

ART

Paper 6010/01

Drawing and/or Painting from Still Life

General comments

Both questions appealed equally to candidates with the majority choosing to work in watercolour, but there were many examples of superb pencil studies. A few candidates submitted work using other media such as pastel, oil, charcoal or pen and wash.

The overall general standard of work remains high and there were many examples where full marks could be awarded. The very best work showed a fine understanding of all that was required in the Assessment Criteria with a thorough depiction of the form of objects, excellent composition along with skilful demonstration of good constructional drawing. These candidates use of colour was well thought through and tonal values, combined with the candidates own individuality, made for beautiful Still Life work.

Many of the middle grade candidates lacked confidence when it came to understanding how to create form and relate it to the three dimensional aspect of the composition. Some of these candidates were not able to produce a sound composition on the area of the paper available or were completely unable to relate it to the background. Drawing skills varied considerably, particularly when seen in the basket study in **Question 2**. Colours all too often received less consideration with a limited understanding of the importance of texture. Unfortunately there was much less individuality shown in this range of work.

The very weakest work showed very little evidence of learning. Images were often made up of flat shapes, with heavy outlining with no particular contour. Unrelated objects were seen floating in space and all with a very basic use of colour or tone

Comments on specific questions

Question 1 *A saw, a hammer, a packet of large nails, and a number of sawn lengths of wood, some of which have been nailed together.*

This was certainly not the question to attempt if the candidate had a poor understanding of perspective. However, there were many who knew exactly what they were doing and those candidates produced some splendid three dimensional compositions. Much of the best work showed that the candidates had fully exploited the variations found in the colours of lengths of different wood. There were a number where the limited colour palettes chosen by the candidate made for well controlled pictures. Many candidates had fully understood the value of creating interestingly shaped negative spaces and thus created convincing tunnels in the overall composition.

Middle grade candidates tended to spoil otherwise good work by not fully resolving their compositions beforehand and these often resulted in only the bottom half of the paper being used for the group of objects, the rest being consigned to rather dull backgrounds. Some candidates did not understand how to construct tonal form on otherwise quite well constructed objects resulting in poor use of space within the composition.

Weaker candidates found it hard to manipulate the unforgiving lines of perspective which could jump around in unresolved space or tapered vaguely into space.

Question 2

A woven basket containing a variety of vegetables with roots and a large vegetable such as a cabbage or a cauliflower has been cut in a chopping board. Include a knife in your composition.

The very best work was produced by candidates who knew exactly what was required of them. Here, there were beautifully rendered forms, such as aubergines, carrots and tomatoes. The use of cast shadowing and the ability to produce work that was wonderfully three dimensional was apparent throughout the work submitted by the very best candidates. Many were able to fill their picture area with a well composed group of interesting objects giving as much thought to the shapes of spaces left as to the objects themselves and all cleverly relating to the background and to the table surface. Some of the constructions of baskets were exceptionally well controlled, as often were the leaves and the perspective of the chopping boards and knives. There was often real compositional beauty in the colours, tones and textures used.

Whatever medium used, the very best work always showed the candidates own and individual approach

The lower and lowest graded work was all too often because the candidates had failed to appreciate the possibilities in one or all of the Assessment Criteria. The weakest candidates were unable to draw shapes, and what they did produce was all too often quite devoid of form and contour and did not relate to the table surface or background.

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Paper 6010/02

Drawing and/or Painting from Observation

General comments

Question 1, *Two electric light bulbs of different shapes and sizes* was the most popular question with **Question 3**, *A wallet, a purse or a make-up bag, partly open to show the contents*, the next most popular question. **Question 2**, *Three contrasting nuts, one of which is cracked open*, accounted for approximately a quarter of all submissions. The **Subjects for working outdoors or from a sheltered position** elicited only a handful of responses.

The most favoured media were pencil and watercolour but coloured pencil crayons, dry pastels and oil pastel all featured to lesser extents. The few dry pastel submissions were fixed except for one which was covered with a sheet of paper. While showing some consideration for other candidates' work, appropriate fixing of the drawing would have been preferable. It was a shame that no exclusive use of charcoal was seen. Only one Centre submitted work wrapped individually in tissue paper, this practice is not necessary and can lead to damaged work when attached too securely.

It was good to see that the majority of candidates written their details correctly on the front, top right of the paper. A few had them on the back. Some Centres had provided candidates with printed labels to fill in and this made the administration processes much smoother. Alas, those without labels did not always set out their details in a uniform order and a few managed to get their numbers different from those on the register.

A few Centres constructed a still life group from the objects in the questions and several candidates worked from it. This paper is really for individual candidates to study, analyse and draw or paint from the subjects themselves. Each candidate should have a separate specimen and be permitted to handle and arrange it. Paper 6010/01 Painting and/or Drawing from Still Life would have been more appropriate for this approach.

Comments on specific questions

Natural or Man-made Objects

Question 1 *Two electric light bulbs of different shapes and sizes.*

The most successful submissions illustrated beautifully the contrast between the solid and transparent parts of the bulbs. This was achieved by both detailed observation and the understanding of the form of the objects: the hard-edged perfection of the machine-made objects, their shiny surfaces, their symmetrical nature and the mathematical accuracy of the screw threads. The space surrounding the objects was often created by well-observed shadows, particularly where the light was passing through coloured bulbs and affecting the surfaces on which it fell.

However many candidates found this a very testing subject and were less successful. A particularly difficult aspect to overcome was the combination of the transparency and the reflections on the glass surfaces. Mid-level achievement managed some success with the attributes of this subject but often did not manage a particular aspect – the screw thread being the most challenging. Some found more success with the reflection off the metal but not off the glass. Weaker candidates had trouble with most aspects, particularly the symmetry. Considering the hard-edged nature and perfection of the forms some drawings were attempted with very soft pencils which made accuracy more difficult.

Question 2 *Three contrasting nuts, one of which is cracked open.*

In contrast to the previous subject, though each variety of nut has its own form, within that there are small variations. These were well observed by the most successful candidates. Also, in contrast to the light bulb, most nuts have an individually textured surface and the rendering of these in the best work was almost perfection. Many of the best examples were done in well matched and modulated colour. In these the space was shown by sensitively rendered shadows in tones related to those of the subjects. In nearly all the better submissions the three nuts had been seen as a group rather than as individuals. This made the observation of the light easier as it applied to each individual and the whole group. Watercolour, and Pencil crayons were the main media used in the coloured work and both were applied with considerable skill at this level. The monochrome versions were also well rendered with a good range of tone being used to describe the forms of the nuts and the surrounding space.

The middle levels of achievement were characterised by good depiction of the convex shapes of the whole nuts but often less well defined rendering of the concave forms of the cracked open ones. The distinctions between the different varieties of nut were well enough seen at this level and textured surfaces satisfactorily described. In some the space around the subject was only cursorily rendered. Candidates at this level were able to use a large enough range of tone to describe the forms involved but in some cases this same range was not applied to the shadows cast by them and were not considered in such a complete way. In the lower levels the space was often not attempted, leaving the drawings of the nuts floating across the paper surface. In some cases the shadows were included but in a tone completely unrelated to the rest of the drawing; sometimes this was much too dark – solid black in some cases, while in others it consisted only of a thin shading of pencil smudged with a finger.

Question 3 *A wallet, a purse or a make-up bag, partly open to show the contents.*

This subject was considerably more complex than the previous two yet a considerable amount of the best work was seen in it. As manufactured objects they shared many of the problems of the light bulbs but also echoed the irregular forms and textures of the nuts. Large (A2) paintings showing excellent watercolour technique illustrated all of the possible objects in the question. These were well observed and rendered drawings showing the form of the container, the many different objects within, the patterns and texture of the material and the surface on which they rested. The softness of the bags and the shine and textures of the wallets were well observed in terms of the light which described the surfaces and forms of the objects. The depiction of the space reached a high level with the shadows, and sometimes complete backgrounds shown with the colour influences on surrounding surfaces minutely observed.

At the mid level candidates often could not tackle both the regular and irregular forms of the collection of objects they were attempting. Some found the shapes of bags easy to depict but had difficulty with more regular forms such as scent bottles or coins which involved perspective, hard surfaces, reflections and transparency. The opposite was true of other candidates. The lower levels of achievement had problems with all of the above but also lacked the full range of tone necessary to describe such a complex subject. Often these depended heavily on outlines, sometimes too heavy and often not very accurate, to which tone was added with little regard to how it described the form. Some decided to look at the container from above showing only a two dimensional view, devoid of any sense of form or space.

Subjects for working out of doors or from a sheltered position**Question 4** *A view overlooking roofs or a garden.***Question 5** *A place where roads or paths meet.*

This section brought only four scripts, all in **Question 4**. One was a view of roofs and three of a garden. All had problems of the depiction of form. A couple were more successful with the space involved. Some did not appear to be from observation.

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Paper 6010/04
Composition in Colour

General comments

It was encouraging to see that all questions had been attempted with the majority of candidates choosing **Question 2**, *Natural disaster*. **Question 5**, *Sacred site* was the next most popular question followed by **Question 1**, *Street traders*. There were fewer responses to **Question 3**, *Players*, **Question 4**, *Caring for birds or animals* or **Question 6**, *Arrivals*. Very few candidates responded to **Question 6**.

The vast majority of candidates had clearly stated which question they had chosen on the label and all but a few responses had names and other details on the front of the script.

Most compositions were carried out in water-based paints but many pastel and pencil crayons works were also seen. Soft chalk pastel must be fixed before sending or the colour quality can be affected, especially where a highly textured paper is used.

Well over half the submissions achieved competent to high levels with a high number of good and some outstanding submissions were also seen.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1 *Street traders*

This was the third most popular question and an interesting range of interpretations were seen including many street scenes with figures buying and selling, stalls, streets, village and city architecture, and arrangements of goods for sale. Some of the best work succeeded in evoking the atmosphere of busy commercial areas and spatial movement through thoughtful composition of figures, goods and architecture, colour and texture, especially in the market studies. Other good personal responses included glum looking stallholders with only a few customers around and were clearly expressing hard economic times in some instances.

Less strong responses showed such scenes in a more generalised way and the compositions were less well organised and controlled with some competent use of colour and texture used to depict form.

The less successful responses depended heavily on simple outlines of a single figure or figures and these often appeared to sit awkwardly within the pictorial space, with shapes such as baskets or figures floating in a vague background. In some cases little or no reference had been made to any real or observed figures or items such as fruit or vegetables.

Question 2 *Natural disaster*

This was the most popular question by far and led to a superb range of varied responses showing devastated scenes of land and townscapes following disasters such as earthquake, fire, drought, flood, tsunami, mudslide, storm, tornado, erupting volcano and so on.

Strong and dramatic composition supported by expressive use of colour, line and texture characterised the best responses, which often depicted figures caught up in the tragedy itself or coping with life afterwards, surrounded by debris and broken buildings or flood water. A large proportion of the strongest responses to this paper were for this question.

Weaker responses suffered from less effective use of composition, leading to flat, unresolved images and the poorest examples consisted of quick crude sketches of imagined storms.

Question 3 **Players**

Fewer responses were noted for this question. Football players and street musicians were the most common subjects so the candidates' ability to draw figures and create the illusion of form was fundamental to success. In these responses and the use of secondary sources did affect personal qualities.

Where candidates accessed their own personal imagery there was a much greater sense of visual excitement and communication of movement or 'play'. Work made by copying still photographs of sportsmen was less effective.

Question 4 **Caring for birds and animals**

Fewer responses were seen for this question. As figures and creatures often featured in responses, the candidates' preparatory investigation was essential for gathering information, and where this had been less thorough the resulting composition was less effective. Weaker responses lacked any compositional planning, resulting in the figures and animals floating on the white background. Some mid level responses showed good personal qualities. Only one or two high level responses were seen for this question.

Question 5 **Sacred site**

This was the second most popular question. In most cases the architectural exterior of a range of temples, shrines, towers, mosques, and churches were depicted along with sites such as gardens, stone circles, statues and graveyards. In the best examples competence in linear and aerial perspective, along with a sensitive use of colour and texture, created atmosphere and a good deal of depth in the compositions. Control over materials with the potential to describe surface and create a spiritual mood through colour and composition was a key strength at this level, emphasising the beauty in the decorative and sculptural design of the sacred buildings.

Less strong responses showed lack of understanding of the structure or proportions of the buildings and little explanation of the space or ground they occupied. In some cases copies of photographs of famous religious buildings remained at a basic level, lacking any personal qualities.

Question 6 **Arrivals**

Only a few responses were noted including some very strong watercolours depicting people arriving in cities or disembarking from transport, as well as a few less strong views of babies and foetuses, mainly depicted from imagination. As with **Question 4**, the best examples reflected the candidate's ability to draw figures and depict clothing and posture.

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Paper 6010/06
Craft B Coursework

General comments

Only one candidate submitted any work for this paper.

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