



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2011**

Dance

42301

(Specification 4230)

Unit 1: Critical appreciation of dance

Report on Examination

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General Comments

It was very pleasing to see some very well answered scripts, where it was clear that candidates had been given the opportunity to study professional works in their entirety as well as being able to articulate their understanding of different aspects of practical work in detail. These candidates could clearly describe motifs/movement phrases and were able to describe and explain different production aspects of their chosen professional works in detail. Candidates are advantaged when they read through the entire question paper before deciding to name their dance work 1 and 2, particularly as the paper takes the candidate on a journey in that many questions are linked in some way. A very small number of candidates did not cite works at all, continuing to answer the questions based on unnamed works, to which examiners found it very difficult to award marks. A very small number of candidates selected and answered questions on works that were not from the list of prescribed works given in the specification.

Dance teachers should note that no other component within GCSE dance will be referred to specifically in component 42301. Questions will only refer to general performance or choreography skills within a solo or group.

The most popular works studied were: *Swansong*, *'Still Life' at the Penguin Cafe*, *Ghost Dances* and *Nutcracker*. In some cases candidates incorrectly assumed a narrative/storyline to very abstract works, particularly *Bird Song* or *Rosas Danst Rosas*.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1(a)

This was generally well answered with a majority of candidates being awarded 3 full marks. Candidates failed to gain marks when they named choreography skills, or were repetitive, for example: unison, canon, contact – all only worth 1 mark as they all refer to relationships.

Question 1(b)

This question was asking for suggestions of improving the skills named in (a) for a group dance. Answers therefore had to suggest improvements for a group of dancers in order to achieve a mark. Some candidates merely made general references to 'rehearsing' and 'practise' rather than HOW to improve.

Question 2(a)

The majority of candidates could accurately cite the first performance date of their chosen dance works.

Question 2(b)

Again well answered and accurately cited

Question 2(c)

Many candidates could identify either the main dance style of the work or a style within the work.

Question 3(a)

Many candidates achieved 1 mark here. Marks were awarded if the composer was spelt incorrectly but was phonetically accurate.

Question 3(b)

Most candidates gained at least 1 mark for this question with only a few achieving all 3 marks. The majority of candidates explained how the accompaniment contributed to the mood of the work with very strong candidates able to identify specific moments where aspects of the accompaniment impacted on the mood, for example, 'the increasing volume and tempo of the guards' tapping in *Swansong* adds to the scary mood'.

Question 3(c)

Well answered with candidates able to identify instruments, style or other audible aspects within the dance work.

Question 3(d)

Like question 3(b), most candidates achieved at least 1 mark. The majority referred to dynamics within the accompaniment and were awarded marks for explaining how the accompaniment and actions matched closely. Structure was answered by a few candidates who understood how repetitive music or a change of accompaniment indicated, for example, a significant aspect of the structure or a change of scene in a dance work.

Question 4(a)

Generally well answered, although some candidates confused stimulus/starting points of works with the theme/dance idea. It is important that they understand the difference.

Question 4(b)

Many candidates answered this very well with very clear identification of a motif. Candidates who achieved all 6 marks had very clearly described the action, space and dynamics of a given motif that was (very) recognisable. Weaker candidates were much more general in their descriptions, describing dancers as using all of the space rather than being more specific. Some candidates offered very detailed answers, suggesting that they had accurately learned and analysed motifs from their chosen professional dance works during their practical lessons.

Question 4(c)

Again, many candidates achieved very highly, offering the actions, dynamics and/or space of two very clear movement examples within their chosen works as well as a strong explanation of the effectiveness of the chosen movement example.

Question 4(d)

The majority of candidates were awarded a mark for this question. A few offered an entirely different movement example and were therefore not awarded a mark.

Question 4(e)

Again, a well answered question with many candidates being awarded both marks. Marks were lost when candidates did not relate their named feature to the theme/starting point of the dance.

Question 5(a)

Good descriptions of the lighting. Many candidates were awarded all 4 marks, being able to describe, for example: the direction, colours, patterns and intensity of lighting in their chosen work.

Question 5(b)

The majority of candidates managed to achieve some of the 10 marks available here, with some achieving all 10 marks. Successful candidates could discuss different effects lighting has on the work, and offered their own evaluative judgements on the impact of lighting for their chosen dance works. Some candidates were very repetitive, offering the same information for both dance works. Others were very descriptive and therefore lost marks. It should be noted that, as indicated in the rubric on the front of the paper, it was perfectly acceptable for candidates to answer this question using either bullet points, continuous prose, or a combination of the two.

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