

ART

Paper 6010/01

Drawing and/or Painting from Still Life

General comments

It was found that many more candidates opted for **Question 1** which asked for the opened up kit bag than **Question 2**; which was a composition of potted plants. In either case, both questions suited the candidates' abilities. They were apparently well versed in the Assessment Criteria and were able to produce work according to their understanding and abilities.

The usual range of materials had been employed for the work. Impasto paint and the use of colour pencil predominated with some watercolour paintings. There was much less lead pencil work seen and those using it should take more care in their choice of paper. Smooth, thin paper is often not helpful for pencil studies.

Most of the groups had been set up with care and it was good to see when the arrangement of the objects had allowed for interesting negative spaces to be fully exploited. Unfortunately some candidates seem to ignore the subtleties of creating form. Many attempted cramming individual objects on to too limited a field so that they ended up fighting each other for space. This can sometimes create oddities in composition where an object is in front of another and as such a base ellipse, for example, contradicts an upper ellipse. This was particularly evident in the case of plant pots.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

An open bag containing sports equipment and clothing, such as boots, gloves, balls, goggles and a bat or racket. Some of the items are placed in front of the bag.

This question suited the majority of candidates well, as it contained items which they were most familiar with. The very best work seen was when candidates used soft gradations of coloured pencil line in order to indicate the forms and different textures found in the objects. Contours were mostly explored to add interest and depth, and where the shapes; as in shoes and rackets, were meticulously drawn a tremendous flow was given to the overall design. Skilful manipulation of the negative shape not only added to pictorial interest but contributed to the creation of depth.

The weaker candidates encountered difficulties when attempting to place the group within the context of its background which could be made up of quite crudely drawn windows. Sometimes the work was minute in comparison to the paper used; it was just too small to be at all convincing that there was much knowledge involved. Colour could be used by these inexperienced candidates as a mere filling in exercise with little or no understanding for form or shape. Fortunately there were few who offered such a poor and bare knowledge of their subject.

Question 2

Three different plants, two of which are in decorative containers. The third is in the process of being potted. A trowel and compost are also included.

At best the work offered was of a high standard. There were exceptionally well composed and skilfully executed watercolours where there was superb understanding of colour combination and the freedom offered by this medium. Pots, plants, trowel and soil were used in such a way as to establish and pleasing relationships. The foliage, in particular, was used to make a variety of different interlacing shapes and patterns. This was particularly evident in some of the pencil studies.

Pots were mainly used without decoration. Decorative pots were seen at their best in the particular Centre; they were of a raised and moulded pattern design and had been carefully decorated with watercolour or pencil which made for a pleasing outcome.

The less able found candidates had difficulty with the drawing of the pot ellipses. Sometimes pots were decorated in stark colours and displayed poor shapes which overshadowed otherwise good pictures.

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Paper 6010/02

Drawing and/or Painting from Observation

General comments

Over half of all submissions were in response to **Question 2**. **Question 1** was the second most popular, but there were a substantial number of responses to **Question 3**. Very few candidates chose to respond to the subjects for working out of doors question, **Question 5**. There were no responses to **Question 4**.

The use of media was more varied and adventurous this session with a number of Centres introducing interesting combinations of graphite pencil, pencil crayon and inks with water colour washes. Candidates had also been offered more appropriate papers on which to carry out their studies. Consequently there were not so many examples, compared with previous sessions, of candidates struggling to create definition of forms and structures on inappropriate heavily textured paper.

Comments on specific questions

Natural or Man-made Objects

Question 1

*A padlock and chain **or** a door bolt **or** lock mechanism.*

The specimens studied varied between rusted padlocks and chains to shiny new brass sliding bolts or complex locks integrated with door knobs. This was a demanding question but candidates rose to the challenge and many high level responses were seen. Full consideration been given to the point of view adopted for observation and the interesting arrangements of the chain links around the locks. The surface qualities of metals were particularly well observed in conjunction with the structural points where the moving parts of the objects were connected.

Mid level achievements were generally successful in establishing the major forms and structures through light and shade and cast shadows in relation to the surrounding space, but often the finer details, such as the ellipses of countersunk screw holes, were not analysed from a viewpoint consistent with the rendering of the main structure. The linking of chains and keys on rings was usually well observed through linear definition, but the application of tone to render the forms tended to be repetitive and generalised. Candidates struggled with the subtle changes and variations caused by how the chosen objects were lying in space. Less successful outcomes showed difficulties with establishing the surrounding space, with chains shown in impossible mid-air positions and locks rendered like diagrams with an over-emphatic use of line and tone. In the weakest attempts the chains simply did not link together and the basic forms of locks were vague or shapeless.

Question 2

*Two vegetables **or** two fruits of contrasting structures, one of them sliced or peeled.*

This question was by far the most popular, leading to outcomes ranging from the very highest to the lowest levels of the mark range. A very wide range and combination of different specimens was chosen, but most candidates focused on fruits. While the studies from the majority of Centres showed a good understanding that purpose of Paper 2 is to observe and analyse in close detail the forms and structures of the chosen specimens, unfortunately some Centres had encouraged a 'still life' approach that would have been more appropriate to Paper 1. Centres should be reminded that it is not necessary to add any additional items, such as such as baskets, cloth, crockery and cutlery, to those stated in the question. Close analysis of the forms and structures of the chosen specimens, their immediate surrounding space and the space within the

specimens is all that is required. Additionally, a sense of directional light, reflected light and shadows can be considered a major part of the process of developing the study.

Over a quarter of all submissions achieved high levels of definition in the detailed structures of many vegetables, while rendering their forms to create a strong sense of volume and tactility. Among these were many excellent studies for which a highly accomplished use of media also conveyed rich surface qualities affected by directional and reflected light through the subtle use of tone and colour. In such able outcomes the angle adopted for observation, as well as the arrangement of a whole fruit or vegetable in relation to one that had been sliced or peeled, had been thoroughly considered to motivate an interest in sustained analysis.

Mid level responses achieved some success when rendering the forms of whole fruits or vegetables, but uncertainties were apparent in the definition of contours of the sliced sections. For example, a peeled banana placed in front of an apple or orange was far less well rendered, or had been observed from a viewpoint inconsistent with the whole fruit. It was apparent that in some Centres candidates had practised reproducing the forms of fruits, such as apples, rigorously beforehand which had led to a similar repetitive and formulaic rendering by all the candidates, rather than an individual observation of a specific specimen.

At the lower levels of achievement, although some sense of the forms of fruits or vegetables was apparent, the definition of edges and contours was often vague and fuzzy. The use of heavy outlines had been employed to emphasise shapes and the application of colour and tone was also limited by a lack of modulation and gradation with sudden jumps into over-contrasting shadows. In the weakest submissions basic shapes were flat and diagrammatic and very little else had been attempted in terms of sustaining observation.

Question 3

A length of coloured or decorated ribbon tied in a bow.

Although fewer submissions were received for this question, the majority of studies achieved competent to high levels of observation and analysis. All but a few candidates were successful in conveying the complex form of the knot, the shiny surface qualities of the material and spatial recessions enhanced by cast shadows. However, only the best responses showed a consideration of how the twisting and turning and long tail-ends of ribbon could be used rhythmically to enhance the surrounding space. In the most able studies the fine edges of the ribbon had also been acutely observed in terms of varying directions which sometimes caught the light.

Mid level achievements tended to place the specimen centrally on the paper, thus offering less interesting symmetrical arrangements with edges and contours rendered in terms of an unvarying outline. In the few weaker submissions seen the candidates lacked the ability to concentrate on the flowing directions of the loops of the bow and following the path of the ribbon within the knot was the main problem encountered.

Subjects for working out of doors or from a sheltered position

Question 4

Part of a building seen from above or below.

No submissions were received.

Question 5

*Some large potted plants placed beneath a window **or** outside the entrance to a building.*

Several studies were received, all of a competent to good standard. Candidates choosing this question were clearly interested in observing a variety of leaf shapes affected by their angles and projections in space. In most studies the ellipses of the pots and the structural points where leaves met stems were well observed. The better responses also related the potted plants to the ground plane and a door or window through good observation of cast shadows.

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Paper 6010/03

Drawing and/or Painting from a Living Person

General comments

Drawing or painting from the posed figure seems to bring out the best in all candidates who attempt it. Perhaps this was the best year ever concerning the overall high standard attained. Candidates had submitted work using charcoal, soft lead pencil, impasto colour and watercolours

Not many submissions fell below a high mark level and some could be awarded full marks. Most candidates opted for **Question 2** but there were also submissions for **Question 1** which concerned the study of the whole figure. All had regarded the instruction to relate the figure to its background and thus was able to reveal a sound knowledge of how to portray space and perspective. Without doubt each candidate, in their own way was able to give a strong feeling for aesthetic qualities. The combination of the expression of the personality of the sitter together with personal artistic qualities of the candidate was a pleasure to see.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The model sits astride a bench or a box with both hands, between the knees, resting on the front edge.

Candidates at one Centre in particular produced very knowledgeable studies which were carried out using soft lead pencil. Proportions were captured with exceptional skill, form was carefully modelled and every detail fully explored. The final analysis was made by the careful plotting of the space created by the feet and the seat on the ground plain perspective, and the depth emphasised by placing of strategic shadowing.

Question 2

*The model is seated at a small table in front of a wall or screen, on which paintings, prints or fabrics are displayed. Some art materials are placed on the table and the model holds a brush or a pencil in **one hand**.*

All candidates who chose this question included in their completed study, besides the head and shoulders, the hands working at the table, with brushes and water pots. This made for a very rewarding composition. The background of pictures or other wall hangings asked for in the question, in all work created a wonderful relationship with the portrait to make very complete pictures.

Close attention was always given to the modelling of form and often in quite individual ways. In all of the work where colour was used it had been chosen with care and for harmony. However, in some cases, there was a failure to establish a firm and accurate structure of the human figure.

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Paper 6010/04
Composition in Colour

General comments

The majority of candidates chose **Question 1**, *Water source*, **Question 2**, *Performers* and **Question 6**, *Abandoned*. There were fewer responses to **Question 3**, *Strange encounter*, **Question 4**, *Towering* and **Question 5**, *Customs and Rituals*.

Most compositions were carried out in water-based paints but many pastel and pencil crayons works were also seen. Over half the submissions achieved competent to high levels but a number fell below the standard for the lower grades of O Level.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Water source

An interesting range of interpretations were seen including many seascapes with figures, waterfalls, scenes of people fishing or working in villages with wells. Some of the best work succeeded in evoking atmosphere and spatial movement through thoughtful composition, colour and texture, especially in the seascapes and village studies. Mid level responses showed forms and spaces in a more generalised way and the compositions were generally less dynamic, but were still well planned and controlled with competent use of colour and mark-making. In the weaker submissions many of the compositions were flat, with shapes such as trees or figures ending awkwardly at the edges of, for example, the land or the sea with no spatial recession. In some cases little or no reference had been made to any real or observed landscape or natural forms such as trees.

Question 2

Performers

Most compositions featured groups of figures dancing or playing musical instruments, ranging from rock bands to ethnic musicians, although there were some single figures, including a snake-charmer. The best examples reflected the candidate's ability to draw figures and depict clothing and posture, as well as being able to group them together within a space or to show movement. In some cases the audience of the performers was depicted effectively, as a background to a street parade or as a foreground 'frame' through which the performers were viewed. In the mid level responses the compositions were more stylised or more rigidly arranged in parallel lines with less convincing figures, instruments or spaces. The less successful responses depended heavily on simple outlines of a single figure or figures lined up in rows and these often sat awkwardly within the pictorial space with no overlapping of elements.

Question 3

Strange encounter

This question attracted some surreal imagery including figures with computer game monsters, mutants or creatures meeting and, in most cases, fighting. The candidate's ability to draw figures and create the illusion of form was key to success in these responses, although the use of secondary sources did affect the compositions' personal qualities. Weaker responses lacked any compositional planning resulting in the figures floating on the white background.

Question 4*Towering*

In most cases architectural 'towerings' were depicted. In the best examples competence in linear and aerial perspective, along with a sensitive use of colour and texture, created atmosphere and a good deal of depth. In the compositions all of which emphasised the towering of the buildings. There were few less able responses to this question.

Question 5*Customs or rituals*

Included in the few responses seen were some very competent compositions depicting rituals around shrines or healing as well as ceremonial dress and artefacts, with good control over light to create both form and movement around the composition, as well as adding drama and mystery at the very highest levels. As figures often featured in response to this question, the candidates' preparatory investigation was essential for gathering information, and where this had been less thorough the resulting composition was less effective.

Question 6*Abandoned*

Some of the highest level responses were seen in response to this question with subject matter ranging from abandoned buildings, cars and settlements as well as objects and even people. Careful observation of surface texture and decay informed and inspired some of the best responses, showing how nature returned to cover up or destroy the abandoned place or house through mark making and tone as well as colour. Control over materials with the potential to describe surface and create a mood of decay and aging, was a key strength at this level. Mid level responses exploited a structured composition to create the sense of an order or place or form, lost or hidden from view and weaker level work suffered from a lack of information from preparatory investigation and poor compositional arrangement on the page.

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Paper 6010/05

Craft A – Design on Paper

General comments

Most candidates made good use of the examination time, although as is often the case, some did not make full use of preparation time, with some candidates apparently being satisfied with readily sourced secondary images with little evidence of personal input. Whilst preparation time was used to advantage in most cases, slick presentation often disguises, and is certainly no substitute for thorough visual analysis of the design problem.

The vast majority of entries this year displayed a greater imaginative approach, together with an appreciation of the development of the graphic image from initial concept through to a completed design. There appeared to be a discernible effort to forge and maintain an aesthetic link between the visual image and accompanying text.

There was less evidence of candidates interpreting the questions in a pictorial, rather than a graphic sense although there did appear to be some degree of over direction by some Centres leading to a formulaic approach by candidates. This is unfortunate, since the work often appeared to be lacking in imagination, creativity and individuality.

Stronger candidates showed an appreciation of colour and how contrasts can be used to good effect. Colour schemes were on the whole personal, but weaker candidates tended to be content with colour used straight from the tube. As with last year, there was some concern over the type of paper used, often inappropriate for the medium.

A few administrative errors were noted, these were mostly incorrect Centre numbers. Candidates should be reminded of the need to write their own names as clearly as possible and in preferably in block capital letters.

If any preparation work is to be submitted then it must be securely fastened to the back of the candidate's examination piece. Paper clips must not be used as they can easily become detached. Centres must not send candidates' preparation work in separate packages. Centres are also asked to check that the work is in candidate order and that it is thoroughly dry before it is despatched.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Front cover of a computer game - RUNAROUND

The very best candidates displayed evidence of sound teaching, possessing good graphic illustration skills and were able to capture and enhance appropriate imagery with great artistry. This skill, combined with the ability to select and produce appropriate lettering resulted in some very fine work indeed. The design qualities of lettering itself were identified as well as its function to communicate information.

The vast majority of candidates omitted to include the spine, as was required in the question. Candidates should be reminded to follow and adhere to the rubric. A question paper of this type aims to mimic the real world of design, where such an omission would be unacceptable.

Predictably, weaker candidates relied on tracings from secondary sources such as clip art or computer magazines. Little thought was given to how these tracings might fit within a chosen shape. Lettering was then added almost as an afterthought, creating somewhat disjointed compositions. Some candidates did attempt to develop designs from original drawings or personalise copied images with varying degrees of success.

Question 2

Poster design – SKATES AND SKATEBOARDS

This was the second most popular question and brought a variety of responses. There were a number of excellent scripts seen, such pieces succeeded in a number of ways. Firstly, there was a high visual impact arrived at through well-considered font style and size, together with dynamic, eye-catching colour schemes. In addition they displayed a real sense of movement suggested by the title added further visual impact.

In the mid range work, secondary sources, with little or no personal input were very common. A lack of figure drawing skills was the main weakness from candidates who were attempting compositions, which were perhaps far too adventurous for their ability range.

Text appeared to have been added as an afterthought in many cases. Even the simplest lettering skills, such as centring and alignment were noticeable by their absence.

Question 3

Logo design

This was the third most popular question, and it brought responses from across the whole ability range.

A high degree of draughtsmanship was evident amongst stronger candidates. Good letter formation skills and in particular, an ability to integrate lettering and imagery resulted in some excellent finished pieces.

Colour schemes were well considered and the best candidates often chose the simplest colour schemes to attract the eye.

The main weakness seen was the treatment of the subject in a highly pictorial way, often adding text as an afterthought. A significant number of candidates do not seem to understand what constitutes a logo.

Question 4

Repeat pattern

Some well- executed drawings were seen, which served as highly individual starting points for stronger candidates. With a few exceptions weaker candidates simply used secondary source images with little or no personal input. Centres should note that this question aims to determine the candidates' ability to construct an accurate grid. Where tracings were used, they more often than not had lost definition by the time a third or fourth motif had been produced. The most noticeable error was the way in which motifs bore no relation to the grid; random placing of motifs ruining otherwise highly promising designs through a lack of consideration of the negative shapes.

Colour schemes were usually effective, though many candidates might have benefited from considering colours other than those straight from the tube. Stronger candidates showed evidence of a variety of personally produced colour schemes and varying alternatives.

Question 5

Calligraphy

There were surprisingly few entries for this calligraphy question compared to previous years. Nevertheless, weaknesses of letter formation skills were sometimes balanced by excellent illustration. Some candidates simply relied on their normal everyday handwriting. Whilst they may indeed be very familiar with their own handwriting, Centres should be reminded of the need for formal training in calligraphic script as an art form in its own right.

Question 6

Packaging design

As was the case last year very few entries were seen for this package design question, so again it proved to be the least popular question. No high quality pieces were seen due to a lack of accurate grid constructions. In one case clever consideration was given to the way in which a design wraps around a box shape. Other candidates simply saw their idea as a flat one sided design.

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Paper 6010/06

Craft B – Design in 2D and 3D

General comments

Less than twenty candidates enter for this paper. The work included soapstone carvings, papier mâché, mosaic, ceramics, beadwork and models. Some of the work was mature, sophisticated and technically ambitious. The soapstone work showed a real understanding of 3D form and a high level of skill.

The papier mâché was excellent and showed a great feeling of life and movement but with very simplified details. Seed Mosaic was somewhat stilted in interpretation, but with good understanding of tone and with meticulous technique.

Workbooks were often minimal with little evidence of source material, research or development of the idea.