



**General Certificate of Education (A-level)  
June 2011**

**History of Art**

**HART4**

**(Specification 2250)**

**Unit 4: Investigation and Interpretation (2)**

***Report on the Examination***

---

Further copies of this Report on **the Examination** are available from: [aqa.org.uk](http://aqa.org.uk)

Copyright © 2011 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

Overall it was felt that the standard of responses was somewhat higher than last year, although there was still a proportion of students who entered the examination with a range of examples that they were determined to incorporate into their answers whether or not they responded to the demands of the question. In extreme cases, it was impossible to reconcile the subject of the answer with any of the questions in the particular section of the examination paper. A proportion of students had also memorised whole essays and often these rarely corresponded to the demands of the questions. Some students wrote three discrete sections on their chosen examples without an introduction, conclusion or any connecting sections. Even a very short introduction can be very useful in clarifying a candidate's ideas about the discussion or argument to be followed or in defining the terms of reference by which the question is to be approached. Often, a sense of chronology was weak or absent.

This year there were more instances of students failing to identify works of art clearly. Titles such as Portrait of a Man/Woman, Madonna/Mother and Child, Nude, Landscape with..... or even Untitled (for some modern works), when accompanied by extremely vague descriptions, caused great problems of identification for examiners. While this was not such an issue with architectural examples, there were nevertheless some buildings inaccurately named or given the wrong locations and then further obscured by imprecise descriptions and discussion. Examiners take great pains and spend considerable amounts of time to track down examples, but this year some works simply defied recognition. If examples cannot be verified, they cannot be given full credit and marks are inevitably sacrificed. Students are therefore urged to take great care over the identification of their chosen examples.

All examiners agreed that handwriting has become worse, at times to the point of total illegibility. Examiners go to great lengths to decipher writing but if they are unable to read responses, they cannot award marks. Spelling and grammar have also deteriorated and too often even the names of artists and architects and titles of works were spelled incorrectly. At A2 such an expectation is not unreasonable. The apostrophe was used very infrequently, the American form of 'centre' often occurred and far too often 'altar' was given as 'alter'. The use of specialist terminology for the architectural questions was often lacking or used inaccurately.

In many cases it was clear that students had seen the particular work being discussed and their answers benefitted from the insights and understanding that first-hand experience brings. Although it is increasingly difficult to take students out of class, the benefits of such visits are often very apparent to examiners.

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

#### **Question 1**

Analyse **three** sculptures of the human figure from the thirteenth century **and/or** fourteenth century, discussing the relationship between form and meaning in each. Select your examples from **at least two** countries.

Sculptures from Chartres and Reims were frequently discussed as were works by the Pisani and numerous anonymous masters. Often students concentrated on formal descriptions and gave little or no consideration to meaning. An understanding of the narrative surrounding the religious or secular represented was often instrumental in formulating a fruitful discussion of the relationship between form and meaning.

#### **Question 2**

Discuss the characteristics of the Gothic style of architecture in **either** England **or** France through an analysis of **three** cathedrals.

There were only a few responses to this question, but for England Salisbury was inevitably one of the examples used and Amiens and Reims were most often cited for France. A few students wrote about the Abbey of St Denis, which, as a twelfth-century building, is outside the time period for this topic.

### **Question 3**

Examine **three** religious paintings from the thirteenth century **and/or** fourteenth century and discuss the purpose of each.

Examples by Cimabue, Duccio and Giotto were very frequently discussed as was the Wilton Diptych. Most students could distinguish between the differing functions of a scene from a narrative fresco cycle and a church altarpiece. The differing nature of a portable altarpiece for private devotion and a major public altarpiece were also recognised. The role of patronage was often cited as providing the motivation for the creation of a religious work, such as Giotto's Scrovegni Chapel and Andrea di Bonaiuto's Way of Salvation for the Dominicans in the Spanish Chapel, Santa Maria Novella. Unfortunately, some predominantly secular examples were used, such as Ambrogio Lorenzetti's works in Palazzo Publico, Siena.

### **Question 4**

Discuss the status of the artist and/or craftsman during this period through an analysis of **at least three** works of art **and/or** architecture.

There were very few responses to this question. Often only vague notions of artistic status were demonstrated and the examples barely supported any argument.

## **Topic 2      *Art and Architecture in Sixteenth-Century Europe***

### **Question 5**

What do you understand by the term 'Mannerism' as applied to sixteenth-century art and architecture? Discuss **three** examples in your answer, **at least one** of which must be from architecture.

This was not a popular question, although most attempting it had some notion of the characteristics of Mannerism. The most popular painted examples were Parmigianino's Madonna of the Long Neck and Bronzino's An Allegory with Venus and Cupid and in sculpture Giambologna's Rape of the Sabine Woman. In architecture the Palazzo del Te was most frequently discussed and its deviations from the classical vocabulary of architecture readily identified. Some students unwisely used the façade of the church of Il Gesù as a mannerist example.

### **Question 6**

Examine and discuss **three** representations of the nude in sixteenth-century art. You may select your examples from painting **and/or** sculpture.

This was the most popular question of this topic and almost every response used Michelangelo's David as one of the examples. In painting Titian's Venus of Urbino and Bronzino's An Allegory with Venus and Cupid were often discussed and in sculpture the most frequent examples were Cellini's Perseus, Giambologna's Rape of the Sabine Woman and Bandinelli's Hercules and Cacus. Very few responses considered how the subject matter provided the justification for the depiction of a nude figure, although some very good answers distinguished between male and female nudity, focussing on the heroism of the former and the decorative eroticism of the latter.

### **Question 7**

Analyse and discuss the representation of Jesus Christ in **three** sixteenth-century religious

paintings, each by a different artist.

Some students had evidently prepared essays on the Madonna and Child or on the *Sacra Conversazione* and in using three examples of either of these forms there was often considerable repetition of material. Images of Christ as an infant by Bellini, Leonardo and Raphael were often cited. Christ's ministry and passion were most often discussed in Sebastiano's Raising of Lazarus and in Deposition scenes by Raphael and Pontormo. While Raphael's Transfiguration was often discussed, a good number of students seemed unaware of exactly what the transfiguration was and concentrated on the subordinate scene of the healing of the possessed boy.

#### **Question 8**

Compare and contrast **two** religious buildings built in the sixteenth century.

This was a popular question and by far the most frequent examples were the Tempietto and Il Gesù. Other main examples were Palladio's San Giorgio Maggiore and Il Redentore. The Palladio churches were usually quite well known although weaker students sometimes transposed features from Il Gesù. St Peter's, Rome also appeared in significant numbers. Although a valid example, it is a challenging example to discuss in the time given as so much explanation is needed as to what is being specifically discussed before comparisons can begin. Although the majority of students did attempt comparison and contrast in their answers, a small minority did not and just described each example individually.

### **Topic 3      *Art and Architecture in Eighteenth-Century Europe***

#### **Question 9**

Analyse **three** eighteenth-century sculptures of one or two figures, considering the relationship between the form and subject matter of each.

Many students demonstrated an impressive knowledge of eighteenth-century sculpture and subject matter ranged from mythology to portraiture and funerary sculpture. Houdon, Canova and Roubiliac were the most popular choices of sculptor. In some responses description far outweighed discussion of the relationship between form and subject matter. The depth and understanding of some responses suggested that students had first-hand experience of some of the examples.

#### **Question 10**

Analyse and discuss **three** eighteenth-century paintings depicting women, each produced by a different artist.

This was by far the most popular question in this topic with Boucher's Madame de Pompadour of 1756 in Munich heading the list. With some less-accomplished students it was not clear exactly which of Boucher's Pompadour portraits was being discussed. This was also true of Vigée-Lebrun's portraits of Marie-Antoinette. There were also some very thoughtful discussion of the role of Madame Lavoisier in David's dual portrait of the chemist and his wife. Fragonard's The Swing was often discussed with reference to the writings on it rather than what is actually seen on the painting. Occasionally, this work sparked lubricious discussions of sexuality and erotica.

#### **Question 11**

Compare and contrast **two** paintings by different eighteenth-century artists which depict war or conflict.

The contemporary images of war were almost exclusively West's Death of General Wolfe and Copley's Death of Major Peirson (almost inevitably misspelt as Pierson). The violent conflict of

the French Revolution was discussed via David's Marat at his Last Breath and David's Oath of the Horatii and Intervention of the Sabine Women were used for discussions of war and conflict in the ancient Roman world. Students sometimes found it difficult to describe the historical event or scene without losing touch with the painted image. Although historical background was frequently quite well understood, the struggle to depict conflict in modern as opposed to antique dress was rarely touched on. Instead of writing about the depiction of conflict, a tiny minority of students wrote stylistic essays concerned with the 'conflict' between the Rococo and Neo-Classicism. Definitions of conflict were occasionally so far stretched as to become ridiculous, such as intimations of marital or relational conflict in portraits. The question was deliberately worded so as to require visual representations of war or conflict and not to stimulate speculation on how conflict might be interpreted within almost any image.

#### **Question 12**

Analyse the architectural characteristics of **two** palaces **and/or** grand houses built in the eighteenth century. What differences and similarities do you find between your chosen buildings?

This question was attempted by relatively few students and Chiswick House was usually contrasted with Blenheim. Kedleston Hall, Castle Howard and Strawberry Hill were also discussed. From the detail and understanding of some of the analyses, it seemed that the students had visited the buildings in question. Points of difference and similarity included style, function, location and details of plan and elevation.

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

#### **Question 13**

Discuss the characteristics and aims of **one** style or movement of art that emerged during this period. Make reference to **three** works of art in your answer.

Dadaism, Fauvism, Surrealism and German Expressionism were most frequently discussed and many students demonstrated an impressive knowledge of each movement's characteristics and aims. Cubism and Futurism were written about less often. Occasionally students chose to write about three works from a chosen style or movement and neglected to relate these to the aims and characteristics. Frequently no understanding of chronology was demonstrated and works of art were written about in a seemingly random order. A grasp of the order in which things were produced was often a vital element in explaining the range of characteristics and aims of a style or movement. A few students wrote general essays on how primitivism had influenced modern movements and referred to examples from multiple styles or movements. In such circumstances only a proportion of marks could be awarded.

#### **Question 14**

Analyse and discuss **three** paintings produced during this period that depict still-life **and/or** genre subjects. Select your examples from the work of **at least two** artists.

While a number of students wrote successfully about how still-lives and everyday subjects were used by avant-garde artists to explore form and colour, some students misinterpreted the question as an invitation to write about any genre of painting they liked. Where students clearly demonstrated an understanding of a particular genre and then selected appropriate examples, they were accepted. However, some students decided to invent their own categories of genre, such as 'emotion'- or just wrote about any three paintings they chose to cite. Some grasp of the term 'genre'- in either of its two accepted art-historical usages, is expected at A2, especially as Subjects and genres forms one theme of HART 2.

**Question 15**

Examine and discuss **three** sculptural representations of the human form produced during this period. Select your examples from the work of **at least two** sculptors.

This was a very popular question and the most frequently discussed examples were Boccioni's Unique forms of continuity in space, Brancusi's Kiss, Epstein's Rock Drill, Giacometti's Woman with her throat cut and works by Moore and Hepworth. Discussion often focused on use of materials, the interpretation of the human form and on subject matter, especially in relation to modernity and to the machine age.

**Question 16**

Analyse and discuss the architectural characteristics of **three** commercial, civic or institutional buildings constructed during this period. Select your examples from **at least two** countries.

Almost all students attempting this question could successfully identify three commercial, civic or institutional buildings, although a few residential building were incorrectly incorporated into answers. The main obstacle to some answers was that buildings were described rather than analysed or discussed. As architectural types, commercial, civic or institutional buildings have particular demands of design and function and many successful answers related the architectural characteristics of their chosen examples to these demands. Examples cited included Wagner's Post Office Savings Bank, Vienna, Behren's AEG Turbine Factory, Berlin, Gropius' Bauhaus Building at Dessau and Lloyd Wright's Johnson Wax Headquarters at Racine, Wisconsin.

## Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available at [www.aqa.org.uk/over/stat.html](http://www.aqa.org.uk/over/stat.html)

UMS conversion calculator [www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion](http://www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion)