

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

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

JUNE 2007

THEATRE ARTS

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MAY/JUNE 2007

GENERAL COMMENTS

Six hundred and ninety (690) candidates registered for Theatre Arts this year from the following territories: Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago. This figure represents an increase of 28.7% over last year's five hundred and thirty-six (536).

There was also an improvement over last year's performance. In 2006, 86.25% of the candidates achieved Grades I – III, while in 2007 the number increased significantly to 91.90%. It was evident that schools that received feedback reports in good time followed the Examiner's recommendations.

Three papers comprise the Theatre Arts examination. Paper 01 offers six written questions accounting for 30% of the total marks. Paper 02, representing 50% of the marks, is the practical examination and is examined by a Theatre Arts Specialist and the teacher. Two assignments are given in Paper 03, the SBA, for the final 20%. The Examination Committee is responsible for the marking of Paper 01 and the moderating of Paper 03.

Question 1

This question tested candidates' understanding of the social significance of Caribbean cultural forms. The question focused on objectives Gii, Giii, Sii, and Sv.

Response to this question was very good with the majority of marks at the higher end of the scale. Some scripts showed in-depth knowledge of cultural forms, one of the principal objectives of the syllabus. Weaker responses classified theatre arts components (dance, drama) or generic forms (folk dance) as cultural forms.

Candidates also lost marks where responses were merely listed rather than 'explained' as the question stated.

We recommend adherence to the syllabus and the current list of selected cultural forms. **These should be taught in terms of their history and origins, practices, spiritual, moral, and social values, economic aspects, practitioners, theatrical elements and aesthetic influence.**

Students should also be given practice in reading and interpreting examination questions.

Question 2

This question required candidates to interpret a text (folk tale) in terms of the elements of dance and drama. This question related to objectives Gi, Giii, Si, Sii, and Sv.

Candidates' response to this question was barely satisfactory. Many seemed to misunderstand terms such as 'function', 'portray' and 'staging of the story'.

We recommend that students be given practice in the analysis of text of all kinds, including stories, plays, poems and dances.

At the same time, they should also be taught to see theatre as a live event rather than a literary text.

Question 3

This question tested candidates' knowledge of theatre and ability to link taught / learnt experiences with real life situations. Objectives Sv, and Svi, were assessed in this question.

Response to this question was good with a significant proportion of marks ranging between 4 and 8. Most candidates showed a strong appreciation of the skills gained in Theatre Arts. One weakness was the failure to link their experience specifically to a 'musical or pantomime' as required.

We recommend that students be exposed to as many different types of theatre as possible and that teachers continue to encourage them to reflect on their own processes and progress through classroom discussion and journaling.

Question 4

This question required candidates to recall their research experiences and reflect on their significance to them. In so doing, the question reinforced SBA (Paper 03). Objectives Gi, Gii, Gihi, Sii, and Sv were tested in this question.

Candidates performed well in this question with a good distribution of marks at the upper and middle range of the scale. The weaker candidates failed to specify features of the practitioner's work and also failed to give examples.

We recommend that students be more specific in their research projects and that teachers structure means for reflection, for example, journaling and class discussion.

Question 5

This question tested candidates' critical sense and understanding of critical terms. In so doing, it reinforced the SBA (Paper 03) requirements and met objectives Gi, and Svi.

Response to this question was fair. Few candidates achieved scores at the upper end of the scale. Many had difficulty expressing the concept of 'style'. The instruction 'Briefly comment' was not always interpreted correctly.

We recommend that teachers familiarize students with basic concepts of play analysis and encourage viewing and critical reflection on theatre events through journals and class discussions.

Question 6

This question tested candidates ability to apply the knowledge and experience of Theatre Arts to a work situation and to reflect on their own experience in the programme. The question focused on objectives Gii, Giii, Siii and Sv.

This question received quite fair responses with most marks gained at the middle of the scale. Candidates argued strongly for the relevance of theatre to the job situation. Weaker responses did not sufficiently make links to specific areas of syllabus content.

We recommend encouraging reflection on theatre processes in which students are engaged.

GENERAL COMMENTS

In spite of the difficulties mentioned above, there was an overall qualitative improvement in performance on this examination. More candidates displayed a better grasp of analytical skills and fewer candidates had problems understanding the requirements of each question. In addition to the recommendations above, the Examiners suggest the teaching of all Options offered in the syllabus, as each re-enforces the others. Teachers are reminded that the syllabus is essentially an interdisciplinary one and as such encouraged to employ talent resources of their schools and communities in its delivery.

School-Based Assessment - Paper 03

The requirements of the SBA are a Research Paper based on a Theatre Arts or Cultural practitioner and a Critique of a drama or dance production or film/video of such a production.

1. There were instances of schools in Barbados, Guyana, British Virgin Islands, Trinidad and Tobago not doing research on a THEATRE ARTS PRACTITIONER or CULTURAL PRACTITIONER as stated in the syllabus. These may be schools entering candidates for the first time.
2. Some teachers failed to record marks on the assignments and, in one instance, to submit the mark sheet.
3. Critiques were generally well done and the mark scheme accurately applied.
4. There was confusion of the interview requirement with research paper. The interview is a research tool to inform the writing of research paper. **The body of the Research Paper is to be presented in essay form.**
5. Candidates lost marks through the inadequacy of research materials.

Recommendation: New teachers need to familiarize themselves with every aspect of the syllabus and contact CXC for clarification where necessary.