OCR
RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENT

GCSE

Expressive Arts

General Certificate of Secondary Education **1917**

Report on the Units

June 2010

1917/R/10

CONTENTS

GCSE Expressive Arts (1917)

REPORT ON THE UNITS

Chief Examiner's Report

General Comments

The administration of the examination was reported as being generally good this session. Centres knew what they were doing; there were almost no examples of examination and moderation having to take place in inappropriate conditions; and organisation was efficient. A particular area of improvement was in the way samples were identified and labelled, and in the signposting of where marks were awarded.

Most centres provided the correct information in advance with very few needing to be reminded about the authentication of work form completion.

Component 01 – Group

The stimuli provided by centres were many and varied. They included:

- 1960s musicals, for example Summer Holiday. More modern musicals such as Les Miserables also featured
- 'The Intruder', a song by Peter Gabriel
- 'At lunchtime', a poem by Roger McGough
- 'Out Loud' by STOMP, linked with physical theatre
- 'Another Friday Night'
- 'Story of a Bad Weekend'
- Use of past papers
- Picasso's 'Guernica' – this piece has many possible outcomes
- Christopher Bruce's 'Swansong' was widely used this year
- The Tragedy (Picasso)
- Adagio for strings (Samuel Barber)
- Elephant Man (David Lynch)
- Pop art
- Caught in the act (play)
- Freedom, sure when? (deviant art)
- Artwork (Mark Titchner)
- An inspector calls (JB Priestly)
- A woman crying (Picasso)
- La Belle Dame sans Merci (Keats)
- Contemporary Quilts (Various)
- Secrets & lies (Mike Leigh)
- Wall hangings (Tracey Emin)
- The Scream (Munch)
- Tales untold (Rob Brannen)
- Brit Pop
- West Side story (Bernstein)
- Rabbit proof fence (Pilkington)
- Rose Blanch (Roberto Innocenti)
- Dr. Faustus
- 'Vanity' John William Waterhouse,
- 'The last Tree' by Angie Farrow
- 'You're So Vain' by Carly Simon.

There was evidence of a deeper study of practitioners, but not from an historical perspective, more looking at the style and work of the practitioner; and there was evidence of a much stronger focus on the areas of study. Moderators felt that this was because of the influence of the new specification where deeper study is required.

Topics chosen for the component

Some of the most effective outcomes were produced by candidates who were given a theme as their stimulus and then studied three specific works that were representative of three different art forms. Candidates were encouraged to explore the theme through looking at the different practitioners and their works. For example, a film such as Star Wars might have been chosen as one of the three art works when considering 'the future'.

Other topics were vibrant responses to social issues. These included:

- Knife crime
- Bullying
- Teenage pregnancy
- Drama based on "Conflict", accompanied by STOMP-inspired actions
- Gang wars
- Palestine and the different issues involved as well as the human tragedy
- Tragedy
- Movement
- Language barriers
- Class divides (Blood Brothers was used effectively here)
- Specific social issues
- Overcoming a crisis
- Messages
- Culture Clash
- Vanity
- The future
- Relationships
- Peer Pressure
- Fairy tales with a focus audience on primary schools

There were some imaginative and effective responses that came from candidates who considered the areas of study in relation to each art work and then created their own work using the same approach, or where fingerprints of the practitioners were evident.

Some centres allowed candidates to develop their own ideas on a topic they had chosen based on their own interpretation of a stimulus provided by the teacher.

How were the art forms introduced and used?

There are still centres where specialist teachers stressed their own areas of expertise to the detriment of the expressive arts working together. Even if centres structure lessons through individual disciplines, each discipline teacher must be aware of the integrated approach and be able to see how the areas of study work across all art forms, and how key words will be represented in each and in all disciplines.

Sometimes this results in a carousel approach, which can work if there are enough candidates to make this a cost effective and realistic option. The benefit of this approach is the level of subject expertise available for advice and guidance; the danger is forgetting that the subject is

expressive arts, and not the individual discipline, and sometimes teachers can forget that it is the way the arts work together to produce creative outcomes that is the driving force of the specification.

The opposite of this is to have one teacher doing everything. Sometimes this leads to a narrowing of the disciplines available through insecurity of teachers; on the other hand it can provide a development opportunity where the teacher learns about other disciplines and how they work with the ones that they know well. When the latter happens there can be a very rich curriculum operating.

A third model noticed this year is where there is a large cohort and a team of teachers, and a teacher will introduce a practitioner to the whole cohort as a lead session, providing the materials and follow up with fingerprints and a prompt sheet for the teachers when they go off to their groups. This seemed to work well and helped to raise the knowledge levels of staff who were also hearing the lead sessions.

Some centres visited used an integrated approach to considering the stimuli with one teacher delivering the whole course; students whose teachers were multi-disciplinary tended to produce the most integrated outcomes.

In other centres two or three teachers would typically provide specialist input, which contributed to an integrated end product. When the latter approach was used, the application of areas of study and development of skills and techniques within the discipline were usually especially sound.

Other methods included:

- Through brainstorming
- In idea making and exploration of themes.
- Analysing others' work

It is interesting to note that Drama-based sessions were often the most poorly recorded with regard to evidence in portfolios.

How were the areas of study covered?

This is an area where there has been the most room for improvement. In the past, many centres have paid lip-service to the requirement to refer to areas of study. This year, there was a much better approach with learning about practitioners having the affect of helping candidates to use areas of study much more convincingly in their own work. It has also helped them make cross-references to the influences of practitioners more easily. These are some examples of what moderators had to say:

- Looking at colour through artist's interpretation
- Emotion through colour and harmony/ melody worked very well
- Where the centre focused on theme the narrative was clear but the product often lacked style or structure.
- Candidates sometimes became confused when the motif was an emotion.
- Where practice was good, the areas of study were considered 'step by step', following clear guidelines given by the teacher; candidates demonstrated their understanding of the relevance of the areas of study to their own work. In some centres the areas of study were covered almost independently of the project and then 'applied' to the work, very successfully.

What use was made of practitioners?

- Studied works and practitioners included Banksy, McBride's "Concrete Angel", Alan Ahlberg's "Please, Mrs. Butler", The Cranberries' "Zombie", Lauren Child's "I will never not ever eat a tomato", Munch's "The Scream", Red Jumpsuit Apparatus' song "Face Down", the film "Mississippi Burning" and "Turn the Page" by The Streets
- A weak candidate will show no clear relationship between practitioners listed and the work actually produced.
- Much use of irrelevant (over-expansive) biographies
- A number of candidates padded out folders with printouts and lists of other works by chosen practitioner, attracting no credit at all
- Making a story out of a scene from an image, linking it to programme notes or a poet's source image
- Inspiration for pieces of installation work
- In one centre candidates made very little if any reference to practitioners in portfolios, even though they were known to have figured in planning and development – perhaps a reaction against downloads criticism in the past.
- In the case of artists, musicians and choreographers, their influences and techniques were used to show shape structure, motif and genre.
- Some centres encouraged candidates, in the early stages of the project, to research practitioners as appropriate to the projects being planned.
- In some centres at least one practitioner representing each art form was studied, which enhanced learning and candidates' knowledge and understanding of the strategies and techniques they were using in their projects. Most candidates studied one sole work in each art form.
- Used well in planning, harder to see in outcomes

Sadly, in some centres the focus on practitioners is still very limited. In these centres there is usually too much biography and too little emphasis on influences, skills and techniques.

Component 02 – Individual

What types of stimuli were provided?

A very varied mix of stimuli used. Sometimes a practitioner her/himself was used. Examples reported by moderators include:

- 1960s musicals
- "The Pearl" (novel)
- Horror.
- Valerie's monologue for Jim Cartwright's "Road"
- "Vincent" (Don McLean song)
- "Starry Night" by Vincent Van Gogh
- "I Hate the Colour Pink"
- "The Dump"
- "Large Interior" by Lucien Freud
- Michael Jackson's "Thriller"
- Alan Bennett's "Talking Heads"
- "Sesame Street" (eg "1234 - Feist")
- You tube.com
- Canvas images
- Last breath (Ahmed Bukhtar)
- The Fellowship of the Ring (Tolkein)

- Every ghetto every city (Lauren Hill)
- The great wave
- Waiting for a telegram
- Speech therapy
- Wild style
- Banksy
- Bonkers
- Kubla Khan
- The Haywain
- Penny Lane
- Bob Marley
- Pop art
- Cloverfield
- Les Miserables
- The cost of living
- The scream (Munch)
- Gershwin's music
- Peter Nichols, 'A Day in the Death of Joe Egg',
- Van Gough's 'The Chair'
- Janis Ian's 'At 17'
- Blood Brother by Willy Russell
- Works of popular music by Beyoncé and Black Eyed Peas

Some of the works chosen are demanding in their own right and demonstrate the way centres are challenging candidates more now.

What topics were chosen for the project?

Although the unhappy and macabre still attracts many candidates, there were more examples of happier and uplifting topics. It is very hard for candidates to act people of their own age, and often work that has a focus on bullying or social issues can end up being uninspiring and banal. There did seem to be fewer cuddled teddy bears this year, which is a relief. Topics reported to have been used by candidates included:

- Stories for children
- Local miners' strike
- Homelessness
- "The Pearl" (individual interpretations of the title)
- "Lost"
- "Numbers"
- War
- Madeleine McCann
- Schizophrenia
- Love
- Honour killing
- Rape
- Reflecting self
- Terror
- Journeys
- Street
- Dream Landscapes
- Love is/Union Jack
- Barriers

- Women
- Fear
- Imprisonment

How were the art forms introduced and used?

One centre felt they had to play to their strengths and so focused only on Art and on Creative Writing. Another focused on the monologue (drafts) with music/art as minor add-ons. There is a danger here that the second art forms begin to appear as bolt-on and so does not enable high marks to be achieved.

Strategies employed by centres included:

- Introducing them after a visit to the local art gallery/museum
- Through brainstorming
- In idea making and exploration of themes.
- Analysing others' work
- Dance and physical theatre were used to present highly emotional or physical moments.
- There was not enough emphasis on the skills needed for effective script writing.
- Drama tended to be monologues - naturalistic, personal and poorly developed. More work needs to be done on style, structure and content.
- In some centres there was very little musical input.
- Art sometimes has a tendency to be used as a subsidiary art form, eg as background, and music too suffers from that sometimes.

In many cases candidates had been introduced to the art forms through work in preparation for their group projects and used their knowledge in applying it to their individual projects. There was further study and development as candidates explored their practitioners and their choice of 'professional' to illustrate the art forms being used. In many centres most candidates' final presentations involved writing and performing a monologue influenced heavily by works and themes studied.

How were the areas of study covered?

Some centres take a formulaic approach to this to ensure the requirement is covered. As in past years, writing frames or check-sheets were frequent. Centres are reminded that a writing frame must meet the demands of the assessment procedures for controlled assessment and must not provide the answers implicit in the wording. Writing frames can also restrict the creative possibilities for higher achievers.

An increasingly popular method is for an example of each practitioner's work to be scrutinised and analysed using the areas of study to enable the students to understand how areas of study are used within their own work. Other examples included:

- Stories about childhood through practitioners' work.
- The use of sound and silence was used to create Atmosphere
- A practitioner's approach to industry
- A practitioner's approach to political or social injustice.

Narrative was not really explored beyond the words in the scripts, when drama was the principal art form. However, it was demonstrated more imaginatively through poetry and Dance.

What use was made of practitioners?

Reports in earlier years have identified how using practitioners can be a challenge. Moderators said:

- In one Centre, links with studied practitioners were unclear - eg Merce Cunningham with some research but no use made of it
- Some strong monologues clearly influenced by (amongst others) Alan Bennett and Jim Cartwright
- Looking at the self, me myself and I
- Looking back through autobiography, monologue
- Reflective
- Some centres looked carefully at the skills and techniques employed by the practitioners and that was evident in the work produced, particularly where art and/or dance were the principle art forms.
- A variety of practitioners was used, often in research, which enhanced learning and candidates' knowledge and understanding of the strategies and techniques they were using in the project. Most candidates studied one art practitioner, one drama or literary practitioner and one music or dance practitioner.

However, it wasn't all positive!

In some work it was difficult to find evidence that candidates had looked at a practitioner at all. This was particularly evident where the starting points were all films.

Component 03 – Community

What research did they do on their chosen starting point(s)?
For several years now these reports have stressed that there are no marks whatsoever for researching and exploring more than one starting point. It seems it needs to be said again, because a surprisingly large number of centres still have their candidates explore and research some or all of them, sometimes in great detail. Candidates need to focus on the one chosen as soon as possible and concentrate research and exploration on that one.

For the new specification, Unit A693 will be setting commissions, and it is essential candidates do not try to explore more than the one they have chosen or they will have no time to develop a high quality outcome.

Weaker candidates relied too heavily on printed Internet notes that were unedited or lacked notation. In one centre, much of the portfolio consisted of work on a practice Starting Point (eg "Animal rights") that was completely irrelevant to the official examination paper. Doing this can access no marks.

Other examples of how research was used include:

- Poignant figures researched from the starting point chosen
- World War 1 & 2 research, sometimes with an unusual or local slants
- Exploring other people's memories
- Explored the question, 'What makes a household dissolute?'
- A significant minority of candidates took the title rather than the whole work and thought-showered ideas. There was also a lot of information based on the history of the work rather than linking it in to the AOS. Some did not read the instructions and failed to notice that for some starting points the title alone could not be used as the stimulus. In the new

specification it will not be possible to use the title alone for any of the commissions. Research into the commission will be needed in all cases.

- From the musical starting point little research was done on the way in which it was written or on analysis using the AOS.
- Many candidates used the Internet to acquire background information for their projects.
- Some candidates watched performances and video presentations.
- Some candidates researched the specific aspects of the areas of study which they needed to prepare their presentations.

What types of approach did they use?

Record keeping was largely improved, often through running evaluations (in diary form) and through examination of the rationale behind decision-making. Many had 4 Art Forms, with some attempt at balance. In one centre, however, the third Art Form was simply arranging chairs around the table, which was then described as set design; or in another case having a statement saying the use of jeans and T-shirt was costume design! Whilst with both examples there are ways that the information could link to extensive exploration of set or of costume, in these cases they didn't.

- The weakest relied too simply on presenting drafts of speech, with little research into character or influences
- Exploring the artforms against the chosen starting point
- Weaker centres presented monologues that were read with very little expression/drama. Even strong candidates at these centres were not expected to learn/rehearse their monologues, reducing their opportunities to access higher marks
- Good examples were where candidates explored their own choice of topic based on the starting point and investigated practitioners appropriate to their own work.
- Other good examples were where candidates investigated statistics and the social, cultural and historical context in which they chose to work. There were good examples where candidates were allowed to create their own context for performance based on their research and they could contrast their own context with an original context.
- In some centres visited, candidates were instructed to consider all the starting points on the examination paper quite thoroughly and formally in an exam room context, which left little time for extensive research to support the preparations for the final presentation based on the actual chosen starting point.

Which Communities were used? (good/bad examples)

This area has been a challenge in recent years, but there was evidence that it was better applied this year. At the very least there was a reference to an institution. A community described as 'School pupils', 'Assembly' or 'people' (teenagers) still dominated, but at least the age of the audience (eg Year 6) was often specified. This area becomes more important in Unit A693 with the commissions needing a tightly and carefully designed and chosen community.

Candidates could say what their community was, but unfortunately did not understand the importance of this in their realization.

Man on the moon led to some interesting communities: space conventions; university talks; Star Wars enthusiasts. Memories led one candidate to choose Gordon Brown; Dissolute household led another to use a church congregation!

- Popular, too, were Youth Club, Theatre in Education troupes and Book Week.

- There were several examples of successful film trailers - part of the increasing use of technology - and of presentations for You-tube.

It must be noted however that even if the outcome is a film on You Tube, because it is a public access site there must be a version for the examiner to see and it is this version that will be marked, albeit in the context of the selected audience/community being related to You Tube. Centres must be aware of this, and if the work is carried out on YouTube or Facebook, that authenticating such work is likely to be impossible.

Examples that worked very well include a nursing home; families affected by war; primary school assembly; venues outside school such as art galleries and museums.

Less successful was where a school gave a blanket description of a community, and candidates then seemed to lack impetus to strive for something different and interesting. In one centre 'People was the community but was only referred to on the Working Mark Sheet, the performance failing to cater for the needs of the audience. The community in this instance is clearly an after-thought and the analysis of the needs of the community audience was completely lacking.

In what ways were the art forms used? (eg The range used, the connections between projects, effective practice, the split in moderated/examined comps)
There was the usual mix of art forms used. Whilst some examiners felt that there were disappointingly few examples of choreographed dance possibly because of the 12 hour limit, others saw some dance work of a very high standard.

- Increasing use of photography (as art), often to high standard
- Many candidates used more than three art forms
- Films were sometimes very good, despite the lack of time for refinements. Often these had atmospheric music
- One centre used pre-recorded film (eg for flashbacks) very effectively, in conjunction with live performance
- In one centre, the third art form Art and Design, was perfunctory and barely visible (3 chairs around the table = "set design", and white T-shirt and jeans = "costume design")
- Most centres focus on performance (either live or via technology) with occasional installations
- Centres are still relying on a bit of script writing for a drama piece. The quality of the script itself often lets the Drama down
- Art work was much better integrated
- Higher ability candidates were sometimes let down by a lack of integration between the art forms. If true integration could be required practice from the start of the course, the level achieved by the end of component 3 would be much higher.
- In written work higher ability students were able to identify which skills and techniques they use within the pieces
- There are a number of issues concerning the making of films: lots of commercials are simply too short, and often didn't fully integrate the 3 arts form. Little or no thought was given to the camera work. Sometimes it was felt that film was chosen so that students didn't have to perform in front of the examiner, appearing to be an easier option. As the use of the technology is not marked it makes it even more important to have a quality outcome.
- Make-up sometimes constitutes the only nod to Art and is not much more than a very basic skill. This is disappointing as make-up and hair design can be very challenging demanding high-level skills.
- The best examples of work came from candidates who saw the realisation as an end product, which made use of three art forms and integrated them.

- Particularly successful pieces of drama used art work in the creation of a backdrop or props when the drama had been scripted and performed. These pieces made effective use of all the art forms in an integrated manner. The artwork was appropriate to audience and specifically used (and necessary) for the communication with audience. There were some good examples of monologues which candidates had written and produced either using artwork in the presentation of the monologue or to illustrate it.
- The worst examples were where candidates performed a piece of drama, having written the script, but where their third art form consisted of a rough sketch of a possible costume.

How were the Areas of Study covered?

- As in previous years and in other units, areas of study were often clear developments of best of earlier practices, candidates having become familiar with the concepts
- Thorough analysis of practitioners

One moderator's advice to a centre on how the Areas Of Study can be covered effectively in portfolios:
Firstly, when describing the starting point, explain how and where the Areas of Study are found and what effect they have upon the starting point. When deciding which ideas to take forward into the project, continue to refer to the Areas of Study. Repeat this process when describing arts influences, including practitioners.
Finally, repeat the process when describing the finished product (if necessary, section by section.)

The preparation period

There were many varied patterns for using the preparation period

- Blocked over two (or three) days or in set lessons
- Clearer focus than in earlier units, with more succinct presentations
- Often had useful running commentaries that traced the development of the piece, giving rationale behind evolution towards performance
- Diaries/ logs of time management for students with clear plans of how the student intends to use their time in order to complete their project.
- Good examples included work where centres allowed candidates the opportunity to thoroughly research and prepare work prior to the twelve hours. Some centres, however, spent some unnecessary time considering all ten starting points in depth before candidates made their choice of which one to use.
- Pages of Internet research is still often included, sometimes highlighted or annotated, sometimes not.
- The potential for looking at practitioners and skills and techniques was missed in some centres.
- In the best centres, art form techniques were explored thoroughly in the preparation period and then realised in the exam period.
- For drama, more character development work is needed with the evidence that this has taken place.

Some centres looked at the structure of performance work in detail and explored ways in which the arts could be integrated. They examined the different needs of different communities and the effect on the nature of performance.

The 12 hours – how did Centres organise it?

- Evidence that more time devoted to rehearsal this year, with clearer knowledge of scripts and movement, and with sharper use of technical aids
- 2 full days
- Separated into lesson times
- Some blocked every 2 hours in school with 20 minutes write up time at the end of each centres.
- One school used the last two hours for the students to perform to the others and evaluate ideas for improvement. This seemed to be successful in this case.
- One centre used the morning for a final rehearsal; the examiner felt that this allowed candidates to reflect on their work and to keep the energy going for their presentations.

It always seems a disservice to the candidates when the centre does not take the opportunity of giving them the best possible environment for their exam performance. There are still occasions when an ordinary classroom is used with no attempt at clearing a performance area.
Similarly, a well-behaved audience can lift the occasion.

Evidence/record keeping

There was an improvement in the provision of DVDs. Most centres provided DVDs that were chaptered and well-labelled, and most provided a fully completed form with the details of what was contained within the DVD. What is important is for candidates to identify themselves on camera before they start their presentations. This is essential so that the correct candidate can be identified when moderating.
The other essential element is that the material to be viewed by a moderator or examiner must be in a format that can be easily viewed on a DVD or PC. It must not require the downloading of some sophisticated software.
Mostly, there was evidence of excellent record-keeping and very thorough preparation on the part of centres and their candidates. It was a pleasure to see portfolios ready, covering all examination requirements, to be presented alongside performance work. Most centres clearly identified evidence for marks awarded on working mark sheets and candidates' portfolios were neatly and well presented. It was helpful when teachers at centres explained the use of the stimulus material and its context.

Some good examples included
- Photographs that traced the development of ideas
- Inclusion of rejected material (with reasons), which was often enlightening
- Varied but mainly excellent, annotated working mark sheets that showed clear record keeping of evidence.
- Less duplication of candidates' work was noticed this year. Some centres videoed the development and exploration as evidence without providing teacher summaries of the evidence. This made heavy work for the examiner to wade through it all, trying to find the evidence for each individual candidate
- Some candidates used prior knowledge to aid and influence their work

Not so good examples include:

- Occasional padding about practitioners (not really being relevant to the performance)
- Some DVD are still not well enough labelled (especially components 1 and 2)
- Too much biography still - unrelated to practitioners' skills and style.
- Centres should make sure that 2 minutes per candidate is kept throughout the group and individual performances. Realisations that were adverts are often far too short, if they are group pieces.

- It is difficult to credit marks when the only evidence is a teacher support comment and no detailed explanation by the candidate. One moderator saw a film of a teacher giving suggestions to a student rehearsing his piece. Sadly this showed that the candidate didn't explore and develop his own work. However, it should be emphasised that component 3 should be treated very differently from components 1 and 2, in terms of the amount and type of help and support given.

General comments

The visit:

A cautionary tale from one examiner: One very large centre was visited, where there were at least six teaching groups. The DVD evidence had not been organised in advance of the visit – DVDs had a running order but with no candidates identified either by description or photo and candidates were not named on the DVD. The teacher could not identify any of the candidates chosen for the sample and had to pull staff and pupils off the corridor before some of the sample candidates were finally identified – a tremendous source of unnecessary stress for the teachers concerned and for the candidates. Preparation for the exam in the centre is essential. Talk to the examiner in advance about requirements – they are willing to help in this way.

Several examiners commented that there was strong evidence that the centres they were visiting had read both the report to the centre on the moderation and examination, and this Chief Examiner's report on the subject published in September by OCR. They noticed the changes in procedures and evidence. Sadly, there were still some centres where, despite it being the same teacher, absolutely no notice had been taken of the points made in the previous year and the same errors and weaknesses appeared again.

Comments on the starting points for 03

1 Pirates	2nd most popular	- This was particularly popular with boys. - There were many (often successful) comic presentations, including a "Dragon's Den" rescue appeal for indigent, non-conformist pirates - Marked influence of Jack Sparrow and Long John Silver. - Several dealt with Pirate Radio ("The Boat that Rocked" influence?) and a couple were based on the modern problem of Somali pirates - Some - usually individual presentations - were stories written for children. These were more successful when they included some live action. - Simple sets and costumes (eg red bandana, eye-patch and West Country accent for character, upturned tables for ship's broadside) were often very effective, adding to comic atmosphere - One ferocious swordfight was hilariously interrupted by the Captain warning the audience of the dangers of playing with knives - frozen action, followed by pirate nods of agreement - In one, a joke-playing pirate captain entrusts the ship to the panicking control of a press-ganged novice, with consequent (well-choreographed) comedy of erratic movements

		• A simple swabber dance (to a hornpipe) had impact, as did a rap ("I'm on a boat") • A piece about the kidnapping of British civilians by pirates. • Storybooks with accompanying tapes produced a variety of outcomes. Some of these were let down by the quality of the narration on the CD audio tracks. Others showed a deterioration in the quality of artwork as the book progressed. • An interactive CDrom that fully integrated music, narration and art was particularly effective. • Quite a few pantomimes
2 Far from the home I love	**9th most popular**	• These were rather flat readings of created stories for children • Monologues about missing home
3 Mysterious Bug	**8th most popular**	• One presentation was a film (an animated story) and there was one solo item where a government official gave a warning to the public about the dangers of the bug (how to recognise, alert authorities and treat bites) • There was a particularly successful comic dance with a "Benny Hill" chase of a mutated bug on stilts. • Some of the most amusing outcomes were inspired by recent Dr Who episodes. • Good Physical theatre links were seen. Candidates that tackled this theme worked well with their bodies, providing good characterisation. • Detective stories
4 Man walks on the moon	**4th most popular**	• Several presentations were on film, often as recreations of the moon walks linked with Houston controllers. • Weaknesses here tended to be with newsreaders/controllers who often read, too quickly, from overlarge sheets of paper. • Sound quality on film was often poor, although recreated images were often well managed. (There was a particularly witty and successful one where street hoodies become astronauts, complete with accent change from Estuary English to American.) • Dance piece • News reports - although candidates integrated art forms well, they were very similar, and lacked imagination. • Good animations, however time was an issue and many were unfinished. • Lots of white suits and walking in slow motion!

5 The Dissolute Household	7th most popular	• One couple had a meaningful conflict of viewpoint expressed through monologues of mother and teenager, each blaming the other for conditions of living • One presentation was a criminal investigation into a child death, with a forceful, tricksy Inspector and an impressive use of occasional mime • Another performance made appropriate adaptation of a studied work, Michael Jackson's "Thriller" • Arranged marriage pieces • Popular with girls. Lots of films about abuse, often informercials that were very short. • Little research into the picture and artist
6 In the Hall of the Mountain King	10th most popular	• Thriller-influenced dance • An outstanding performance that came directly from the music. Fully integrated. Physical theatre and mime used confidently
7 I have a Dream	3rd most popular	• Many good examples of art work (set design) • Some interpreted as nightmare, with the best including some dissonant music to enhance mood. (one very fine 'a cappella') • One well-structured piece on the escapist dreams of a beggar, from street slumming to paradise (=good lighting and sound effects) • Two "Britain's Got Talent" game shows, one with a comically droll MC and exaggeratedly silly Spice Girl performers • "Abba" presentations varied in quality and impact • Motivational speakers such as Martin Luther King were the theme from this starting point. One candidate really got the speech pattern and mimicked the intonation of the original speech. • Several candidates missed the point, didn't research the song or the group, and went straight to martin Luther King
8 Memories	Most popular	• War" and "Guernica" • One, on location to a separate classroom, was an atmospheric recreation of Anne Frank's room, with photographs, drawings, diary writings, recorded dialogue…) • Some letter-reading presentations were overlong, sometimes gabbled, with a need for more varied screen support • Ironically, a couple who stressed that memories last a lifetime promptly forgot their lines • Too many "misery memoirs" (of deaths from cancer, car crashes, war, Nazi atrocities…) A couple dealt with personal family tragedies, an approach that clearly has its dangers • Most popular was the topic of WAR, with several groups giving presentations where individuals simply stepped forward and delivered a monologue

		• World war 2 pieces, memories boxes, stories recorded for radio • Use of candidates' own family memories used to very interesting effect – clearly this could be a very motivating starting point. • death of a loved one or broken homes & bullying. • Funerals
9 **The Secret Garden**	**5th most popular**	• Several were stories for children, with illustrations projected on screen, and there were a few (often well produced) films. Art was generally strong on this Starting Point • Strongest impact was when film interacted with live action • Scripts were often well written and imaginative, but presentation was sometimes rushed or unclear • Three groups dealt with growing of drugs by criminals • Interesting dance/drama piece based on the 'Chained Oak' tale in Alton using still image as a start and end. • Lots of audio story books for children. • Some realisations included effective dance, costume and with music fully integrated. • Very poorly researched by many – a shame because this starting point had huge potential
10 **Ghost House**	**6th most popular**	• These were largely solo presentations • Several were very atmospheric, with imagination and care put into costume, make-up and set • Music was usually well made and used but in a couple of instances drowned out the dialogue • Location mattered: the official guide around Derby Gaol was particularly effective in its impact • "Thriller" (again) proved to be a good influence - a rare example of successful dance - as did "Dracula" and Alton Towers "Haunted House" Performers should recognise that wearing a mask often stifles the voice, so measures should be taken to overcome this (eg by stronger projection, recording or having another speak the lines) • Some effective use of projected images.