunder or the flights of certain birds of prey (omens), alternatively, they might observe the direction in which the fire burned when a sacrifice was made, examine the entrails of animals which had just been sacrificed or base judgments on the sacrificial beast's willingness to approach the altar. The interpretation of dreams was popular too, and so was palmistry. The most notable soothsayers of ancient Greece were Tiresias, Calchas, Helenus, Amphiaraus and Cassandra.

However, there were abundant instances in which the gods did not manifest themselves to the faithful in the forms of signs but spoke directly to an intermediate who for a short time was overcome by a 'divine mania' and transcended his own human essence. Here the prophet- or more usually the prophetess- entered a state of ecstasy in which he or she delivered the message from the gods to the suppliants.

These practices for foreseeing the future were the basis on which the ancient Greek oracles operated. Each oracle was located within a properly organised sanctuary and was directly associated with one or more of the gods. Apollo was the archetypal soothsayer for the Greeks, the god who was responsible for conveying to mortals the decisions pronounced by Zeus. The most important of all the oracles, that at the Delphi, delivered the messages with the intervention of Apollo, while the oldest Dodona, functioned with the assistance of Zeus.





**Title : Divine powers and soothsayers**  
When humans faced difficulties they were given powers to communicate with God, and strengthened their beliefs. Praying before God was a proper source. In ancient Greece this was done by soothsayers. They showed their powers by flashes of lightning, rolls of thunder and also gave final reading about sacrificial beasts. Palmistry was popular. Even they directly spread their own preachings without associated signs from God. Short period was of 'Divine-Mania'. God sent prophets to deliver his teachings. These practices were became cornerstone for next era. Every diviner was associated with one or more God. Apollo shared final output with mortals by Zeus. Most significance prognosticator was delphi who use intervention of Apollo.



For conveying information. Dodona  
was the oldest who worked with  
help of Zeus.

original word count:- 339

precise word count:- 126