

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 2008

CLOTHING AND TEXTILES

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CLOTHING AND TEXTILES
GENERAL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION
MAY/JUNE 2008

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Caribbean Examinations Council administered the twenty- seventh examination of Clothing and Textiles in June 2008.

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).

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 were expected to answer two questions. Each question was worth 16 marks, six of these marks were attributed to the testing of knowledge and ten to the testing of 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 a visiting teacher.

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 candidates 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 this year candidates continue 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. These garments were 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 percent cotton, sanforized knit which relate to the properties of the fabric. It was expected that an answer pertaining to the pair of blue jeans would 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-shirt.

Question 2

This section of the question required that the candidates define the term “notions” and give an example of a notion. Many candidates were able to give the correct definition for the term “notion” although in some instances the definitions were not as would be expected. Most were able to give a correct example of a notion with thread, button, zipper and Velcro the more popular answers.

Candidates were also asked to list two properties of fibre which are important when selecting fabric for making a bathrobe and a pair of gents’ trousers. This section was well done. For the bathrobe candidates chose properties such as strength when wet, durability, absorbency and smooth. Responses for the trousers included easy care, absorbency, crease-resistance and durability.

Question 2 also presented a diagram with flaws in the symmetry and harmony (unity) of the design. Candidates were asked to identify two design flaws and give on reason why each flaw did not conform to symmetrical balance. Only a few candidates were able the correctly answer this section. Few were able to give a reason why the design was neither in harmony or symmetry but even some of these could not express their answers clearly.

The candidates were also given a template with basic style features, asked to copy the diagram and select three additional style features to design a garment that shows symmetry and harmony in design. While most candidates were able to show symmetrical balance the concept of harmony (unity) in design appeared to be unfamiliar and as such those candidates affected would have lost valuable marks. In the latter, candidates sketched designs that included both the curved lines for as on the sleeves and collar and the geometric lines on the pockets. Others correctly sketched designs where both princess lines began in a similar position and chose either curved or geometric details for the garment. Students should be reminded that harmony in design would dictate the use of similar shapes on the details of the design.

Exercises on identifying flaws in design using real examples and corrective action would be an asset to students studying the design aspect of the syllabus or candidates preparing for the examination.

Question 3

Part (a) required that the candidates study a diagram of a shirt with an embroidered pocket and answer questions related to the diagram. They were asked to name the stitches which were suitable for the parts labelled. Some were correctly able to identify the top stitching on the collar while others chose running stitch. They were also able to name a suitable embroidery stitch for working the pattern on the pocket as well as correctly identify the area for the buttonhole. On the other, hand they could not for the most name the group to which each stitch belonged.

Candidates were also asked to name the stitch suitable for holding the seams of the shirt together, neatening the armhole of the shirt by hand and outlining a simple heart shaped embroidery design. The response to this section was satisfactory except that many were unable to state that over sewing, blanket stitch or loop stitch were suitable for neatening the armhole of the shirt by hand.

The next section required that candidates describe the procedure for working gathers on the chef’s hat shown in the diagram given. While a few were able to clearly express the correct procedure in sequence others rambled and especially omitted to suggest the distance between the two rows of stitching to be used when gathering. The main steps identified were to:

- Make two rows of stitching.
- Pull threads to form the gathers.
- Pin, tack, then stitch the gathers to the headband of the hat.

In addition to those points mentioned above, the description of the procedure in this case would have required such details as:

- The adjustment of the stitch length to a slack stitch
- The distance between the two rows of stitching
- Securing one end of the two rows of stitching
- The even distribution of the gathers

Many of the candidates, though able to correctly name a suitable method for neatening the edges of the seam on the chef's hat were unable to describe the method.

Prospective candidates can benefit from practice in giving written and or diagrammatic descriptions for the garment construction processes.

Question 4

This question tested the candidates knowledge of textile fibres and their use, as well as the care of clothing and the selection of laundry equipment used in its care. This question was almost as popular as the compulsory questions and was generally well done.

The properties of polyester were well known and silk to a lesser extent, but many candidates were not able to highlight the differences between the two fibres. Generally they did not seem to be very knowledgeable about the handling of lightweight silk fabrics during garment construction. Although silk fabrics may not be popular in the region, students should still be exposed to its treatment even if just through demonstration. It is also necessary to know related details such as the correct needle size, stitch size and tension to be used when stitching, and the fact that tissue paper placed underneath the fabric makes it easier to handle when stitching.

Candidates were for the most part able to outline three factors that may be used to persuade families to purchase a washing machine. Most candidates were able to suggest two pieces of laundry equipment other than the washing machine. The responses to this section of the question captured the cultural diversity of the region as candidates named items used in their territories such as the tub or pan, "jukking board", "beater" and "river stone".

Question 5

This question focused on the psychosocial aspects of dress and tested both clothing and culture and career opportunities. Candidates were given diagrams of three style features, asked to name the style features and identify the culture which uses these features as part of their clothing. Only a few were able to correctly identify the mandarin collar, the frog fastenings/closures and the cap sleeve. However almost all of the candidates knew that the style features were indigenous to the Chinese.

Most candidates were able to correctly name at least one fabric of the two used by East Indian women for making traditional saris. Once again this year there was the problem of candidates using the names of fibres such as cotton and polyester instead of fabric names instead of the names of fibres such as shantung and voile.

In addition, candidates asked to FOUR skills that are essential for constructing gents' suits in a tailor shop that is run by a manager and an employee. The employee is responsible for construction only. There was a lack of quality responses in this section as answers were sometime given using one word such as "stitching". More specific answers would be:

- Stitching seams
- Grading seams
- Inserting zippers
- Attaching waistbands

Others responded with answers such as drafting patterns which is not a construction skill.

Candidates were also asked to describe three duties of the manager. The quality of these answers was very satisfactory and ranged from specific duties relating from marketing, customer relations, purchasing, training and supervision. The next section required that candidates list six essential supplies (thread, interfacing, lining fabric, shoulder pads etc.) that should always be available in order to ensure the efficient production of gents' suits. Many of them were unable to differentiate between supplies and small equipment giving answers like scissors, machines, seam rippers.

Question 6

This question dealt mainly with taking body measurements and making pattern adaptation. A number of the candidates knew the correct procedure for taking body measurements; however, many candidates were not able to clearly describe in exact terms the positions involved in taking the measurements. For example candidates would write "Take measurement around the hand" instead of "Place the tape measure closely around the fullest part of the arm, keeping the tape measure level." A few candidates included diagrams showing where the tape measure should go in order to take the four measurements.

Part (b) of this question presently the greatest difficulty. Candidates were given a diagram of a sleeve that had been adapted to a puff sleeve pattern and asked to adapt the pattern to simple set in sleeve or a dress. Candidates were encouraged to use written instructions only, diagrams only or both written instruction and diagrams. Responses indicate that student could not adapt sleeve patterns. The majority of the candidates removed the sleeve head leaving a straight strip of the pattern. This was a gross error as a sleeve pattern requires a curved head to fit into the curve of the arm hole.

Some of the candidates also did not read the question carefully and therefore failed to recognize that it was a paper pattern they were adapting. As a result these candidates wrote of un-picking the sleeve and cutting the material shorter before reinserting it into the armhole.

A very small number of candidates answered this part of the question correctly. These were well done. In one case diagrams of the pattern pieces only was shown explaining the steps required and in another case both pattern and written explanation was given to explain the process. Many candidates did not attempt this section.

This section of the question required the candidates to list four actions for correcting a sleeve which was inserted into the armhole but did not hang straight. Here again, candidates found difficulty in expressing their answers. A few were only partially correct and their answers lacked the details expected. They were very concise in their answers, stating that the actions were to:

- Unpick
- Pin into the correct position
- Tack
- Stitch

Questions which focus on pattern drafting have also been unpopular but showed some improvement over the years. In order to further improve on this question, attention needs to be paid to all aspect of pattern making including the practice of explaining in writing and by using diagrams. Since pattern drafting is closely associated with garment construction, emphasis should also be placed on the correction of faults and other associated construction details.

Question 7

This was a very popular question and attempted by many candidates. Most of them knew the advantages and disadvantages of using commercial patterns and as a result this section was well done. There is still the need for candidates to give their answers in complete statements.

Candidates also appeared to be quite familiar with the information on the pattern envelopes as they also knew the information that can be found on the pattern envelopes. Most of them also knew three factors to

bear in mind when designing heat proof placemats. As in the other questions, some found difficulty in expressing themselves properly.

There has been an improvement over the years in using fabric names instead of fibre names. Nevertheless the problem still exists. It was pleasing when candidates correctly used fabric names such as corduroy, calico and drill as examples of fabrics suitable for making heatproof placemats instead of fibre names such as cotton and polyester. The candidates also knew the notions that could be used when constructing the placemats.

Despite the fact that commercial patterns are not widely used in garment construction and may be expensive or unavailable in some territories it is hoped that students can be given the fullest exposure to the topic as it remains a convenient and fundamental tool for any student of garment construction, homemaker or business person alike.

SCHOOL BASED ASSESSMENT

There are 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 is prescribed by the Council for moderation and was jointly assessed by the class teacher and a visiting teacher who discussed the project before arriving at an agreed mark. Teachers are reminded that all assignments set should be 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. This is the second year that Council did not request assignments to be sent to be moderated at the marking centre but please note that in the future CXC may require that selected schools submit samples of students' work. **Assignments should not be submitted unless requested by CXC.**

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Of great concern is the continuing trend of entering candidates for the examination irrespective of their knowledge and practical ability. This is evidenced by large numbers of scripts and batches of scripts with poor quality responses, poor language skills and poor handwriting. It is hoped that only candidates who have been exposed to the relevant tuition and those who display a satisfactory level of preparedness will be entered for the examination.
- 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.
- Students should practice reading questions and underlining the key words before answering the questions.
- The use of the names of fabrics 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 reinforce 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 of 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 required 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. All fractions should be rounded off to the next whole number within profiles.
- In cases where a group project was assigned, candidates should submit their individual contributions to the assignment as well as other sections which will give personalised attention to areas studied by the group.