



General Certificate of Education

History of Art 2250

HART4

Investigation and Interpretation (2)

Report on the Examination

2010 examination - June series

Further copies of this Report are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2010 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 3644723) and a registered charity (registered charity number 1073334). Registered address: AQA, Devas Street, Manchester M15 6EX.

HART4

General Comments

This first year of examination at A2 showed that a wide variety of strategies for the delivery of the specification had been used. While some centres appeared to retain the core of their material from the A2 options of the previous specification, others adopted a broader approach. Overall, the examiners were very impressed by the invention and industry shown by both teaching staff and by candidates, although there were isolated instances where centres seemed not to have been aware of the standards expected which were communicated in the scripts and commentaries distributed to centres for HART3 and HART4.

There were some truly outstanding responses that combined a clear joy in the subject with impressive knowledge and acute powers of discussion and analysis. The most common causes of underperformance were, as in previous examinations, the inability to fulfil the demands of the question and the use of inadequate or inappropriate examples.

Since all questions require three examples, or two for compare/contrast tasks, the choice of these examples is crucial as they form the agenda on which to base discussions. While choosing three examples of the same subject, theme or purpose is acceptable, it might prove difficult to broaden a discussion, analysis or interpretation if similar information is repeated. Similarly, if the question requires two examples to be compared and contrasted, it is advisable to select two examples that provide enough material to allow similarities and differences to be pointed out. This is an aspect of the new specification that was not present in the previous specification and it does require a greater degree of discrimination from candidates.

In the discipline of the History of Art there are inevitably examples that are controversial or do not comfortably fit into categories. When candidates use examples that might be considered marginal, problematic or a mixture between media, it is important that some form of explanation or argument is provided to the examiner as to why the selected example is appropriate to the demands of the question. It is a last resort for examiners to disallow examples and a step that is never taken lightly.

If a building or artwork that spans two centuries is selected, it is incumbent on the candidate to give some form of explanation why their example belongs in one century or another. For example St Paul's Cathedral which was built across the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The sample mark scheme uses this formula - '....the appearance and character of the chosen example must date primarily from work executed within the chronological period.' When deciding on which century a building that spans two centuries belongs in, this formula should be noted and for added confirmation the style of the building should be considered - since styles are usually associated with one century rather than another. For extra confirmation Honour and Fleming might be consulted to see where they place it. Though not detailed enough as a reference source for A2, this book does split art and architecture up into centuries). By all of these measures St Paul's, as an example of English Baroque Classicism, falls into the seventeenth century, rather than the eighteenth century.

Worryingly, the information cited for many examples consisted of the reproduction (full, partial or garbled) of the Wikipedia entry for that work. For the most part, electronic resources are no substitute for the detailed published sources that are appropriate for the demands and expectations of A2.

Although the Specification allows centres and candidates to choose their own examples with which to answer questions, on some occasions only vague or generic titles were given – such as Madonna and Child, Pietà, Portrait of a Man/Woman. This sometimes makes verification of examples difficult. Examiners make exhaustive efforts to identify examples and this summer they have spent an enormous amount of time checking information. Perhaps centres and candidates could assist them by adding a little extra information when using examples which exist in multiple versions or treat common subjects, such as date or location?

At A2 a competency is expected in the terminology of the History of Art and a sound understanding of the different categories and genres of art and architecture is required. This is a consolidation and expansion of the knowledge and understanding that should have been gained in HART2 'Subjects and genres' section. From this year's responses it was clear that some candidates found this a challenge and sometimes used inappropriate examples.

In response to questions that required comparison there was sometimes a tendency to write two discrete sections and to neglect the comparative element. Some candidates interwove aspects of similarity and difference while discussing both works others, drew their comparisons after having analysed or discussed the first example. Both strategies were successful. Leaving similarity or difference until a solitary concluding paragraph rarely yielded high marks.

Generally speaking, answers that contained some form of introduction and conclusion were more successful than those that did not. This was because an introduction either served to clarify a candidate's ideas about the discussion or argument to be pursued or defined the terms of reference by which the question would be approached. Candidates employing this method were then less likely to give a purely descriptive account of their examples. A conclusion could also provide further evidence of the security of knowledge and understanding. Some candidates wrote separate sections for all of the examples used with little or no linking material.

There was a tendency for architectural questions to be answered less well than those on painting and sculpture. This was mainly because candidates seemed less adept at providing architectural analyses that covered plan, elevation and style. Where required, discussions of the relationship between form and function were sometimes poorly addressed. Some difficulties with architectural terminology were also noted.

The standard of English was generally good-to-fair, but spelling was often erratic or phonetic and names of artists, patrons and commissions were sometimes spelt incorrectly. The problem of illegible or hard-to-read handwriting has undoubtedly become worse. Plainly put, if it cannot be read, it cannot be marked. The titles of the letters 'i' and 'j' were often replaced with tiny circles or even hearts.

A surprising number of candidates were confused about the correct usage for identifying centuries and, for instance, when referring to 19th century works, dated them beginning with the digits 19.

Topic 1 *Art and Architecture in Thirteenth- and Fourteenth-Century Europe*

Question 1

Analyse **three** sculptures made during this period, commenting on the interpretation of the subject matter **and** the use of materials. Select your examples from **at least two** countries.

Though many candidates could describe three examples reasonably well, this was not always accompanied by a detailed knowledge of biblical subject matter or the use of materials. Most examples came from Chartres and Reims, although there were some excellent responses on tomb sculpture. The essential characteristics of free-standing and relief sculpture were not always pointed out. Not all candidates followed the instruction to select their examples from more than one country.

Question 2

Compare and contrast the design and construction of **two** Gothic cathedrals from this period that are located in different countries.

The majority of candidates chose examples of cathedrals from England and France with Salisbury and Amiens the most popular choices. Beauvais and Notre Dame de Paris were also chosen. The instruction to compare and contrast the design and construction of the chosen examples was not always followed. There was often a poor grasp and understanding of architectural terms.

Question 3

Analyse **two** painted altarpieces, one from the thirteenth century and one from the fourteenth century, which were made during this period. What differences and similarities are evident?

For the thirteenth century the most common examples were by Berlinghiero and Cimabue, and for the fourteenth century works by Giotto were most commonly discussed. The Wilton Diptych was also occasionally used. The obvious comparison between Cimabue's and Giotto's Maestà was rarely made. While the analysis of difference and similarity was sometimes at a very basic level, more able candidates wrote with greater authority on the Byzantine and Gothic elements of their selected examples.

Question 4

Discuss how religious meaning was communicated in **three** depictions of Christ in thirteenth-century **and/or** fourteenth-century art. You may choose examples of paintings, drawings, illuminated manuscripts **and/or** sculptures.

The most frequent examples were sculptures from Reims, Chartres and from the Pisano family and paintings by Cimabue and Giotto. Almost all candidates addressed 'religious meaning', although the choice of three examples of exactly the same subject, such as the Crucifixion, meant that there was a good deal of repetition.

Topic 2 Art and Architecture in Sixteenth-Century Europe

Question 5

Examine the differences **and** similarities between **two** sculptures, each containing two or more figures and made by a different artist in the sixteenth century. The most frequent examples were Cellini's Perseus and Medusa, Giambologna's Rape of the Sabine, and Bandinelli's Hercules and Cacus. Michelangelo's Rondanini Pietà was also discussed as was his Pietà in St Peter's – which was a valid example as numerous sources (such as Olson and Hartt) date its completion to 1500. There were some excellent responses and often High Renaissance and Mannerist sculptures were compared and contrasted. A few candidates failed to understand the compositional and narrative strategies adopted in sculptures of two or more figures. Sometimes the selection of examples gave little opportunity for the examination of both differences and similarities.

Question 6

Discuss the renaissance characteristics of one painting **and** one sculpture **and** one building.

This was a popular question and most candidates could discuss the renaissance in terms of the borrowings from antiquity, balance, harmony, technical mastery and complexity. Relatively few candidates wrote about how the renaissance of the sixteenth century built on the discoveries and innovations of the Quattrocento. The most frequently cited examples were Raphael's School of Athens, Michelangelo's David and Pietà and Bramante's Tempietto and Palazzo Caprini. Venetian examples were also discussed, notably Titian's Bacchus and Ariadne. Some candidates failed to understand renaissance characteristics and used Mannerist examples.

Question 7

Examine **three** examples of portraiture, each by a different sixteenth-century artist. How were ideas of character and identity conveyed? You may choose your examples from painting **and/or** sculpture.

This was the most popular question in this topic and the most frequently discussed examples were Raphael's Julius II and Leo X with two cardinals, Titian's Paul III and Charles V at Muhlberg, Dürer's Self-Portrait of 1500 and Holbein's Ambassadors. Bronzino's Eleonora of Toledo and her son, Bellini's Doge Leonardo Loredan and Lotto's Portrait of Andrea Odini were also occasionally examined. Apart from Cellini's Cosimo I, sculptural examples were rarely used. Portraits of powerful rulers and statesmen usually gave more opportunity to discuss character and identity than examples of unknown or obscure sitters.

Question 8

Analyse **three** sixteenth-century palaces **and/or** grand houses, discussing how their architectural characteristics convey power and status.

The most popular examples were different villas and palazzi by Palladio, Bramante's Palazzo Caprini, Sangallo and Michelangelo's Palazzo Farnese, Giulio Romano's Palazzo de Te, Peruzzi's Palazzo Massimo alle Colonne and Smythson's Hardwick Hall. Power and status were discussed through scale, decoration, references to the authority of antiquity and the use of coats of arms family and emblems. Often the analysis of these buildings paid little attention to stylistic qualities.

Topic 3 Art and Architecture in Eighteenth-Century Europe

Question 9

With reference to **three** examples, each by a different artist, discuss how eighteenth-century art borrowed from, or was inspired by, ancient art. You may choose your examples from painting **and/or** sculpture.

This question was not attempted by many candidates and both specific and general borrowings were identified. Examples ranged from Batoni's General William Gordon of Fyvie, Canova's Theseus and the Minotaur, Vien's Cupid Seller and David's Oath of the Horatii. Some candidates wrote essays on paintings and sculptures from mythology or ancient history that often had little direct inspiration from, or relation to, ancient art.

Question 10

Analyse **and** discuss **three** paintings, each by a different artist, that depict scenes from contemporary history.

There were many excellent essays that discussed examples such as West's Death of General Wolfe, Copley's Death of Major Peirson, and the Oath of the Tennis Court and Marat at his last breath by David. A few candidates were unclear about 'contemporary history' and wrote about ancient history or quotidian genre scenes. Unfortunately some candidates wrote about prints rather than paintings.

Question 11

Examine **two** eighteenth-century portraits, one of a male sitter and the other of a female sitter. What differences in depiction are evident? You may choose your examples from painting **and/or** sculpture.

This was a popular question and examples used ranged from Rigaud's Louis XIV, to Reynolds' Commodore Keppel, Boucher's Madame de Pompadour and David's Marat. Self-portraits by Hogarth and Vigée Lebrun were also used. More successful candidates moved the discussion of difference on from simple formal descriptions to considerations of the gender roles and identities assumed by (or imposed on) the sitters. Some candidates turned this into a comparison between the Rococo and Neoclassicism, although such a strategy only worked well when the general characteristics of each style could be identified and discussed within the two examples chosen. Inappropriate examples of mythological goddesses and genre scenes were sometimes used.

Question 12

Analyse **three** religious, civic, or institutional buildings built in the eighteenth century **and** discuss the relationship between each building's design and its function.

The most frequent examples were Hawksmoor's Christ Church, Spitalfields, Gibbs' Radcliffe Camera, Oxford and Neumann's Church of the Vierzehenheiligen. Some candidates turned this into an essay on palace architecture. While a case could be made for a building such as Blenheim Palace to have been a national symbol of victory and thus have a civic or institutional function, palaces such as Sanssouci, where the emphasis was on princely pleasure and enjoyment, were poor examples with which to address the requirements of the question. Some less obvious examples were also cited, such as Bonomi's St James' Church Great Packington, Warks.

Topic 4 Art and Architecture in Twentieth-Century Europe and America between 1900 and 1945

Question 13

Examine **and** interpret **three** abstract or non-objective art works, each by a different artist, produced during this period. You may choose your examples from painting **and/or** sculpture.

There were some excellent responses to this question using examples by artists such as Kandinsky, Malevich, Mondrian, Brancusi and Arp. Candidates also wrote about the significance of abstract or non-objective art and what meanings it might have. Examinations of individual works were often linked with the theoretical beliefs or writings of artists. However, it was clear that some candidates had no clear idea of what constituted an abstract or non-objective work and used figurative examples such as the *Demaiselles d'Avignon* in their answers. While credit could be given for pertinent observations about abstract elements within a figurative work, almost without exception figurative works were discussed in wholly figurative terms and no attention was given to how lines, shapes and colours could have a meaning and significance independent of any representational function. At A2 level it is expected

that a candidate in this option should have a fully secure understanding of the characteristics of an abstract or non-objective work.

Question 14

Analyse **and** discuss **three** paintings produced during this period, each by a different artist, that depict the modern world.

There were many excellent responses to this question and works from both Europe and America were discussed. Examples included works by the Futurists, such as Balla's Street Lamp and Boccioni's The City Rises, Delaunay's Homage à Blériot and The Cardiff Team and Picasso's Guernica. Many German Expressionist and Neue Sachlichkeit paintings by Dix, Kirchner and Grosz were also discussed as well as American works by Joseph Stella and Edward Hopper. Sometimes stylistically radical and modern works were selected that had subjects with little obvious connection to the modern world such as still-lives or nudes. In such cases, it was up to the candidate to demonstrate how this work related to the demands of the question. A few candidates wrote general essays on Dada or Surrealism and in such instances the examples used by Schwitters, Ernst or Dalí could rarely be said to depict the modern world.

Question 15

Examine **three** paintings by the same artist, demonstrating how they are associated with **either** Cubism **or** Fauvism.

Picasso for Cubism and Matisse for Fauvism were almost exclusively selected. Picasso's Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J. Version O) was almost inevitably used as a starting point, and many candidates correctly observed that it did not represent fully-fledged Analytical Cubism. The portraits of Kahnweiler and Vollard were often discussed as was Ma Jolie. Many responses ended with a consideration of Synthetic Cubism and Still-Life with Chair Caning. Significant numbers of candidates discussed Guernica and were able to establish links between its lack of colour and fragmentation of form with aspects of Cubism. Matisse's Collioure works of 1905 were often discussed as were The Green Stripe and Woman with a Hat. The Joy of Life was the single most cited example. Not all candidates were aware of the genesis of the term 'Fauve' at the 1905 Salon d'Automne. Some candidates assumed that their examples were either Cubist or Fauvist simply because they were painted by Picasso or Matisse and gave little or no stylistic justification for their association with the particular movement. Often the more successful candidates underpinned their examination of the chosen examples with a sound awareness of the stylistic chronology of Cubism or Fauvism.

Question 16

Discuss the design and construction of **three** private houses, each built by a different architect during this period.

There were numerous full and detailed responses to this question that demonstrated a full awareness of the varying approaches to private housing that existed in Europe and America between 1900 and 1945. The most frequently discussed examples were Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House and Falling Water, Rietveld's Schröder House, Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye, the Gropius House and Scharoun's Schminke House. Many candidates had a sound grasp of the use of materials in the construction process.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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