

ART

Paper 6010/01

Drawing and/or Painting from Still Life

Key messages

- In order to achieve higher marks, candidates should remain within the spirit of this paper and work from direct observation. Working from direct observation is crucial in order to demonstrate the skills being assessed.
- Candidates should use a medium with which they are familiar, rather than try to be adventurous in the examination with a material with which they have had little or no experience. Experimentation should perhaps be left to class work or early in the preparation stages.

General comments

The two questions attracted an almost equal number of entries and the standards achieved on both questions were balanced. The questions provided opportunity for a personal approach to technique, whether this was through the study of man-made or natural objects.

The question paper indicates that the background should be considered as part of the arrangement. A significant number of candidates did not pay attention to this. By including the background, the still life group can be more easily observed in space by the candidate when producing the final piece, and by the Examiner when assessing the final outcome for spatial awareness as well as links to composition.

Compositional skills can be acquired through the study, investigation and analysis of the work of other artists. Working on an appropriate and familiar scale is also important in order to test the candidate's best ability.

The majority of work was produced using liquid colour, but dry pastel and pencil crayon was also seen. As was the case in the November session, candidates should be reminded that their name, Centre number and candidate number should be in the top right hand corner of their examination piece. It is vital that name labels are self-adhesive or secured with glue. Staples may be acceptable if glue is not available. Paper clips alone must not be used as they can easily become detached. If protective tissue/tracing paper is thought necessary to protect delicate pastel work, then the name label should not be attached to this, but should remain on the examination piece itself.

Preparation work should not be included, and should not be sent to Cambridge.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1: Chopped and sawn pieces of wood, some of which have been tied into a bundle, together with a saw or axe.

Some excellent graphite pencil work was seen using the full range of tones available. This was particularly noticeable where an appropriate pencil grade such as a 4B or 6B was used.

Where sawn wood was depicted, some candidates found difficulty with linear perspective. Such a skill is arrived at via continued practice. An understanding of basic two point perspective is necessary to achieve higher marks in a question like this.

The depiction of reflective metal surfaces such as those that might be observed on a saw blade was well done, especially when seen in contrast to the flat matt surface of sawn or planed wood. Interesting surfaces were also well depicted on sawn or chopped tree trunks. Gnarled and twisted branch forms were also well observed.

Fewer well painted examples were seen. In order to achieve higher marks, the subtleties of colour within a narrow, yet sensitive, range of colours should be well practised. Sensitivity towards colour mixing is essential. Careful consideration should take place before using colours straight from the tube.

Question 2: A basket containing a variety of flowers as if they had just been picked from the garden. Secateurs and a pair of gardening gloves are arranged in front of the basket.

Strong lighting such as from a window or a strategically placed spotlight often helped to accentuate tonal ranges and silhouette, which to some extent aided depth.

There were some excellent examples where candidates continued with careful observation throughout the examination, avoiding a repetitive approach to flowers and their petals, with each individual flower being carefully considered. As with **Question 1**, the reflective qualities of metal were well observed and interpreted by many. In order to attain higher marks, candidates should be advised to consider the way in which the colour of an object can, under certain light conditions, affect the perceived colour of a neighbouring object, either through the sheer strength of the colour of one, or the way in which a shadow can be cast across an adjacent object.

Some candidates had difficulty depicting the gloves; the main strengths lay in the portrayal of the flowers and the secateurs.

The basket was often depicted in a sketchy way, but sometimes to good effect. Some candidates perhaps spent too much time on the intricacies of a woven basket, leaving far too little time for the rest of the composition. Marks will not be deducted if a final piece is not complete, but candidates should be advised of the need to manage their time and to try and show a range of skills and effects rather than to concentrate disproportionately on a single narrow aspect such as the weave of a basket.

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Paper 6010/02

Drawing and/or Painting from Observation

Key messages

- This paper requires an analytical approach to observational drawing and painting. The form, space and structure of the objects in the study are as important as the colour and texture. Proportions should be accurate; there should be fine detail rather than vagueness or blurring.
- Candidates should consider the relationship of the items in the composition and their positioning on the page.

General comments

The variety of media employed included dry materials such as pencil, pen, charcoal and pastels, and wet media such as gouache and watercolour. Candidates generally chose their medium and technique well. Many chose to work with traditional observational study materials such as pencils and watercolour. In many cases these media were used skilfully to produce accurate, interesting and well formed images. In some cases charcoal was used, but care must be taken as this can smudge during transit. There were many colourful, vibrant and carefully rendered drawings using oil pastel. In a few cases candidates successfully used pen and ink with careful mark-making and cross-hatching.

There were several examples of exquisite paintings using watercolour or gouache, where candidates conveyed the forms and the qualities of the material well. There were many well executed pencil drawings where candidates described the tone and form accurately and captured the subtle details of their chosen study. Candidates understood the form of the selected objects and showed that they were able to produce a sophisticated final composition. Better work showed great technical ability with skilful rendering of form and perspective.

In general, pieces were composed well and there was a clear sense of depth in the image. For **Question 1**, higher achieving candidates described the texture of the materials well. For **Question 2**, some candidates managed to show the reflection accurately and explored the subtleties of colour and detail in the flower head. In some cases candidates worked on paper larger than A2 size, with mixed results. Some were able to create a larger, more detailed, piece whereas others produced a small image with a great deal of white paper around it. There were very few responses to the questions for working out-of-doors or from a sheltered position, with the vast majority of candidates choosing to work from direct observation of small scale objects.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1: A pair of shoes or boots on a patterned rug.

This was by far the most popular question. Media was varied and there were some extremely skilled pencil drawings and several examples of well produced oil pastel work in addition to watercolour pieces.

Candidates achieving higher grades produced well composed images with sensitive use of colour. Images of the shoes or boots had accurate proportions and a sense of depth and volume. Candidates chose their media well. In most cases candidates reproduced the patterned rug and background effectively to give the shoes or boots a context and scale. They communicated the idiosyncrasies of the selected shoes or boots successfully, for example the softness of the material. They also managed to show the shape of the owner's foot and the structure of the shoes or boots.

In the mid-range, examples tended to have flatter, solid blocks of colour and less convincing depth and form. Candidates should be encouraged to consider the positioning of the items and their relationship to each other. In a few cases the shoes lacked clarity of form and were small in relation to the page.

Question 2: A flower head with stem, lying on a mirrored surface.

This was the second most popular choice. Candidates achieving mid to high mark bands were able to render the form of the petals and leaves convincingly and also gave a sense of space and reflection in their work. In some cases there was a real sense of depth to the image, with the relationship between the flower, the surface and the reflection being skilfully communicated. Some candidates sought out interesting or challenging flowers to draw and paint, or an ornate or interesting mirror to compliment the flower. Many responses to this question showed accurate and sensitive colour mixing for the delicacy of the petals and the tones in the leaves and stem. Almost all candidates completed a full colour study, with only a very few examples in pencil tones. Candidates wishing to use watercolour should be encouraged to work in a series of washes to build up colour to portray form, otherwise the image can seem flat and translucent. There were several examples using pastel which managed to capture the colour and texture of the flowers well, however the fine detail needed for this question can be challenging to portray with this medium.

Candidates should always consider composition; those attaining the mid to high mark-bands located the image well on the paper to draw the viewer's eye to the form, using the full size of the paper to their advantage. In some of the more skilfully painted responses, brushstrokes were sensitively used with fine painted detailing and longer, looser brushstrokes to build up layers of colour or to describe light and reflection.

Question 3: A pen and folded sheet of writing paper on a stamped envelope with a crumpled piece of paper.

This was the third most popular question and drew a range of personal responses. Some candidates really explored the composition to the best of their ability, thinking about of the relationship between the items on the page. Careful consideration was given to the scale and proportion of the items; for example the paper would fit inside the envelope, and the pen appeared realistic. The very best candidates used appropriate paper for their selected media. There was a good understanding of space and structure. They were able to use perspective drawing in this question to demonstrate the folded paper and envelope on flat planes. Many candidates found it challenging to render the crumpled piece of paper, but there were several beautiful examples showing the lines on the paper and discarded letters complete with text. In some of the stronger examples candidates rendered the stamp and postmark with fine accurate details. They demonstrated extremely sophisticated brushwork or pencil work in detailing the stamp and postmark, in contrast to the skills needed to portray light and shade for the paper and envelope. Where text was used it was in proportion to the paper on which it was depicted.

Many of the mid to high mark band pieces used light and shadow effectively in the composition to give a feeling of space and weight to the objects. Media used included pencil, pen and ink, coloured pencils, watercolour and gouache. There were a few responses in oil pastel but it can be difficult to render straight lines in pastel and the medium used should always be appropriate to the selected question.

Question 4: A refuse bin in its setting. A few other discarded items have been put out for collection beside the bin.

There were too few responses seen to provide a report for this question.

Question 5: A view through an open door to a garden.

There were very few responses to this question. Candidates appeared to be working from imagination and not observation. They did not always fully consider the perspective drawing for the doorway. Candidates should consider how the open doorway would frame the image and how the perspective lines would draw the viewer's eye towards the central focal point of the study. Instead of gentle colourful mark making, there should be an accurate depiction of the view into the garden and foliage should be discernable. Some candidates produced an appealing painting but would have done better to include the level of fine detailed work seen in responses to other questions.

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Paper 6010/04
Composition in Colour

Key message

- Candidates should endeavour to exploit the full potential of their chosen medium.

General Comments

A broad range of work was seen across questions. In the best work, the varying properties of the materials used were exploited effectively, along with an excellent command of formal elements. The most popular question was **Question 1**. **Question 6** was the next most popular, followed by **Questions 2** and **4** equally, and then **Question 5**. The least popular question was **Question 3**.

Question 1: At the end of the day

This was by far the most popular question. This question saw the frequent use of figures in a landscape. Candidates sought to use this motif to convey notions of the onset of night simultaneously with a putting down of work. Other work which did not use the human figure relied more on mood and atmosphere. This made more technical demands on candidates. Some candidates associated the question with a romantic theme. Here, greater success would be achieved by avoiding simply copying secondary sources. In many instances, work of imagination or fantasy was executed well with candidates' skills supporting strong ideas. Where candidates purposefully deployed the properties of their chosen medium to inform their work this often added a dynamic element to the work. Some candidates submitted allegorical work which was referenced to the end of life or the running out of time. This work succeeded in an illustrational style when skills and ideas were equally balanced. Candidates who chose to depict the close of play at a sports event had to apply themselves to the figure, light and shade, fabrics and materials, details of equipment, surfaces and textures, and mood and atmosphere. As in **Questions 3** and **6**, some complex textures were effectively rendered by well chosen use of media and expressive use of their plasticity. This approach allowed candidates to retain control of the pictorial space, picture surface, colour and tone, and engage in dynamic and responsive drawing.

Question 2: Wrapped

Responses to this question were often concerned with clothing. Abstract qualities of fabrics and folds informed the work. The human form revealed within the wrapping led to good marks in the interpretation strand. Some candidates who moved away from more obvious interpretations did well in the personal qualities strand. Oblique references to the Surrealists inspired work based on dreams. Christmas themes were handled confidently, with the graphic qualities of presents and decorations represented. Some still life work represented the qualities of peel and skins expressively and candidates displayed a good level of technical skill in describing layers. Where candidates chose to show the human form in various crouching poses and in romantic interpretations, they faced challenges in drawing the figure. Any weaknesses seen here may have been due in part to the quality of secondary sources. Some examples of mixed media work and low relief added to a sense of "wrapped". Answers based on high tech themes should be supported by appropriate choice of media.

Question 3: Working as a team

Frequently, answers to this question were inspired by insect activity. Work was based on observation of bees and nests or hive patterns. Repetition rather than team work was found in some scripts and candidates would have done better to avoid replication in favour of collaboration. Groups of figures sharing tasks proved to be ambitious responses to the question. Candidates made significant efforts to render believable spaces and realize human forms in complex poses. Higher marks could have been awarded if such works managed to balance ambition with the candidate's ability. Historical references made for interesting compositions but were sometimes not supported by the appropriate use of materials. Some complex figure arrangements in landscapes were seen. These were often handled very well and light and shade was described with confidence. Candidates used the inherent textural qualities to consolidate the picture and differentiate distance. Work which illustrated more literal interpretations of the question tended to be less successful.

Question 4: Confusion

Some interesting work inspired by urban networks and the complexities of intersections were seen. Other scripts contained more abstract interpretations which were based on calligraphy and typography. However, the inherent order of the letter forms frustrated a sense of disorder or confusion. Mirror images and contrasting ideas made technical demands which candidates found challenging. Other work combined letter forms with expressive brushwork and confident rendering of facial expression. This often resulted in a coherent image of confusion. There was evidence of an acknowledgment of the work of the Surrealists. Candidates had clearly benefited from this exposure and produced sophisticated work. Some work was reminiscent of the drawings of Escher. Other candidates used puzzles and games to frame answers to this question. Work based on chess, playing cards, jigsaw puzzles and scrabble provided engaging responses. Here candidates had made good choices of materials. Scenes of urban emergencies made demands on candidates as they sought to bring together human forms, urban landscapes and perspectives, dynamic action and intense colour and tone. Such ambitious work would require strategic preparation. Amongst the most successful works were those in which the properties of materials were fully exploited.

Question 5: Hand made

Some strong examples of still lifes and of people at work attracted higher marks. Other responses where objects were examined close-up presented challenges for the skills of candidates with many demonstrating command of tone and colour. Elsewhere marks were potentially frustrated by a lack of understanding of how light and shade reveal objects. Some hand made objects like carvings or puppets gave responses to this question an intriguing quality. Some images of carpets and rich fabrics allowed candidates to use fluid and saturated colour, however many candidates sought to draw the patterns and motifs found in these subjects which limited the outcome. Where candidates recognised the inherent visual potential of arrangements of objects, vibrant responses to the question were evident.

Question 6: Light and shade

This question inspired some abstract work which was competently handled. Candidates demonstrated a good command of formal elements and control of materials. Some depictions of interiors presented challenges and the choice of materials and process could have been more carefully considered. The question inspired some very personal and imaginative work which focused on contemplation and illumination. Candidates are encouraged not to forsake representations of light in favour of colour and texture. Examples of complex and detailed landscape painting brought another dimension to the question. These responses were rewarded for exploitation of the transparent and opaque properties of materials. Some high quality figure drawing, still life work and interior scenes were submitted. Exposure during class time to the work of other artists was evident. There were some very technically accomplished renderings of transparent and reflective surfaces with intelligent understanding of shadows. In some mixed media work, candidates successfully experimented with materials to explore the properties of light and shade. This approach was used in particular to describe imaginary themes. Where fabrics or flesh became the main subject, the best work provided a synthesis of pattern, textures and form, translated through the properties of well chosen media. Many candidates worked with reflections and intense light. Some of the highest scoring scripts used the different properties of materials, combined with an excellent command of formal elements, to realise light of both intensity and subtlety.

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Paper 6010/06
Craft B Coursework

There were insufficient entries for this component for us to be able to produce a report.