



General Certificate of Secondary Education

Art and Design (Unendorsed)

Controlled Test 3201/T

Report on the Examination

2008 examination – June series

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GCSE Art and Design (Unendorsed) 3201

Controlled Test 3201/T

All the questions were well received this year and personal responses were diverse in content and preferred working processes. The most popular questions were reported to be 'Portraiture', 'Events', 'Decoration' and 'Traditions'. Moderators reported continued good practice in relation to sketchbook use, indicating the depth of enquiry across the creative journey. Centres are becoming increasingly confident in encouraging a well ordered balance of evidence across the Assessment Objectives in the test component, building on well constructed coursework units. Centres presented candidates with appropriate supporting materials for this component and in so doing, provided them with the opportunities to achieve and attain to the best of their abilities.

Centres are familiar with the intentions and purposes of the AQA question papers and it was evident this year that candidates are supporting their knowledge and practice with extensive reference to other artists, designers and craftspeople beyond those explicitly referenced in the questions.

Question 1: Portraiture

Portraiture was a very popular question with "self portrait" and "relationships" eliciting the greatest number of responses. Candidates made primary observations through formal drawing and digital photography in relation to Assessment Objective 1 and resourced their ideas through references to Peter Blake and in many instances, other "Pop" artists. Further references were evidenced within the context of the question across a breadth of artists including Victoria Crowe, Gustav Klimt and Vincent Van Gogh. The context of the question was well understood and although the majority of practice evidenced was primarily two-dimensional, some centres had encouraged opportunities for mixed media and on occasion three dimensional working processes and outcomes. Lower ability candidates were able to access the question with confidence across all the assessment objectives.

Personal responses were varied and diverse, with more adventurous candidates combining digital media with traditional painting and drawing techniques, whilst others elected to introduce text to give close attention to the context of the question.

Question 2: Impressionism

This question was well received, but not as widely selected by candidates as may have been expected. Many responses related to the candidates' familiarity with the movement, characteristic working methods and notable subject matter such as landscape. The context of the question, in relation to light and colour, was in the main examined through an understanding of painting techniques with clear references to Monet, Pissarro and the post Impressionist painter Seurat. Digital photography had been used to record viewpoints later translated into predominantly painted outcomes. Lower ability candidates showed a good understanding of Impressionist techniques and were able to access the question comfortably through the translation of photographs into paintings in an Impressionist style. Very few three-dimensional responses were evident and the most thorough and inspired responses combined digital photography of buildings and landscape locations with low relief collage embellished with painted and stained surface. Some candidates used contemporary settings for interpretation of the question in a contemporary context.

Question 3: Events

This was a very popular question, where the option “My World” received most responses. Reference to Robert Rauschenberg seems to have offered an important degree of direction in both content and working methods. Gillian Wearing’s film and photographic works inspired some highly imaginative mixed media artwork, and there was also notable reference to the work of Barbara Kruger. Reference to film maker Ron Fricke, or other artists, was limited, although evidence showed a wide variety of both two-dimensional and three dimensional working processes and outcomes. Observing and recording in relation to this question was mainly through digital photography and collected images from the internet. In this respect, confident candidates were able to personalise their work through recording and selecting digital images and by manipulating images through Photoshop. Candidates used current events from world news to inform the content of their work and relate ideas within the context of the question. Many responded through mixed media in both two- and three-dimensions. Subject matter relating to “My World” drew upon a wide range of sources including contemporary youth culture groups, sport and international news. Less confident students accessed the question through selected magazine clippings or internet images, reflecting more localised themes and manufactured with more limited digital or applied surface enhancements. The most inspirational work evidenced, comprised combinations and montages of treated images, both digital and traditionally manufactured which reflected clear personal opinion to the context of the question. The degree of success related very closely to the depth of enquiry and resourcing in respect of Assessment Objective 1.

Question 4: Japan

This question enjoyed a good degree of popularity and was chosen by many candidates reflecting a broad spread of attainment. Some candidates experienced difficulties with coverage of all the assessment objectives. The best responses were highly innovative and made good use of descriptive bold outline and decorative detail. Outcomes were presented in such forms as landscape paintings, parasols, fabric paintings, decorative panels and garments, with designs derived from drawn and photographic observations of natural floral forms and landscape. Moderators reported many instances of transcription from sources such as “The Great Wave off Kanagawa” and direct copies from Japanese landscape art of the Ukiyo-e style. Moderators also noted many references to “Manga” and “Anime. For example, one moderator commented that, “Developments from extensive research and purposeful observation included many contextual references and successful candidates related their observations to the context of the question. Less successful candidates were able to access this question with relevant reference points, but there was too much dependency on direct transcription from secondary sources and limited development of the idea ultimately diminished their personal responses.

Question 5: Word and Image

This proved to be a very popular question and generated a very wide variety of responses in both two- and three-dimensions. A good number of candidates chose to design and make a product or package in media of their choosing. References to Stefan Sagmeister and Tom Phillips drew the best responses and were popular in directing innovative combinations of text and image. Barbara Kruger’s work was another important reference with her work used by certain centres to highlight the question’s context. Candidates in many centres were keen to explore the codes and conventions of “street art” in relation to the graffiti artist, Banksy. The context of this question was very well understood by candidates of all abilities. Moderators have reported the use of photomontage, graphic illustration, clothing, mixed media construction, sculpture and painting. The most inspirational work was highly personalised with content

related to poetry, lyrics and message. Candidates manufactured images in a very exploratory manner using carefully designed codes and symbols to communicate or suggest message and meaning. Candidates of lesser confidence accessed the question through their understanding of graffiti art and produced some original outcomes. However, supporting material was at times limited, consisting of small collections of graffiti art from magazine pictures pasted into a scrapbook. Where candidates had taken ownership of this very open question, sketchbooks were filled with relevant annotation, rapid sketches, photographs and collages that explored the idea of communication and message.

Question 6: Decoration

This question generated mainly two-dimensional responses, although there were reported examples of well resolved ceramic works where incised and applied surface decoration exemplified good practice. The identified artists in the question paper were all represented in candidate responses, with the mosaic designs of Antoni Gaudi, in particular, proving to be popular. Some centres used the decoration theme as another opportunity to reference non-European cultures and there were some good examples of responses to Islamic design in candidates' research and outcomes. Repeat pattern featured in many responses with a tendency to reach final outcomes without thorough investigation. In the most successful responses this question was approached through investigation into how artists and designers employed the formal elements of art and design to create an engaging effect, mood or design. Moderators reported good responses to Assessment Objective 3, but less evidence in respect of Assessment Objective 1.

Question 7: Traditions

The question was well received and proved to be very popular. In particular candidates from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds enjoyed the opportunity to respond in a very personal manner with regard for traditional and contemporary design in a variety of media. Cultural references were extensive crossing time and place.

Option 7a was the most popular response with reference to African, Chinese and Asian cultures featuring prominently. Option 7b invited some responses in the form of photographic and montage artworks. Option 7c relating to body adornment was the least represented. A variety of working processes were reported including printed textiles, garment construction, photographic montage, ceramics and painting and drawing.

Candidates working with confident ability explored a selected culture in great detail, documenting visual characteristics in sketchbooks and supporting their findings with relevant annotation. Observations of surface decoration were recorded through drawing and digital photography and in certain instances developed through Photoshop manipulation. The question was genuinely accessible and candidates were able to respond in a manner that respected local, regional, national and international cultures.

Mark ranges and award of grades

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