

C A R I B B E A N E X A M I N A T I O N S C O U N C I L

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION**

MAY/JUNE 2007

CLOTHING AND TEXTILES

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CLOTHING AND TEXTILES

GENERAL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

MAY/JUNE 2007

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Caribbean Examinations Council administered the twenty-sixth examination of Clothing and Textiles in June 2007.

Paper 01 - Multiple Choice

This paper comprised 60 items which examined all areas of the syllabus. Thirty items tested knowledge (Profile 1) while thirty items tested the candidates' use of knowledge (Profile 2). Performance was generally satisfactory with a mean score of 34 out of 60 and scores ranging from 0 to 57.

Paper 02 - Structured Essay Questions

This paper comprised seven structured essay questions from which candidates were expected to answer five questions. Part A of the paper comprised the three compulsory questions and Part B comprised four questions from which the candidates should answer two questions. Each question was worth 16 marks, six of these marks tested knowledge and ten tested the use of knowledge.

Paper 03 – School-Based Assessment

The School-Based Assessment comprised three practical assignments designed to test the practical ability of the candidates. The assignments were worth 20 marks each. These assignments were set by the class teacher. The first and third assignments were marked by the teacher while the second assignment was assessed by both the teacher and an External Examiner.

DETAILED COMMENTS

Paper 02 – Structured Essay Questions

Question 1

This question focused on information that forms the foundation of the study of Clothing and Textiles. In part (a) of the question candidates were given a diagram of a plain weave which is the most popular weave used in fabric construction. They were also given a diagram of the twill weave and one of an uncut pile. In addition, they were asked to name one fabric made by each of the three weaves. While some candidates were able to correctly name at least the plain and twill weaves and give examples of fabric made by those weaves, most had difficulty in identifying the pile weave and naming a suitable fabric. There were cases where some candidates correctly identified the pile weave but incorrectly gave velvet, a cut pile, as an example of the fabric instead of a fabric such as terry towelling which is an example of an uncut pile or looped pile fabric. There were quite a few candidates who were unable to identify the most basic of these weaves, the plain weave. Once again candidates continued to incorrectly give the names of textile fibres when fabric names are required.

In part (b) candidates were asked to give two reasons for selecting a number of garments for a weekend trip, namely a pair of jeans made from blue denim; a pair of sanforized jeans; a pair of shorts made from polyester-cotton fabric; and, a swim suit made from jersey knit. Most candidates were able to offer at least one reason for selecting each of the garments. The responses were fair but lacked focus on the key words which described the garments, words such as blue; 100 % cotton; sanforized; and knit which relate to the properties of the fabric so that an answer pertaining to the pair of blue jeans should focus on the colour, the implications for care and suitability for occasion. Responses generally related to general reasons for choosing, for example, jeans or T- shirts.

Question 2

This question related to the selection and care of household linen. In the first part, the candidates were required to name two fabrics that were suitable for making kitchen towels. Most candidates were able to name only one fabric, with calico being the most popular choice of fabric. Terry towelling was also a popular choice of fabric but not widely named by candidates. As was the case in question one, candidates erroneously stated the names of textile fibres instead of the names of fabrics. It is hoped that candidates desist from this practice with the appropriate guidance and exposure to swatches and a wide variety of fabrics and their usage.

In the second part of this question, candidates were asked to state four guidelines for selecting kitchen towels. The response to this section was very pleasing as most candidates, despite their inability to express themselves clearly, were able to correctly state the four guidelines.

The next part of the question, (a) (iii) was very well done with most of the candidates gaining the full two marks. Here the candidates were asked to sketch a design that was suitable for a hand-embroidered kitchen towel.

In part (b) (i) the candidates were given four symbols found on the care label of bed linen and asked to select the fibre content for which the labels were appropriate. The symbols given established that the fabric can be machine washed with hot water, bleached using chlorine bleach, ironed with a hot iron and be tumble dried. This was well done for the most part but some candidates were apparently unfamiliar with the term, bed linen, and gave the fibre content as flax, linen or natural fibre.

Part (b) (ii) required that candidates name a fabric from which bed linen may be made. Here again candidates named the textile fibres, cotton or linen as the answer and not fabric names such as poplin, Dacron, calico, sheeting and percale. Satin was also a very popular answer.

Though most candidates were able to name the texture appropriate for bed linen and to give the reason for the choice of texture requested, a few omitted this section of the question.

The final part of the question required that candidates state four advantages of choosing bed linen with the care label symbols given in the diagram. Most of the candidates were able to identify the care label symbols yet many candidates were unable to think beyond the symbols and discuss the properties of fabrics based on the care symbols given. For example, candidates stated that the fabric can be machine washed with hot water, bleached using chlorine bleach, ironed with a hot iron and be tumble dried. Not many zeroed in on the fact that such a fabric would be absorbent, strong and resistant to most alkalis. Generally candidates performed well on the question.

Question 3

Part (a) required that the candidates name the most suitable seam for three different garments made from three different fabrics. They were also required to give reasons for their choice of seams. This section questioned two fundamental topics within the subject and it was disheartening that such basics were not

well known. Candidates had difficulty naming suitable seams for the garments and incorrectly named the seams, for example, the double stitched seam was called a lap seam or double seam. There was, for the most part, a definite disconnect between the fabric used for making the garment and the seam chosen.

In section (b) a diagram of a blouse made from cheesecloth was given. Five construction faults were given and candidates were asked to state one problem that could arise as a result of each fault and to supply one solution for correcting each fault. Many candidates knew the faults which could occur but, as in other questions, found difficulty in clearly expressing these. Candidates successfully provided solutions to correct the faults even when they were unable to diagnose the problems. Candidates' response to this section of the question which involved this aspect of the study of seams was better than in the previous years.

Because this area is vital to garment construction and basic to the study of the subject, candidates should be exposed more regularly to the selection of seams for a variety of garment types and fabrics.

Question 4

This question was almost as popular as the compulsory questions and was generally well done. Part (a) (i) of the question required that the candidates list three guidelines that should be followed when sorting clothes in preparation for laundering. This was well known and candidates were able to list three guidelines such as sorting by colour, fibre content, degree of soil, type of laundering treatment necessary and type of detergent to be used, to name a few.

In part (a) (ii) the candidates were asked to state one guideline that should be followed when preparing clothes for dry cleaning. This part was also fairly well done. Unfortunately some candidates interpreted dry cleaning as cleaning with a brush or the practice of sponging which involves cleaning with a damp cloth. Nevertheless many candidates were able to state at least one guideline.

Part (a) (iii) required that candidates outline two advantages of dry cleaning a hundred percent linen suit. This part was also well done. The most common answers were that it saves time and prevents shrinkage. Candidates knew that dry cleaning resulted in a more professional appearance.

Part (b) (i) sought to establish whether candidates could differentiate between pressing and ironing, two terms that are usually mixed up. Candidates were asked to determine the correct method to be used for finishing a school shirt, tailored pants, a knife-pleated skirt and a pair of gents' dress trousers. Many candidates had problems in differentiating between the two processes.

Part (b) (ii) required that candidates name two pieces of pressing equipment needed to finish a polyester-wool double breasted jacket with princess line seams. They needed to give one reason why each piece of equipment was necessary. This too was well done; however, candidates should be encouraged to use the correct names of the equipment. The term ironing board should be used instead of pressing board, and sleeve board instead of sleeve presser. More thought and detail is needed when giving reasons. A few candidates simply stated that a seam roll is used for pressing seams.

Part (c) was also fairly well done. Here candidates were required to give two steps to be taken before storing the jacket which does not require cleaning. Some candidates ignored the word before and proceeded to answer the question as though it was for storing in general therefore answers such as, to store in a plastic bag or wardrobe would not be correct. Some candidates also ignored the fact that based on the question the garment did not require cleaning, and proceeded to explain that the garment should be cleaned using a brush or damp cloth.

Question 5

The study of the basics in the field of Clothing and Textiles continues to be a sore point, particularly as candidates delve beyond the study of natural plant and animal fibres. As a result, basic information pertaining to the manufacture of rayon required in part (a) (i) proved challenging to most candidates. Very few of them could name the raw materials used in the manufacture of rayon. Most of those getting a part of the answer correct were able to state that cellulose was one of the materials used.

Here again in part (a) (ii) students simply named the process without any detail. Most were able to name ginning as the first process in the manufacture of cotton or mixing as the first stage for the manufacture of polyester but could not provide further answers. Much work is needed in this very fundamental area of the discipline.

Candidates, especially in recent times, seemed to enjoy those parts of questions which required them to sketch outfits. Though not particularly artistic they did well in answering part (b) (i) and (ii) in sketching the front view of an African outfit that was suitable to be worn to a birthday party as well as to label the style feature which made the outfit distinctly African. They were aware of cultural style features such as peplums and long loose pants suits, ethnic embroidery and prints and the accessories which gave an African flavour to outfits.

In part (c) the candidates appeared to know the two changes that should be made to the sewing machine in order to make the African hat which had heavyweight interfacing and piping as a part of the design. They were also required to give one reason why each of the changes had to be made. Answers, however, lacked the detail necessary for them to maximise the marks available. For example, the candidates would state that the presser foot should be changed but what they needed to state was that the presser foot should be changed to a zipper foot or cording foot or piping foot. The reason would then be to change the foot so that the stitch can be done as close to the piping as possible. Other correct changes were suggested such as to loosen the tension but candidates for the most part could not give the reason why this was done. Candidates need to be encouraged to answer questions in greater detail.

Question 6

Part (a) of this question asked candidates to list three factors to be considered when choosing commercial patterns. This was very well done but some responses lacked detail. To simply write one word for an answer such as cost or size, though it is the key word to the response is not sufficient to be awarded a mark. Some of the correct answers would have been to select a pattern which matches the skill of the worker and to select a style which suits the occasion to which the garment is to be worn. Although this section was widely known some candidates still scored zero.

Part (b) required that candidates explain the procedure for preparing a new commercial pattern in readiness for laying out on to fabric, the key word being the word new. Some candidates attempted this part of the question but did not capture all of the details of the preparation in their responses, mainly stating that the pattern should be cut out. Other steps would be to select the views for the style to be made and make adjustments to the pattern for the correct size and style if necessary. However, some candidates gave the instructions for preparing to draft block patterns and therefore selected tools for drafting patterns. In other cases, the candidates wrote the instructions for laying out pattern pieces on the fabric in preparation for cutting out.

Most of the candidates encountered difficulty with part (c) of this question where the candidates were asked to give instructions for lengthening the skirt. This process would necessitate the preparation of a pattern before any alteration is made whether the addition is to the bottom of the skirt as a straight piece or as a flare, pleats or any other appropriate style feature or whether it is an insertion into the garment.

The area of pattern drafting continues to be of concern as not many candidates seem to understand that alterations to a garment should only be done using a pattern or by employing the method of flat pattern cutting on to the fabric. The practice of freehand cutting should not be encouraged as it is not a part of professional practice and further interferes with the candidates' ability to answer questions such as this.

Despite this difficulty, candidates who did the question well used very creative and fashionable methods of lengthening the skirt such as adding pleats or flares to the skirt. In these cases the diagrams were well done and clearly explained the process. Some candidates used diagrams to assist them in answering the question.

Question 7

This question dealt with soft furnishings. It was not a popular option but candidates who chose it performed well for the most part. Part (a) required that candidates sketch a set of bedroom curtains with a valance. Almost every candidate got this correct and obviously knew what a valance was. Sketches were creative, large and clear for the most part and well done.

Part (b) (i) required that candidates list the main steps for making one panel of the curtain after the fabric had been cut. The answer to this section focused on the neatening of the side edges, making the heading and hem and trimming and ironing. Some candidates omitted this section and not many of them got this section correct. Candidates instead focused on measuring, laying out and cutting although the question stated after the fabric had been cut.

In part (b) (ii), the candidates were asked to make a list of notions needed to decorate and make the curtains that they sketched. Generally, candidates' responses were limited to thread, and incorrectly included items such as needles, pins and sewing tools. They were also asked to name a fabric suitable for making the curtain. Many candidates were able to name a suitable fabric and the most popular fabric named was satin. Some candidates also incorrectly gave fibre names such as cotton, silk and polyester instead of fabric names.

In part (c) candidates were asked to redesign a bedroom which was painted dark green, had a low ceiling, narrow glass door and faced a busy street. They were asked to state how curtains and drapes could enhance the appearance of the room and how colour could be used to make the room appear larger using paint. Candidates were asked to give reasons for their choice of colour. In addition, they were asked to select a suitable colour for the drapery and to give two reasons for the choice of colour. This section was fairly well done.

Generally candidates demonstrated an understanding of the effect of colour and window dressing in creating optical illusions in interior decoration. They knew that pastels made a room look larger and brighter and to a lesser extent that the use of vertical lines made a ceiling appear to be higher. There is still need to focus on the effect of line in design when using colour and soft furnishing to enhance the appearance of rooms. Sometimes answers, though correct, were repeated within sections and therefore did not illustrate a wider use of knowledge.

SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENT

There were three school-based assessments and each of the three practical questions is worth 20 marks. Questions were set by individual teachers or by groups of teachers in order to develop territorial questions. Assignment 2 was prescribed by the Council for moderation and was jointly assessed by the class teacher and an External Examiner who concurred towards an agreed mark. Teachers are reminded that all assignments should be set guided by the details of the generic mark scheme provided by CXC.

This mark scheme should also be used as a guide when marking the school-based assessment assignments. CXC may require that selected schools submit samples of students' work. However it should be noted that **Assignments should not be submitted unless requested by CXC.**

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- All areas of the syllabus should be covered as the examination is set from every Module in the syllabus. This will maximize the opportunity for the candidates' to be successful in the examination.
- Candidates should practice reading questions and underlining the key words before answering the questions.
- The use of fabric names instead of their fibre names should be encouraged. No marks are awarded if fibre names are given instead of fabric names. The use of swatch kits, visual examination and tactile manipulation of fabrics reinforces the identification of fabrics. These methods should be employed as part of the instructional process in order to reinforce this information.
- Sketches should be large and clear and when required, labelling should be accurate.
- Topics related to the fundamentals of the discipline such as seams and fabric construction techniques should be given renewed attention as candidates are not generally performing well in those areas.
- Part of the difficulty in producing quality answers is the candidates' inability to express themselves clearly. It is the practice for candidates to answer in point form without expanding the points or giving examples and reasons where necessary. Candidates should be encouraged to answer questions in full.
- Candidates should be encouraged to write instructions prior to and while working the processes. This would enhance their ability to answer questions on Paper 2 which requires candidates to give similar instructions.
- A high standard of workmanship should be encouraged at all times and attention paid to producing neat work that is well presented.
- Fractions of marks should not be submitted for the total marks on practical assignments. All fractions should be rounded off to the next whole number.
- In cases where a group project was assigned, candidates should submit their individual contribution to the assignment as well as other sections which will give personalised attention to areas studied by the group.