GCE

Product Design: Textiles

TEXT1

Report on the Examination

1561

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Principal Examiner's Report on the TEXT1 Examination June 2014

The paper was well received by students and examiners saw a wide range of answers across the whole ability range. Scripts were mostly well presented with students using diagrams effectively to explain points as appropriate. Many candidates sensibly showed a brief plan at the start of longer answer questions and this helped them to write more logical and concise responses.
Of the two optional questions in Section B, Question 6 was the more popular.
Some candidates miss the point of questions and their answers include much irrelevant material, especially when they respond to key words in the question rather than answering the question.

Section A

1 This was a good differentiator and the inclusion of 9 items from which to choose made students think about their answers. The items which caused most confusion were Tactel®, Teflon® and Tencel®. Velcro was frequently named as the non-woven fabric.

2 The majority of students gained 2 marks on this question. Tie-dye and batik were common incorrect responses.

3 Students found this to be a straightforward question, especially part (a) where a high proportion were awarded 2 marks. Part (b) was the weaker area as responses listed advantages of a JIT system rather than explaining that it is on-demand manufacture that is linked to changes in fashion.

4 Examiners were looking for a list of types of information that might go into a designer's sketchbook; this did not include specifications, information on sales figures, questionnaires, trend forecasts, prices and shop surveys. This question was directly linked to coursework and students should have been able to gain three marks but unfortunately, many achieved only one mark here.

5 (a) Screen printing was the correct answer from the majority of students. Digital printing, transfer and flat bed were not accepted. The description of the process (b) lacked clarity from a high percentage of students, especially in relation to the position of the screen and the squeegee. This led to some low achievement on this part of the question.

Section B

6(a) It was pleasing to see that students made clear reference to both the polyamide fibre and the plain weave construction in their accounts, explaining the strength and abrasion resistance qualities given to the rucksack. However, many were confused as to whether the fabric is or is not absorbent, presumably because they had read part (b) of this question. Few showed awareness of the light weight of the fabric which makes it useful for the bag. Overall achievement on this question was not as high as expected because of the lack of clarity and detail.

6(b) Few showed awareness of the fact that, although polyamide is not absorbent, the weave structure will allow water to wick through the bag. Most students scored only one mark here for reference to the need to keep the bag contents dry.

6(c) Very well answered with most answers being awarded 2 marks.

6(d) There was some misunderstanding of when the quality control checks would be carried out and a sizeable number of students referred to the manufacture of the fabric, or the component choice, not the rucksack as the question asked.
The most common checks were related to the straps and the zip although there was some lack of clarity about exactly what would be looked for in some responses.

6(e) Students awareness and understanding of what constitutes a modern material and its appropriateness for a rucksack stretched credibility to the limit. Materials such as Nomex, photochromic materials, microencapsulation to give sweet smells, Lycra®, and many other inappropriate suggestions were not awarded marks.
Those who considered the material in relation to the rucksack usually scored well and there were many excellent explanations which included Kevlar, conductive materials and Gore-Tex.

7(a) The majority of students correctly named the twill weave **(i)** although the structure was often less well described. Diagrams of the weave often helped students to secure marks; the main reason why full marks were not awarded was the omission of the different coloured warp and weft yarns.
There was some misunderstanding of the small percentage of elastane in the fibre blend **(ii)**; the question was about the small percentage used, not about the qualities of the fibre. However, most answers were awarded at least one mark.

7(b) Questions about knitted fabrics are always challenging. Answers to part **(i)** suffered from a lack of detail and, at times accuracy, which meant that few were able to be awarded the full marks. There was often good reference to stretch qualities and the fact that warp knits do not ladder but little else.
A lack of correct terminology was the reason why a large number of students did not score a mark for **(ii);** microfibres are *fine,* not *small*.
For part **(iii),** students concentrated on the polyamide fibre at the expense of the microfibre and this again limited achievement.

7(c) Satin fabrics have appeared regularly in past papers and many students had clearly learned about their qualities and disadvantages. There were some very good accounts which earned high marks; unfortunately many missed out on full marks as they did not consider the two products named in the question. There were also a good many with confused and inaccurate information making this question a good differentiator.

Section C

8(a) Those who knew that polyester fleece is a knitted fabric with a brushed finish scored well but many described it as a pile fabric or a non-woven fabric.

8(b) Many clear explanations of the fabric's ability to trap air and the softness of the finish helped students to score marks. There were also good references to the easy-care qualities, the slight *give* in the fabric in relation to comfort and the strength. Many weaker responses tried to explain that the fabric is a blend of polyester and fleece, with the attendant confusion because students do not understand the nature of fibres and fabrics. There was also a lack of accurate knowledge about the absorbency of polyester fleece.

8(c) This question was well answered with most achieving at least two marks. Students should be aware that a pocket is not a component.

8(d) Questions on the care of products always challenge students' knowledge and understanding of fibre and fabric qualities and this was no exception. A small number of answers were awarded full marks as instructions were clear, often explaining them in terms of the thermoplastic nature of the polyester. But the majority were full of misunderstandings and often a lack of accurate detail. Vague directions to *wash at a low or medium temperature* were not awarded full marks, and there was widespread advice not to tumble dry in case the fabric shrinks!
A number of responses included care symbols and, where accurate, these were given credit.

8(e) Most answers made accurate reference to British Standards and many went on to explain the requirement to ensure that fabrics for children's' nightwear are flame retardant, securing a second mark.

8(f) Students continue to have difficulties with computerised design and manufacture and, even though the question was broken up to guide them, there were many very low achieving explanations. With reference to the print design **(i),** many did not go beyond the ability to experiment with colour and pattern.
Part **(ii)** also elicited some weak explanations with few going beyond the ease of grading the templates in order to make different sized garments. Part **(iii)** was perhaps the best understood application as students made good reference to the reduction in fabric waste but sadly, they did not expand on their answers in order to achieve 3 marks.
The use of automation to attach pockets to a product **(iv)** is one of the most obvious uses of a computerised manufacturing process yet few students understood this. Answers were vague and often made irrelevant comparisons with hand sewing. This part regularly failed to attract any marks.

8(g) Examiners saw a wide variety of logo designs, many of which were creative, amusing and highly appropriate for the pocket of a boy's sleepsuit. Lions, dinosaurs, pirates and monkeys featured heavily in such designs. Some clear annotation often helped to secure a high mark. Unfortunately, many of the designs lacked interest, eg a football in a net or a basic car shape, included inappropriate fabrics or components such as silk, wool, Nomex, buttons and beads, or failed to show the relationship between the logo and pocket shape. Many designs coloured and this helped to show how the logo met the requirement to use 4 different colours in the design. Annotation often missed out an explanation of how the logo would appeal to young boys and there was sometimes lack of clarity about the two techniques which had been selected.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results Statistics page of the AQA Website.

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UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion