

ART

Paper 6010/01

Drawing and/or Painting from Still Life

General comments

Candidates answered the **Questions 1 and 2** in about equal proportions. Both questions, within the context of the syllabus criteria offered the same opportunities. Work covering the full mark range was received although overall there were fewer excellent examples and many less very weak examples were seen this year.

Watercolour was the favoured medium although there were many scripts which had been carried out using soft lead pencil or impasto colour. There were a few submissions where pastel, oil pastel and charcoal had been used which are always good to see.

At one particular Centre, where the candidates had all opted for **Question 1**, the candidates had not only drawn the required objects but the whole table which had then been showed standing in a room. These were all worked in pencil and although none were outstanding they were an interesting departure from the norm.

Common mistakes were the incorrect use of perspective and ellipses, poorly composed pictures, weak colour combinations, the over working of tones, a lack of close observation of contours and shape, and an absence of textural surface qualities. Large numbers found difficulty in portraying the crumpled towel, however many candidates excelled in their use of watercolours bringing out that beautiful transparent quality peculiar to that medium alone. A large percentage of work qualified for the award of a grade C and above.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

An opened packet of biscuits, some of which have been placed on a plate. A cup and saucer with a milk jug and sugar bowl are placed on a patterned table cloth. A crumpled towel forms part of the background.

This subject presented a formidable array of technical difficulties but to many it gave the opportunity to show how accurate they could be when confronted with so many ellipses and the added problem of perspective with regard to a patterned table cloth. The best submissions showed a confidence and flair for handling the intricacies of patterns on the cups and saucers; these were often presented in glowingly transparent watercolour. Much trouble had also been taken over the arrangement of the compositions so that candidates were able to explore depth and create pleasing shapes in space. Knowledge was also displayed in the use of subtle toning and the discovery of a variety of textures. Some monochrome pencil and charcoal drawings were outstanding along with some truly masterly impasto paintings.

Candidates in the mid range displayed work that was usually not as personal and showed a little less artistry; quality in perhaps one or two aspects of the Assessment Criteria was not as good. Technical aspects were becoming less accurate and objects less convincingly shaped. Compositions were perhaps less well arranged and shapes more basic and without contour. Colours seemed brasher and objects often appear to sit less convincingly in space.

The mid ranges were often characterised by a weak composition and less understanding of the shape of the objects and of negative shape. The making of ellipses could also be problematic at this level.

Work at the lower end often showed a lack of ability to show objects in space. Not only could the drawing of ellipses prove chaotic when cups were made to stand on saucers but objects also start to compete with each others space. The work was often characterised by unfinished work with weak composition which left a lot to

the imagination. Colours were often used without much thought and the objects might be heavily outlined and the whole portrayed on one flat surface without any depth.

There was some work submitted that could not receive a grade as there appeared to be little or no artistic merit displayed.

Question 2

Two bundles of different vegetables with their foliage are arranged beside a wooden chopping board. A pile of sliced vegetables together with a knife are on the board.

There was work submitted which showed an outstanding good sense of colour with excellent tonal values. Work at the top end showed that these candidates knew all about the main points of the Assessment Criteria, the chopped red peppers often provided an outstanding display!

Mid range work could be equally exciting, although here the compositions were often less coherent which gave rise to problems of the relationship of objects. Here, perspective was often a problem when candidates tried to represent the chopping board convincingly. The knife could often appear to be seen to be standing on its end in space without support! The shapes of the carrot and onions were less rounded in space and colours were more randomly chosen.

Work at the low end often showed a lack of understanding, foliage on the vegetables became less recognisable as such and some candidates found difficulty in placing the chopping board in space so compositions were often a jumble of unrelated objects.

ART

Paper 6010/02

Drawing and/or Painting from Observation

General comments

Question 3, the study of a wristwatch attracted the most candidates. **Question 1**, the study of a hat made from soft material was also very popular, but slightly less work was received for **Question 2**, the study of a small fish or crustacean. Very few responses were seen for **Questions 4 and 5**, the subjects for working out of doors. Although well over a third of candidates achieved the higher levels of the mark range, more less able and poor studies were received this session, compared with recent years.

Soft pencil and water colours were the most commonly used media, but more studies using charcoal, dry pastels, oil pastels, acrylic paints and crayon were seen than in the past. Very many candidates demonstrated a proficiency and expertise in their use of chosen media. The less successful work inevitably showed a lack of experience and control which inhibited the ability to modulate tone or colour and articulate structures through linear definition. Sometimes the choice of very dark coloured papers for the study created an extra and unnecessary difficulty for achieving subtlety or precision. Most studies in soft media, such as charcoal and pastels, had been fixed before dispatch, so there were fewer cases of damage to other candidates' work. Centres have been advised not to wrap the work in tissue paper or transparent envelopes before dispatch.

Comments on specific questions

Natural or man-made objects

Question 1

A hat made from soft material

A stimulating variety of specimens was chosen for observation, although only the strongest candidates considered interesting viewpoints. Most studies, at all levels of achievement, adopted a conventional view of the hat in an upright position resting on the rim. Consequently, opportunities were lost for exploration of the cavernous interior of the form. Some candidates made a series of studies from different viewpoints: this was a very acceptable approach, often leading to good analysis of form, space and structure. Other high level responses resulted from making sure that interesting creases and undulations could be seen in the headpieces and rims. Pattern, decoration, logos, cloth textures and stitching were always meticulously observed to follow forms and contours in the best work seen.

At mid levels of achievement the overall form of hats was usually well established through the study of directional light sources to create unity. Cast shadows in the surrounding space and under the rims were also well observed. However, the thickness of material, particularly on the edges of rims or at the base of a rimless hat, was seldom clearly articulated. In the less able responses the rendering of such edges and contours showed no further development than unvarying outlines although some sense of form was usually established in parts of the study. Pattern and surface qualities, too, were inconsistent in following contours round to the unseen side of the specimen. The weakest examples lacked sustained investigation, making use of harsh lines and lumpish shapes.

Question 2

A small fish or crustacean

Several outstanding studies of fish, prawns, lobsters and crabs were received. Such work managed to convey a maximum interest in colour, surface qualities and pattern without detracting from the definition of forms and structures. Many more very good attempts were seen, for which sustained observation had led to subtle modulation of tone and colour. Sometimes, though, the definition of joints in crustaceans or the fins, tails, eyes and mouths of fish lacked precision in terms of how they were attached or fitted into the main body of the specimens. Work at the higher levels, however, always showed a concern for an interesting viewpoint.

Such considerations were less apparent at the mid levels of achievement. Observation had been seriously sustained but a limited knowledge of underlying structures often resulted in generalised forms. Although fewer less able studies were seen for this question, the limitations of the work resulted from a lack of interest in or the confidence to sustain observation. Some very poor submissions were received which were copies of existing images downloaded from the Internet with no attempt to observe an actual specimen.

Question 3

A wristwatch

This was the most popular choice, possibly because of the easy availability of specimens. All the qualities referred to in the above questions were apparent in the best submissions. Many excellent studies were seen in which the ability to define the structures of casings, straps and buckles, while still distinguishing between metallic, glass, plastic or leather materials, was most impressive. A concern for viewpoints was evident here as much as in the other options and several candidates relished the opportunity to produce large scale studies, making confident use of media to render structures and particularly light reflected from glass and metal surfaces.

Mid level achievements were well sustained with competent modulation of colour and tone, but less precise when attempting to define structures, such as winding wheels, strap clasps or the position of dials within casings. Less able responses experienced difficulties in observing elliptical structures, or became embroiled in the complexities of expanding metal straps at the expense of spatial qualities. Weaker attempts tended to focus on just the graphics of numbers and symbols on dials while offering a crudely drawn diagram of the rest of the watch. As with **Question 2**, there were a number of poor submissions which were copies of magazine advertisements, showing no real intention for direct observation of a specimen.

Subjects for working out of doors or from a sheltered position

Question 4

The forecourt of a public building

Only three studies were seen, none of which observed the ground space in front of buildings, but focused instead on windows and doors.

Question 5

A roadside stall

Only one very weak submission was seen.

ART

Paper 6010/04
Composition in Colour

General comments

Although only a few candidates chose **Question 6**, the interpretation of a literary passage, all of the other five questions were equally popular. Similar to previous years, over a third of the work seen achieved the higher levels of the mark range. However, this year there were considerably more less able and inadequate responses. While the best work showed evidence of thorough preparation, the weaker attempts were muddled in interpretation and pictorial organisation. A number of submissions also used exactly the same sources for the copying of existing works from the printed media or downloaded from the Internet.

The use of media also varied more this session than in the past. Although most candidates used water colours, some with great expertise, there were more submissions in dry pastels, crayons and acrylic paints. Some candidates were inexperienced in using these media which resulted in weak colour and tone relationships and an indistinct definition of shape and line. Work in dry pastels needs to be fixed before dispatch to prevent other candidates' work becoming smudged and spoiled. Similarly, if a substance such as sand is mixed with paint damage to other work inevitably results. Teachers and invigilators have been asked not to wrap the work in tissue paper or transparent envelopes before dispatch.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Nurturing

A mother and child depiction, for the human figure, birds and animals, was the most common interpretation. Paintings of sensitivity and intimacy were seen throughout the ability range. The best examples were clearly based on personal research, whereas the less successful attempted to copy existing images, particularly wild life photography. Agriculture, gardening and the tending of plants led to some good compositions when appropriate postures had been observed. Some weaker responses simply adopted a still life (paper 1) approach when offering a group of potted plants without any human context. There were also some brave abstract ideas, usually involving sun symbolism.

Question 2

On the move

A wide variety of contexts was referred to for the interpretation of this theme. Many strong paintings were seen depicting a single figure or groups of figures carrying heavy burdens. Road, rail, boat and animal forms of transport were also focused on, though more frequently by less able candidates who tended to offer frontal compositions arranged in parallel horizontal lines. Dance and sports activities were sometimes rendered imaginatively through rhythmic or dynamic brushstrokes and evocative colour. A few attempts to develop a more abstract sense of movement were well informed by reference to 20th Century artworks.

Question 3

A lost world

The theme allowed for some strikingly different interpretations. Many candidates researched from a variety of archaeological ruins to offer interesting compositions with well structured spatial recessions. The effects of natural disasters, such as earthquakes and floods, provided strong information for a number of very successful responses. Others used the theme for social and political comment on the deprivations of war and alcohol or drug abuse, often conveying compassion as well as a sense of hopelessness. Less able responses usually offered a more literal illustration of planets in empty space or symmetrical rows of tombstones in a graveyard.

Question 4

Awakening

Some very good paintings were seen for which the ideas had developed from spiritual, emotional and educational initiations, making use of well planned colour and tonal distribution to communicate enlightenment as light. Many more straightforward depictions of people arising after sleep were well researched, but less able candidates experienced difficulties in creating a convincing sense of space surrounding the bed of the rising figure. The weakest attempts almost uniformly offered figures seen from behind in front of a backdrop of the rising sun or just a sunrise by itself. Several candidates simply copied exactly the same image of a sunrise set within an eye with silhouettes of a howling wolf or a dragon included.

Question 5

Buyers and sellers

Responses to this more conventional theme covered the full mark range. The best work was set in particular places, such as a local market or a specific shop. The most successful compositions developed from considering a point of view which enabled a foreground element to overlap the activity behind. Many good attempts to convey appropriate characteristics and postures were seen at mid levels of achievement. An interest, too, in the items being sold or purchased, such as rolls of cloth, fruit and vegetables or craftwork, enhanced the sense of place. In the less able work figures and products were usually thinly spread across the picture surface with little attempt to link them together in a particular setting.

Question 6

Literary passage describing a vehicle security checkpoint

Only two responses were seen, both offering adequate interpretations of the scene described.

ART (CRAFT B COURSEWORK)

Paper 6010/06

Coursework

Comments on specific areas of study

There were only a few craftwork entries this year. These included printing on fabric by stencil and woodblock, batik work, and earthenware fired pottery.

None of the work was of a high standard and most work exhibited some very weak elements of study.

One candidate's work was printing on a garment, which had also received ornamentation of beaded work. This was simple and not very adventurous but was accompanied by a much better working notebook with small examples of tie-dye designs.

The wood block work was well crafted and designed but the actual printing was technically a bit crude.

The batik work submitted showed competency and was nice quality particularly that carried out on silks. The accompanying study was entitled 'The Study of Nature' which showed well blended colour schemes and a good flow to the repeating designs with interesting shapes and textures. The workbook was more of a description of how the work was done, there was little in the way of design tryouts or any other coursework study.

Pottery submissions were the most simple in structure and design, and were decorated with paint and sequins. The workbooks showed some explanation of the final designs in the use of geometric shapes but the actual craftsmanship was unrefined and the final presentation rather basic.

Candidates still do not appreciate the importance of keeping a well-informed workbook, which has been kept over the period of the course, showing their research into ideas together with the general study of useful forms, which can be made up into their final designs.