

ART AND DESIGN (US)

Paper 0415/01

Observational/Interpretative Assignment

General comments

There were some submissions seen at the 'Satisfactory' achievement level, here there was reliance on copying from secondary sources such as the Internet or magazine photographs. All questions are carefully selected to enable candidates to research from direct observation, but those who do not show any evidence limit their access to the higher marks ranges particularly in Assessment Objective 1 (AO1) and AO5.

The majority of work seen fell into the lower level range and could be characterised by thin supporting studies indicating a lack of involvement, poor drawing skills, traced images and little understanding of how to research and develop ideas. Many candidates at this level had difficulty in manipulating media and rendering form and texture.

Some candidates spent considerable time writing about their intentions. There were instances where these descriptions of intent were more extensive than any actual visual research. Clearly, these candidates would benefit from spending less time writing about what they are going to do and more time on actually doing the work. Brief bullet points would suffice with the main thrust of the supporting studies being a visual and not literary form of communication. Such an approach would enable candidates to achieve higher marks for all of the Assessment Objectives.

The ease and immediacy of digital photography meant that some candidates used it as a quick and easy way to produce their examination work, without sufficient evidence of a conceptual developmental process. There was often little or no evidence of reference to other photographers work, sketches for ideas or compositions, the artistic use of lighting, explanation of process and techniques or the use of variable viewpoints. If work has been digitally enhanced and developed this should be documented and included. There were cases where too much repetition of a single image with little or no actual practical development occurred. Similarly, there were also cases where candidates had taken reams and reams of photographs many of which were presented as contact sheets, it was clear that this was simply regarded as a process of collecting with little development of ideas.

Teachers are advised to read the Principal Examiners Report for IGCSE Art and Design 0400/01.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1: Items of clothing are nagging on the back of a chair and some are placed on the seat. A pair of boots are on the floor underneath.

An ability to contrast the rigid structure of the chair in perspective with the softer and textural qualities of the clothes is what was being looked for in response to this question.

Work seen in the mid-range had less of an understanding of angles, forms and structure but through research they explored the subject in various media. The weakest candidates demonstrated poor skills in terms of perspective and proportion, demonstrating evidence of inconsistencies in technical skills in recording and in manipulation of materials.

Question 2: Two different open packets of biscuits

This proved to be one of the least popular questions. The majority of candidates achieved a level that was 'Adequate' or 'Satisfactory' which was due to a lack of experimentation in the selection of media and development of ideas, as well as little consideration to any background or surface or cast shadows to create any sense of depth to the composition.

Question 3: Two large fruits, one sliced open, together with a bunch of grapes or some berries

This was the most popular question. Some submissions for this question achieved a level of 'Satisfactory'; these candidates tended to show a lack of experimentation of media or poor development of ideas. There was a tendency to explore only one compositional idea or a very limited selection of images. At the lower bands candidates were weak with recording and observation lacking in awareness and rendition of form and structure, and a tendency to rely on secondary images as a source.

Question 4: A seated person leaning forward with their hands on a walking stick or umbrella.

Some work was seen in the mid-range that indicated weaknesses in recording from observation and a lack of experimentation with media and materials. There was more reliance on imagery from second hand sources with direct copying from Internet images used to supplement their own observational work.

Work seen at the lowest levels of achievement often presented a series of fragmented images, demonstrating less technical skills and observation, and with limited development.

Question 5: Overhanging

Work seen in the mid-range demonstrated recording from various sources with evidence of varied development but there were weaknesses in technical skills, and some rather pedestrian outcomes. The weakest work seen had been created from a random collection of images with the final piece being a collage with paint added. The pieces often showed no understanding of composition, showed poor use of media and the drawing was always from secondary sources. These candidates often included an artist who did not inform their work but acted as a 'bolt on' addition in an attempt to satisfy the Assessment Objectives. All too often there was too much arbitrary written notation in an attempt to explain ideas but a distinct lack of visual research and analysis.

Question 6: Before daybreak

This question probably provided the most imaginative responses as well as the most clichéd. The obvious, in this instance sunrise, was frequently the subject of very weak submissions.

Work seen in the mid-range usually had some first-hand material but also relied heavily on second-hand and Internet images; this limited the candidates' ability to achieve personal outcomes. Other candidates had too much written work and not enough visual connections to the title. Many candidates produced sunrises and silhouetted figures/buildings, with sources being mostly secondary and from one viewpoint with little if any development.

The work seen in the lowest achievement levels comprised weak drawings from secondary sources or from their imagination. One idea was often repeated and the many sunrises were often reproduced in watercolour which resulted in murky blending of colours.

Question 7: Passageways

Work seen for this question generally indicated that candidates had worked mainly from their imagination and secondary sources. Where they had worked from a primary source, they often produced very sketchy studies that could only suggest the shape and form of the subject. Drawings lacked an understanding of form and particularly the ability to use perspective.

Question 8: Stretching

Work seen in the mid-range had some good ideas but the observational drawings were generally unrefined, with weak technical control of materials, especially watercolour.

The majority of work seen was often directly copied from the Internet, or even traced images of people stretching such as ballerinas or sports people. Poor choice of media often resulted in poor outcomes with the final image being a straight copy from the secondary source image and no attempt to develop the idea. Composition was poor and, at times, backgrounds were not even considered.

Question 9: Corners

This question did rather monopolise the more morose, depressive and angst driven inclinations. The range of outcomes was generally not of the highest order and quite often had a somewhat bleak feel.

Work seen here was usually an angular impression of shapes often simply copied from pre-existing Cubist imagery.

Weaker submissions were seen which took street corners as a starting point. Whilst the basics of mathematical one or two point perspective had been understood, direct observation was frequently neglected. Such scenes were often totally based on imagination with the formal qualities of light, colour and tone being totally neglected resulting in imagery which did not rise above diagrammatic representation.

Question 10: Market Stall

This was not a popular question and submissions generally fell mostly within the mid to lower achievement levels.

ART AND DESIGN (US)

Paper 0415/02
Design Assignment

General comments

The importance of understanding the significance of the Assessment Objectives cannot be overstated. Teachers and candidates must realise that 40% of the final mark is allocated to the process of research and development. This involves gathering, recording and investigating visual and non-visual information, and exploring and developing personal ideas that flow from that research. The investigation process should involve some aspect of direct observation and personal experience.

Some questions were more popular with candidates showing particular types of ability with the format and wording of the question paper clearly explaining the requirements for each topic. There were a few responses in the middle range, with candidates often relying solely on secondary sources, limited investigation of ideas, and little experimentation with media, to find the most suitable expression of ideas. The majority of submissions were in lower mark range, little or no research was evident and there was virtually no evidence of serious development of ideas. The lack of supporting studies invariably led to very disappointing outcomes.

In order to improve outcomes for this component, candidates must provide evidence of thorough research from well-chosen primary and secondary sources which will inform the development of ideas and lead to greater success in the final outcome. Ideas and media must be explored in some depth, with links made to other appropriate artists and designers.

Teachers are advised to read the Principal Examiners Report for IGCSE Art and Design 0400/02.

Question 1: Guidebook

There were relatively few submissions submitted in response to this question. In general, responses showed little understanding of basic layout and presentation.

Question 2: Soft drink labels

This was by far the most popular question. The majority of work seen showed little research, often copying existing labels and showing no engagement with typography. Compositional experimentation was minimal, with outcomes suffering as a result. Despite fruit being easily obtained, many candidates chose to use Internet images such as strawberries and apples rather than first hand studies of locally available fruits.

Question 3: Food festival

There was evidence of photographic research and images of local food and, in some cases, other aspects of local culture. Some candidates used this to good effect in the development of ideas, but the weakest submissions were poorly researched and lettering had not explored in any depth. Some examples of computer generated work were seen, of variable quality.

Question 4: Repeat pattern using traditional toys

This was the second most popular question and most responses were within the 'poor' mark range. Once again many candidates produced final pieces showing far too many repeats, laboriously painted, which lacked quality. In these cases less quantity and higher quality would have been more beneficial. Most examples seen had relied on secondary sources of imagery, and design possibilities were not explored; in some cases no repeat at all was shown.

Question 5: Children's footwear

This was not a popular question and attracted very few submissions. The weaker submissions were drawings and had not fully explored the three-dimensional potential of the topic and, in many cases, ignored the recycling aspect completely

Question 6: Time travel

This was the third most popular question. Submissions did not address the question and merely produced some dress designs, with little or no serious evidence of research.

Question 7: Telecommunications wall hanging

Relatively few submissions were seen for this question. The weaker candidates had not used relevant images in the development of ideas nor researched local arts and crafts.

Question 8: Vegetarian café

On the whole, examples seen lacked the research and developmental work needed in order to inform a purposeful outcome. Some had shown the setting for the design but this in many cases highlighted the candidates' lack of understanding of perspective and so on.

Question 9: Hospital roof garden

The majority of work seen had not explored the design elements fully and lacked the ability to visualise in three dimensions.

Question 10: Waterfront sculpture

Very few candidates chose this question. Some candidates made a maquette with varying degrees of success; others had insufficient research to produce a design which fully answered the question.

ART AND DESIGN (US)

Paper 0415/04

Coursework Assignment

General comments

Teachers are reminded to refer to the Assessment Criteria (pages 24-25) in the syllabus for the different levels and the marks that relate to them.

Mid-level submissions tended to lack the depth and range of research and exploration of ideas was not as strong. It was also common to see that the Aesthetic Qualities of final outcomes was limited by poor technical skills and there were many cases where strengths seen within some of the supporting studies had not been carried through into the final work.

The work seen at the lower achievement levels was far more disorganised and heavily reliant on secondary sourced images, mostly poor quality downloaded material from the Internet. Many candidates seemed to have a preconceived idea of what they wanted the finished work to be before they had even begun to research their chosen topic! In these cases, the candidates were also unable or un-willing to respond to any additional stimulus or ideas gathered during the limited research. Others appeared to be working in a cultural vacuum, with no apparent evidence of looking at the work of other artists or of other cultures. The value of such influences cannot be over-estimated.

Centre assessments were mostly generous although many had established an acceptable order of merit. The most common pattern was assuming that their best candidates were in the top mark range (90+), regardless of assessing their levels of achievement against the Syllabus Assessment Criteria (see syllabus 24 – 25). Other Centres had rewarded the candidate's level of effort and commitment rather than applying an objective evaluation of their outcomes measured against the attainment criteria.

Teachers are advised to read the Principal Examiners Report for IGCSE Art and Design 0400/04.

Comments on areas of study

Painting and Related Media

Submissions in the middle range demonstrated success in meeting some of the Assessment Objectives but had neglected others. For example; candidates had not developed their practical skills to match their lively ideas; candidates had developed good skills, perhaps through a heavily directed course, but presented limited evidence of personal choices and ideas being explored; candidates had written extensively about other artists' work but presented little evidence of this informing their own ideas and methods. By far the most common practice that restricted achievement was the reliance on secondary sources. In some Centres this appeared to be the only method of working, sometimes resulting in skilful but mechanical work that simply mimics the copied sources and restricts the development of the individual.

Candidates in the lower range presented final outcomes that were accompanied by very limited evidence of research, development or experimentation. In some cases it was clear that Centres placed little emphasis on the vital process of development when designing their courses. Examples were seen of very low skill levels which were due to the use of very poor quality secondary source materials or a complete absence of sources. Conversely, but equally poor, some submissions consisted of no more than a portfolio of unconnected copies of other artists' work. It is not possible for candidates to achieve the required standard and produce personal work in any of these circumstances.

In order to improve performance in future, candidates are advised to always include first hand observational studies as an integral part of the development process of their projects. Self-evaluation of work was lacking, in order to inform further experimentation and research as the work progresses, candidates should evaluate their own work in order to inform what has been successful and what has not. The best ideas will always be informed by researching the work of a number of carefully selected artists which encourages development of

the candidate's personal thinking. A range of media and processes were seen but outcomes were often limited by a lack of evidence of sensitivity to the qualities of their selected media. Final outcomes were often unresolved and a reflection of the learning that had taken place between the start and conclusion of the project was not always evident.

Three-Dimensional Studies

Work seen at the lowest achievement levels was not supported with sufficient evidence of research or development. Others showed only very limited craft skills with a very poor understanding of aesthetic values relating to their craft.

Photography, Digital and Lens Media

Most submissions contained some good individual photographs, but there was limited evidence of candidates critically reviewing their methods and revisiting subjects for 2nd or 3rd shoots in order to refine their work. Often this was accompanied by an absence of any reference to other photographers or artists.