



General Certificate of Education

History of Art 1251

HART2 Themes in History of Art

Report on the Examination

2009 examination - June series

This Report on the Examination uses the [new numbering system](#)

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HART2 Themes in History of Art

General

All six questions were attempted. Questions 1 and 3 were most popular, and Question 5 and 6 were least popular.

Rough work was common and usefully summarised and refined a plan or series of relevant points to be discussed. Very occasionally, a lengthy plan, involving continuous prose, was employed which is a time-consuming activity and perhaps should be avoided.

In some cases, candidates ran out of time, completing only two questions, or merely starting the third. Time management is clearly an important issue.

Many candidates did not fill in the numbers of the questions attempted on the cover of their answer booklets. Very occasionally, the boxes on the front cover of the answer booklet were not completed in full. It would be helpful if invigilators could remind candidates to do this.

Drawings or illustrations were occasionally added to answers but only rarely added anything of merit to the discussion.

Candidates generally commanded a good level of English, organised information logically, and used appropriate terminology accurately. Less able candidates, however, proved deficient in these areas; there was also a tendency to repeat observations and arguments in less successful answers.

The majority of responses demonstrated sound teaching and learning. However, a minority of candidates did not accurately or recognisably identify works of art and/or artists. Misinformation was fairly common, regarding titles of works, dates, authors and historical facts.

Rarely, a candidate used the same example in two questions, and therefore had it ruled out as inappropriate, forfeiting 50% of the available marks. The information on the front of the paper instructs candidates not to do this.

The time period of the unit, 500 BC-2000 AD, was scrupulously enforced by examiners. This meant that examples outside this period were disallowed, such as Archaic Kouros and contemporary works post 2000. Very occasionally non-Western buildings and artworks were discussed (eg the great pyramid of Giza, the stone figures of Easter Island). Centres should take care to ensure that the material taught is appropriate to the specification.

It was evident in a significant number of cases that candidates had not read the question with understanding, and had merely read the thematic descriptor above the question.

Subjects and genres

Question 01

Analyse the differences **and** similarities between **two** sculptures which are of the **same** subject or genre.

On the whole, this question was well answered, with discussion of Michelangelo's and Donatello's (occasionally, Verrocchio's and Bernini's) David frequent, although a very wide range of sculptures was discussed. In some instances, the similarities and differences were not adequately addressed, and answers read as a more or less well-informed catalogue of each chosen example, without focused engagement with the question. Encouragingly, discussion was often wide-ranging and illuminating, broaching and developing such areas as iconography, composition, use of material(s) and style. There was a significant number of disparate pairings, but the mark scheme allowed for the broadest interpretation of subject and genre.

Materials, techniques and processes

Question 02

Comment on how different techniques and processes affect the appearance of **two** buildings.

There were some sound responses to this question and interesting examples were used. Some candidates, however, were able to describe two buildings in some detail, but were not able to discuss techniques and processes, while, more rarely, these processes were adequately explained but their effect on the building's appearance was neglected or undeveloped.

Form and Style

Question 03

Analyse the visual characteristics of **two** paintings that each illustrate **different** stylistic approaches.

Candidates were able to select from a wide range of examples, and this question was generally well answered, with some memorable and ambitious contrasts. A significant number of responses became sidetracked by iconography and interpretation and hence responded less relevantly and fully to a discussion of painting style. Less successful answers gave a superficial description, while others did not understand the word 'stylistic'.

Historical and social contexts

Question 04

Discuss how events in history are interpreted in **two** works of art, each by a **different** artist.

The broadest acceptance of 'events in history' was applied. Many nineteenth century 'social' examples were discussed (eg Renoir's Bal du Moulin de la Galette, Courbet's Stonebreakers, Monet's Gare St Lazare (although it was not always clear which example of this work was being analysed) and Manet's Olympia): these were acceptable as long as the historical context was addressed. Works dealing with epochal or major events in history were more commonly chosen, and often discussed in confident, detailed and illuminating ways. There was a variable degree of accuracy and depth in enunciating the historical facts of such events, and also a strong contrast between those answers that investigated the interpretation of these events through art and those answers which did not.

Patronage

Question 05

Discuss how patronage contributed to the appearance **and** to the meaning of **two** buildings.

This question, less popular than most, elicited sound responses, with most candidates aware of the role of the patron(s) of their chosen examples, and the most successful answers displayed sensitivity to the impact on appearance and to the meaning of such patronage.

Gender, nationality and ethnicity

Question 06

Illustrate how **two** works of art **or** architecture engage with ethnicity **and/or** nationality.

Rarely attempted, but candidates who chose this question provided some excellent answers. Many candidates failed to relate their examples relevantly to the question or only partially

succeeded in illustrating an engagement with nationality and/or ethnicity. Concepts of nationality and/or ethnicity sometimes received only cursory and superficial attention, and it was evident that some candidates had not sufficiently understood the implications of this theme for the study of art.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.