



A-LEVEL DANCE

7237/W: Critical Engagement
Report on the Examination

7237
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General

The paper involved both short answer and extended response questions. As last year, the students seemed to manage their time well and there were very few instances of questions not attempted. If a student did not attempt a question, this usually applied to one of the short answer questions.

Generally this year, the length of the responses to the short answer questions was appropriate in relation to the marks available. It is important that students are aware that the overall total for the short answer questions is 25 marks, whereas there are 25 marks for each extended response question.

The majority of students used additional answer booklets. Sometimes parts of the response to a question were located in different parts of the script. It is helpful to examiners if students can indicate where continuations of responses can be found.

As last year, there were a number of scripts where the handwriting was very difficult to read, which could affect the communication of the content.

Section A – Short answer questions

Question 01

This question used the command word 'describe' and required two examples of motifs from the first dance 'Little Red Rooster'. Many students gave detailed descriptions, gaining the full four marks. The motifs most frequently described related to the Rooster strut and grooming actions. The less successful responses showed limited detail or inaccuracy in the description of each motif.

Question 02

This question required explanation of how social dance styles were used to show the relationship between the two dancers in the third dance 'Not Fade Away'. This question was not well answered on the whole. Many students were able to identify social dance styles but were unable to provide relevant supporting examples, or gave examples from other dances in 'Rooster'. The less successful responses did not identify a style and focused on unsupported interpretations of the relationship between the two dancers.

Question 03

This question focused on the explanation of how the choreographic use of space communicated the mood in the fifth dance 'Paint It Black'. Many students seemed to have a clear knowledge and understanding of this section of the set work. The responses often referred to the location in the stage space of the male dancer and the three female dancers, the contrast in levels, the different pathways and spatial design in the body. The choreographic evidence supported aspects of the mood linked to depression, self-obsession and aggression. The less successful responses referred briefly to the location in the stage space of the dancers and focused on unsupported interpretations of the mood linked to female dominance.

Question 04

This question required explanation of how the lyrics of the song 'Play with Fire' were reflected in the movement content of the seventh dance. The more successful responses recognised the need to refer to movement content and gave clear examples linked to the lyrics, particularly the chorus

of the song. The less successful responses did not refer to specific lyrics and made general comments regarding some actions in the dance. There was often inaccuracy in the information given.

Question 05

This short answer question involved both AO3 and AO4 marks indicated by the command word 'discuss'. It focused on how the use of costume in 'Rooster' related to the subject matter. The more successful responses made accurate reference to costume details for the male and female dancers and were able to provide insight into the connections between the use of costume and the subject matter, often referring to male-female relationships, historical location, fashion, popular culture, chauvinism, uniformity or individuality. The less successful responses provided some details of the costumes which were often inaccurate. Some reference was made to the individuality of the male dancers' costumes and the fact that the female dancers were dressed the same. However, there was limited discussion.

Section A and Section B – Extended response questions

The more successful responses showed a relevant response to the question and a clear understanding of the command word. They demonstrated:

- detailed knowledge and understanding
- detailed analysis and interpretation
- clear supporting evidence
- detailed connections between content and context where appropriate
- a well-structured argument
- judgements based on the available evidence.

The less successful responses did not maintain focus on the question. They showed:

- general statements focusing on identification and description
- limited evidence of analysis and unsubstantiated interpretations
- examples which lacked detail
- inaccuracies in the content
- limited reference to context
- a lack of clarity in the line of argument
- limited evidence of making judgements.

Question 06

This question focused on discussion of how the Rambert Dance Company (formerly Ballet Rambert) developed during the period 1986 to 1994 through the changes in directorship. This required identification and details of features of Ballet Rambert in 1986 and analysis of the development of these features during the period 1986 to 1994 in order to evaluate the development of the company through the changes in directorship. The features could relate to company policy, organisation, artistic directors, choreographers, dancers, composers, designers, genre, style or repertoire.

The approaches to this question were varied. Some responses referred to context prior to the specified period and linked features of the company's earlier history to changes in the company

during 1986 to 1994. Other responses focused on the styles of the artistic directors linked to this period and their contribution to the development of the company.

The more successful responses recognised the focus of the question and demonstrated the ability to discuss the company's development during the directorships of Alston and Bruce, often referencing some features of North's directorship to provide context for the beginning of the specified period.

The less successful responses often showed inaccuracy in the content, particularly regarding the order of the artistic directors, the chronology of the development of the company, and the stylistic features of Richard Alston. Some responses focused on Bruce with little reference to Alston.

Questions 07, 09, 11 and 13

These questions required discussion of how the themes of the set work from the chosen option were communicated through the choreography. Identification and details of the themes were needed, as well as clear examples from the choreography of the set work to reflect these themes.

The more successful responses provided details of a number of themes, supported by evidence from appropriate parts or sections of the set work and reference to context. Clear examples from the choreography were provided, with appropriate interpretations linked to the themes.

The less successful responses focused on the identification of some themes with no detail given. Sometimes there was a focus on 'telling the story' of the set work rather than referring to themes. There was limited evidence from the choreography and interpretations did not always show a clear connection to what was described. There were few examples and some inaccuracy in the content. Some responses did not recognise the focus of the question and indulged in lengthy accounts of possible interpretations with limited reference to themes or relevant examples.

Questions 08, 10, 12 and 14

These questions required consideration of the importance of the works studied in the context of the chosen option. Details of the features of the works and their connections to the context of the chosen option were needed in order to evaluate their importance. The features could relate to choreographer, composer, designer, dancers, genre, style, structure, subject matter or constituent features.

The more successful responses recognised the focus of the question. Relevant works were identified and clear details of their features were provided, with supporting evidence. Connections between the features and the context were made, which informed evaluation of the importance of the works in the context of the chosen option.

The less successful responses did not maintain focus on the question and referred to the contribution of the practitioners, particularly features of their movement or choreographic styles. Some works were identified but there was limited reference to specific features of the works. Consequently, there was little reference, if any, to the importance of the works in the context of the chosen option.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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