2010 Senior External Examination
Assessment report — Visual Art

Statistics

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<th>Year</th>
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General comments

The concept for the 2010 examination was Connections.

Candidates demonstrated typical standards in their visual responses in Paper One and attempted to analyse and justify ideas using visual language to reproduce meanings in Paper Two.

All candidates designed and constructed resolved artworks in response to the concept but further development is required for candidates to use visual language elements and skills to communicate ideas and feelings. Most candidates described and interpreted artworks to give an opinion of the artworks presented but generally needed to demonstrate greater analysis and validate interpretations to evaluate meanings and justify positions using visual language.

Paper One: Making (Practical response)

Candidates were required to respond to one or more of the three questions by completing and “resolving” an artwork or artworks in any predominantly two-dimensional medium (e.g. painting, drawing, collage, assemblage). Candidates were to communicate something about Connections (literally, representatively or abstractly) based on their interpretation of one or more of the focuses developed from the concept.

The stimulus provided consisted of a range of artworks reflecting various interpretations of the concept. This allowed for responses such as:

- literal interpretations of the focus concept that represented and symbolised the physical, emotional or spiritual connections with people (Question 1)
- abstract or non-representational interpretations that used places or objects as stimulus for art making (Questions 2 and 3).

Most of the visual responses to Paper One were literal interpretations that used one or more of the stimulus items suggested. Candidates were allowed to use materials (preliminary sketches, painting, collage/assemblage items etc.) that they had collected or developed and brought into the examination room as the basis of their response to the concept. Some candidates appeared...
to have limited source materials for use in the examination. Further developed ideas and use of materials may have assisted candidates to generate higher standard visual responses.

The most common stimulus used by candidates was “People” (Question 1) in combination with stimulus from “Objects” (Question 3). There was a correlation between achievement in the Application criterion and the Visual Literacy criterion, with candidates demonstrating sound drawing skills but to a lesser degree visual problem solving and compositional skills to communicate ideas and intentions.

It is recommended that prospective candidates are given opportunities to understand how work developed during the year can be used to relate to examination stimulus material. Use should also be made of past examination papers.

Teachers are encouraged to develop practice examination papers, enabling candidates to become more experienced in developing a response under examination conditions based on previous work. Strategies for candidates to complete a resolved artwork in the time allocated would assist students to practise the compositional and technical skills they are developing.

Paper Two: Appraising (Written response)

Candidates responded at a satisfactory standard to the questions in both parts of Paper Two. Generally, candidates wrote satisfactorily about the physical characteristics and visual elements of the work but demonstrated limited analysis that was not clearly linked to the cultural and historical context of the stimulus artwork. The information provided with each artwork was not always considered in a candidate’s response when justifying artworks or validating interpretations of each artwork.

Part A (Question 1)

All candidates responded at a sound or high standard to Question 1. The stimulus artworks reflected the concept and two artists’ interpretation of Connections through sculptural forms. The subquestions required candidates to analyse the subject matter, media and context of each sculpture in a short response to each artwork. Those candidates who responded at a high standard in this section were able to provide literal interpretations of the artist’s depiction of the concept in context. Candidates attempted to analyse the symbolic meaning of each artwork but were not able to clearly articulate the meaning created by the artwork in their written responses.

Part B (Questions 2, 3 and 4)

Candidates were required to write an extended essay of 400–600 words in response to one of three questions. Most candidates responded to Question 2.

In Question 2, candidates were provided with images of three artworks that used people and places to document the artist’s memories or experiences and their connection to the world. Each artwork is two-dimensional in form and representational of a scene that provides an insight to the artist’s life. This question required candidates to evaluate and compare the artist’s representations and justify their interpretations using context and visual language. To achieve highly in this question, candidates were required to analyse using a high level of language to communicate their interpretations of the context of the people and places in which each of these artworks has been depicted.
In Question 3, candidates were provided with images of three sculptural installations based on “issues of personal and cultural identity and globalisation” made by artists who live in different cultures. Candidates were required to evaluate how effectively each artwork communicates the artist’s connection with an audience and the cultural values they portray. Candidates who responded to this question found it difficult to articulate their ideas effectively to communicate the meaning and context in which each of these artworks was made. A broader understanding of contemporary art issues and practices may have assisted candidates.

No candidates responded to Question 4.