

ART AND DESIGN

Paper 6090/01 Observational Assignment
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Key Messages

- Some very good work was seen which was rewarded for the skill, investigation, development of ideas and creative responses demonstrated by the candidates.
- Lower ability submissions were often characterised by a lack of research and development of ideas.
- Stronger submissions observed complex structures and successfully realised spatial representation and analysed forms.

General Comments

This session saw submissions produced across a wide range of abilities. Some very good work was seen which was rewarded for the skill, investigation, development of ideas and creative responses demonstrated by the candidate. Candidates presented work in a range of media including oil paint, oil pastel, pencil and crayon. The most successful scripts demonstrated mastery of the chosen media and technique. Some lower range scripts missed opportunities to be rewarded due to little or no evidence of research and development of ideas through process. Some delightful work was seen where candidates had taken the opportunity to embrace the potential of the questions and provide creative and refreshing responses. In such scripts particular attention had been paid to assessment strand AO3 where candidates are required to express ideas visually. Commendable visual language skills were in evidence across the questions. **Questions 1, 4 and 5** were attempted across the entire submission. **Questions 2 and 3** were attempted by few candidates and **Question 6** attracted very few scripts. The most popular question was number **5**. **Question 4** was the next most popular, followed by **Questions 1 and 3**. Responses were seen across the ability range for **Questions 1 and 5**.

Very few scripts were seen for **Question 2**. The more successful candidates continue to use media which is appropriate to the task. There was a preference for dry media although some candidates used paint effectively. There was some impressive tonal work which successfully employed skilful shading techniques. Stronger candidates observed complex structures and successfully realised spatial representation and analysed forms. Other successful candidates used oil pastels to very good effect. Some compelling personal qualities were in evidence from candidates who showed tenacity in observing the object(s) before them. This work was a credit to these candidates and was rewarded appropriately.

Question 1 Nuts and Bolts

This was the third most popular question attracting responses across the range. This question presented the straightforward challenge of depicting circular or often hexagonal solids in space. The interior and exterior threads were also a challenge unique to this question. The reliability of this depiction was a significant factor among successful responses to this question. This challenge was met very well in some instances. These scripts contained both the shape and form of the groove to depict convincing spiral threads. However, the artists chosen for research were often not seen to be appropriate. Artist research is most useful when it is consistent with the subject of the question. Looking at the work of other artists is often of genuine value. However, the best use of the candidates' time would be directed towards an understanding of method or approach, and some insight into the subject provided by the artist studied. Candidates should be able to demonstrate how such study has informed their work. Some innovative approaches and colourful work provided creative and unexpected responses to this question.

Question 2 A Figure Seen in a Mirror

Very few scripts were seen for this question. No discernible pattern emerged.

Question 3 A Precious Object

This was the fourth most popular question and few scripts were seen. The challenge of this question was to convey in what way a physical object is precious. A variety of objects were presented including watches, perfume bottles and jewellery. Candidates frequently sought to convey the preciousness using a variety of devices. These included some kind of container, a close focus on substance and material, and in some cases, a faithful depiction of branding and packaging. However, where these devices were used without a reliable sense of shape or form, scripts risked losing a sense of the preciousness of the object. In stronger scripts candidates made careful and appropriate choices of materials. Colour was often well chosen for gems and precious metals, tone was well used for transparent or reflective objects, and appropriate tools were used to depict labels or lettering.

Question 4 Broken Cups or Mugs

This was the second most popular question. It was noted with concern that some scripts included work by the teacher as exemplar material. This approach is not satisfactory as it may risk a conflict of interest and risk confusion over authorship. The teacher work was not consistently labeled in such scripts. Some good and competent work was also seen. Many lower scoring scripts had marks missed opportunities to provide evidence for AO1, AO2 and AO3. Among such scripts recording, investigating, developing and communicating ideas were seen to be neglected. Candidates were not rewarded for an overreliance on images found on the internet. Among higher scoring scripts candidates recognised the value of first-hand observation during the initial stage of the assignment. The challenge of this question was to depict circular objects with curved surfaces which were interrupted by breaks. Some candidates also recognised the opportunity to use the irregular shape of a break to reinforce the regular shape of the object. Some good work was seen where candidates carefully described the texture and surface of the break in contrast to the texture and surface of the cup or mug. These efforts were rewarded where scripts presented a convincing sense of the material fragility of the object.

Question 5 Shopping Bag with Fruit and Vegetables

This was the most popular question and a wide range of responses were seen. Among weaker scripts the shopping bag was seen to be neglected in favor of the contents. In doing so candidates were seen to have missed an opportunity to more clearly describe the shape of the fruit and vegetables in contrast to the bag. Some examples of very good work were also seen. The challenge of this question was to be able to combine the larger single form of the shopping bag with the individual forms of the fruit and vegetables. Composition was key to the success of this question and the stronger candidates understood it well and experimented with alternative arrangements and projections. At the higher end, lighting sources and shadows were considered as the candidates sought to describe form and surface. Some scripts included fruit and vegetables which were cut or sliced. Candidates employed this device to explore the variety of shapes and forms among the fruit and vegetables used. This approach was also used to expose the range of surfaces and textures. Photography was used alongside first-hand observation to inform the progress of the work in some scripts. Photographs alone are not seen to be sufficient to attract high marks in AO1. However, some candidates recognised the particular characteristics of the objects which were revealed by the camera. In such scripts candidates carefully selected the materials which combined effectively to simultaneously describe colour, surface and texture.

Question 6 Weathered Buildings

Too few scripts were seen for this question to detect a pattern.

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Paper 6090/02 Interpretative Assignment

Very few entries were seen for this paper and it may be that candidates are not confident to take their ideas into this pathway and feel more secure with the design paper. The interpretative paper is an opportunity for candidates to explore abstraction or take a more 'fine art' or open ended approach to their study. The question paper is intended to be a starting point for further development. Overall little development of ideas was seen and candidates produced fairly superficial interpretations of the questions.

It was felt in some cases that candidates had produced a still life study, for example Heat and Light elicited several studies of cooking pots which is acceptable but the opportunities were lost for research and development around the theme during the preparatory period. It would be expected that candidates might start their research with some observational studies and then develop their ideas into a more personal response. This could include demonstrating a style and flair with media or materials, exploring different papers, backgrounds, layout or media. Some level of visual language should be evident with candidates communicating feeling and meaning through their use of mark making, brushstrokes, colour or imagery. Works do not solely need to be painting and drawing and candidates should be encouraged to explore the question paper in other curriculum areas. This could include 2D works such as photography or illustration but it could also include fibre art, sculpture, installation, moving image. This is an opportunity to be expressive and creative where the candidate is confident, it is not testing accuracy of a still life in the way that the previous paper 2 for the 6010 O Level Art syllabus would have done.

Candidates are encouraged to make full use of the preparatory period to research and develop their ideas. The requirement is a minimum of two weeks but it can be longer as the question paper is available in advance. It was felt in some cases that candidates may have used their preparatory period focussing on paper one and then not had sufficient time to develop their ideas or research their themes for paper 2.

The strengths seen in the submissions were often concerned with control of media and technical skills. There was reference to research but not always shown on the supporting studies. Sources should always be credited and candidates should be encouraged to use their own drawings and photographs as first-hand research and then to broaden their investigations to include a range of secondary sources. These should be related to the theme and not purely a page of artist research which is unrelated and does not give meaning to the final works. In weaker submissions the supporting studies mainly consisted of four versions of the final piece. In these cases candidates missed opportunities to show how their ideas had developed, where their research had taken them and how they had used their personal skills and individual style to put together an individual response. It was felt that they could have been working from a photograph and while technical skills were often strong, it was not in keeping with the new syllabus.

The most popular question was Heat and Light then Lost, less so was Elliptical and joint least popular were Growing Old and Turning Point. Candidates chose the questions with a more obvious starting point and shied away from the more open ended and less tangible themes.

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Paper 6090/03 Design Assignment

Key Messages

- Candidates made commendable attempts to recognise the design challenges posed by the paper.
- Lower scoring scripts lacked the degree of skill required to provide a sufficiently effective and individual response.
- The best work was characterised by a confident command of formal elements and which demonstrated how candidates made excellent use of the properties of the materials they had selected.

General Comments

Some delightful and creative responses to the Design Assignment were seen. Candidates made commendable attempts to recognise the design challenges posed by the paper. Many candidates however, opted for questions with a Graphic Design character. Pattern designs and book cover and logo designs were the most popular responses to the paper. Most questions were attempted this session except **Question 6** which attracted no responses. The most popular question was number **1**. **Question 2b** was the next most popular, followed by **Questions 3, 2a** and **4** respectively. The least popular question was number **5**. A broad range of work was seen across questions and among answers to individual questions.

Among the higher level scripts most candidates answered **Questions 1** and **3** and made full use of the preparatory period to gather research and develop their ideas. Relatively few scripts were seen for **Question 5**. Few scripts were seen to fully explore the opportunity to investigate and research from sources. The scripts that were in the lower band typically used colouring pencils in a rudimentary way. This was seen to restrict the potential exploration of materials and limited the opportunity to demonstrate creative and technical ability. The scripts that were awarded in the higher band demonstrated enthusiastic and creative manipulation of media and ideas, and were seen to be willing to take risks in the earlier stages of the assignment. Some final responses were inconsistently satisfactory across scripts. At the lower end candidates produced some very weak outcomes that were not seen to have progressed from the first stages of the assignment. At the higher end candidates clearly grasped the notion of a developed assignment with a resolved conclusion. The more successful candidates were able to exploit a personal and creative response to their chosen question. The best work was characterised by a confident command of formal elements and which demonstrated how candidates made excellent use of the properties of the materials they had selected to realise the potential of the chosen question.

Question 1 Logo for new travel company called Spirit of Adventure

This was the most popular question by far. Among these, the more successful scripts combined expressive use of formal elements with an ability to communicate ideas and feelings in a convincing and original way. This question inspired some satisfactory work and in some cases some good work. The Spirit of Adventure was often communicated through the use of sporting images or images of dynamic outdoor activities like climbing or canoeing. In other scripts candidates used visual devices such as ships and aircraft to indicate scale and distances involved in the idea of adventure. The challenge of this question was to condense the broad and varied notion of adventure into a single motif with enough simplicity to communicate and enough complexity to excite and engage viewers. Some of the stronger scripts depicted people in action activities in black silhouette. The success of these works was seen in the way in which the dramatic shapes of the silhouette contrasted and complimented the simpler shapes of the logo depicted in colour. Good levels of skill were seen in these scripts. Lower scoring scripts were not seen to handle the selected media with confidence. These scripts lacked the degree of skill required to provide a sufficiently effective and individual response.

Question 2a Love Letters

This was the fourth most popular question and relatively few scripts were seen. Centres may have potentially misinterpreted this question. The question required candidates to design a layout for the words **Love Letters** rather than a decorative arrangement related to romance. The design of a *love letter* was not required. Candidates were invited to design letterforms using a range of sources. However, this aspect of the question was often neglected. In addition, many Centres did not submit colour and black and white designs as required in the question. Such potential misinterpretation risks limiting the creative potential of the question and subsequently the creative opportunities open to candidates. Most scripts displayed some limited recording, development of ideas and aesthetic judgements. Weaker scripts were characterised by a lack of development and consideration to layout and form. Sometimes candidates did show a little ability in experimentation and critical thinking. Although such work may be rewarded in assessment strands AO4 and AO5, marks tended to be frustrated in other strands due to insufficient activity in investigation, exploration and organisation of visual elements. The challenge of this question was to design both the forms and the layout of individual letters (letterforms). This is a typography activity. Centres will wish to reflect on the elements of typography which include readability, letter (or font) design, line and letter spacing. These elements can be used as expressive visual language and in visually stimulating compositions. Very few responses were seen in the mid or higher range for this question.

Question 2b Book Jacket – Precious Cargo

This was the second most popular question with responses seen across a wide ability range. Some candidates depicted images from nautical adventures with some fair attempts to represent ships, for example. Other scripts illustrated objects such as precious stones or sacred items. Sometimes candidates included a human figure carrying a trunk or with a child or friend. Some landscape illustrations were also seen this year which sought to refer to the idea of a cargo on a journey. This question presented the challenge of applying an idea inspired by the question to a flat surface that will become the three dimensional surround of a book. Candidates were seen to be both inspired and frustrated by this opportunity. Often candidates only paid partial attention to the way that a book cover should be designed as a whole piece. The front cover, spine and back cover should be realised as equally significant elements. This approach to the design process allows for the ways books are typically stored or displayed. This question also presented a unique opportunity to combine images and text (typography). This is an important design activity. Candidates who attempted to present image and text layouts were rewarded appropriately in AO3. Many scripts however, focused on the interpretation of the title of the question and paid less attention to the layout of the whole cover. Although such work may be rewarded in the Personal and Creative Response strand, marks tended to be frustrated elsewhere. The undoubtedly interesting ideas the candidates brought to this question could be improved by the use of expressive visual language and a visually stimulating and consistent composition.

Question 3 Repeat Pattern for Fabric on a Train

This was the third most popular question. This question attracted very few responses at the higher end. However, some imaginative responses were seen where candidates often relied on their ability to control and command materials, to produce some persuasive work. Although individual examples of very good work were seen, most marks were awarded towards the lower end of the mark range. Such scripts were not seen to make expressive use of visual elements such as line, tone, colour and texture, in a convincing combination. Scripts at the lower end were seen to be limited by the development of ideas, resulting in somewhat cautious and unassuming designs. Whilst such works may attract marks for the organisation of visual elements, ideas were often not sufficiently supported by the expressive use of visual language which frustrated making at the higher end. The challenge of this question was to create a repeat pattern. This required candidates to design a core motif which could be inspired by the subject of the question, to arrange the motif (and any other visual devices) in a way that is appropriate for the question and to make sure that the motifs link in such a way that the pattern is both connected and repeated. Higher scoring scripts often used secondary research effectively, with some making use of cultural and contextual references to inform their geometric pattern designs. In addition, the best scripts showed imagination and individuality and tended towards risk taking within the process of exploration and development of ideas.

Question 4 Full Length Costume based on A Night at The Opera

This was the fifth most popular question and few scripts were seen. Examples of both very limited and good work were seen. Some mixed media work was submitted for this question. Candidates combined materials to make connections across the surface of the scripts to create visual references to the theatrical nature of the question. The challenge of this question was to develop costume designs based on ideas suggested by the question or by elements of the question such as Opera or Night. This required candidates to practically apply ideas to garments rather than to create a visually stimulating composition alone. Whilst candidates demonstrated a fair grasp of media and materials, higher marks would be attracted by a more careful deployment of individual visual elements and a more convincing connection between them. Many scripts demonstrated a limited exploration of initial ideas and their application to clothing. Often a disproportionate amount of attention was given to the final garment illustration. Some scripts displayed a range of clothing and accessories and consideration was given to the presentation of the designs.

Question 5 Wall Hanging based on the theme Best Day Ever

This was the least popular question. Too few scripts were seen to determine a pattern.

Question 6 Green Bike Cycle Park

No responses were received for this question.