

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

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

MAY/JUNE 2014

**VISUAL ARTS
GENERAL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION**

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GENERAL COMMENTS

This was the fourth examination based on the revised syllabus in Visual Arts. The examination requirements for the syllabus are as follows:

- Two Production Papers based on two expressive forms chosen from the eight forms
- A Reflective Journal based on Theory, Process and Practice of Visual Arts related to the expressive forms chosen
- A School-Based Assessment (SBA) tasks, consisting of six pieces of work based on the expressive forms chosen (three pieces for each expressive form)

The eight expressive forms from which the candidates can choose to study are as follows:

Two-dimensional expressive forms

- Drawing
- Painting and Mixed-Media
- Graphic and Communication Design
- Printmaking
- Textile Design and Manipulation

Three-dimensional expressive forms

- Sculpture and Ceramics
- Leathercraft
- Fibre and Decorative Arts

The Production Paper, the Reflective Journal and the School-Based Assessment are compulsory components of the examination. Hence, all candidates must submit each component in order to qualify for a grade. Approximately 4155 candidates wrote the Visual Arts examination in 2014. Entries for the following expressive forms continue to be limited in number: Printmaking, Sculpture and Ceramics, Fibre and Decorative Arts and Leather-craft. There was some improvement in the quality of work submitted, especially in Drawing, Painting and Mixed-Media, and Graphic and Communication Design.

DETAILED COMMENTS

Reflective Journal

The overall responses were fairly good, with fewer falling into the category of good or outstanding this year. The outstanding submissions had a clearly defined theme/topic around which the candidates focused their selection of artist, art-making processes and critical analysis and reflections. Overall, there was marked improvement in some areas of the journals, especially in illustrating and describing processes. Still, a lot of work needs to be done so as to assist candidates to understand critical analysis of works of art.

Selection of themes was problematic. The range of themes was too wide and non-specific. Many journals were based on "Sports" and "Nature". The more successful submissions tended to individualize the themes /topics showing clear linkages between presentation, content and art-making processes throughout the journal. This year there was an overabundance of journals with "Nature" as the theme and topics centred on the flora and fauna of the Caribbean. Some candidates titled their submission "My Reflective Journal", and in most instances these journals lacked focus and were merely a collection of random ideas and art-making assignments. In the weaker journals, the projects that were explored and the artists that were selected were often totally unrelated to the themes.

The layout of some of the weaker journals was very confusing, with the reader having to jump backwards and forwards to make sense of the information. Although the syllabus demands a minimum of five samples for each Expressive Form studied, many candidates failed to submit that number. In many instances the quality and amount of research were lacking.

There were, however, some extremely outstanding journals, where themes were well thought through. The artists selected were related to the themes through subject matter, media, style or use of techniques.

Visual Presentation of the Cover

Some cover designs were good and were related to the theme. The combination of appropriate lettering styles and illustration demonstrated high aesthetic appeal. Many were extremely creative and innovative.

On the other hand, there were others with no title page or titles that were unrelated to the themes explored in the journal. A large number of the covers were cumbersome, elaborate and impractical. The lettering style was often inappropriate and illegible. In some instances, it was obvious that more time was spent on the covers than the total amount of information in the body of the journal. There were a few submissions of blank-covers, that is, covers devoid of text or illustration.

Presentation of the Journals

In most cases the pages were illustrated with appropriate illustrations and decorations. Generally, this did not interfere with or obscure the text. However, many of the weaker journals contained decorative elements meant to add to the creative and aesthetic presentation that instead were distracting and excessive with little or no creative value or relevance to the journal's theme or topic. In addition, some candidates included numerous pages of extraneous content that was irrelevant to the purpose of the journal. Many candidates utilized computer technology to decorate pages, quite often utilizing water marks of related illustrations. Attention was paid to layout and legibility. The placement of illustrations and text was well thought out on each page. In the less successful journals, some pages were poorly presented, illustrations overpowered the text and images were poorly presented.

Many of the journals were not properly bound; some were excessively bulky with loose pages and other content spilling out. Many candidates also included large and bulky samples of their work for Textile Design and Fabric Manipulation, Printmaking, and Ceramics and Sculpture. These included printing blocks, bags with samples of clay, stencils and large pieces of textiles. It is recognized that not all candidates have access to cameras and printing; nonetheless, such inclusion of samples must be relevant and of appropriate size.

This year some candidates also included perishable materials, such as salt, rice, beans, and parts of plants, which resulted in to a number of journals being damaged by insects, mildew and mould. Please note that CXC's regulations discourage the submission of perishable materials.

A number of candidates also used a variety of inappropriate materials (such as glitter, dried beans, rice, flowers, leaves) to embellish their journals.

Some journals met the size requirement; however, there were a number of grossly oversized journals. Candidates must be encouraged to adhere to the specified size requirement for the journal.

Presentation of the Visuals

There was some improvement in the presentation of the visuals. Many were of a very high quality. Images were correctly identified and labelled. There were outstanding preliminary studies to show concept and progress development.

In many instances, on the other hand, little attention was paid to properly labelling and identifying artists and works of art as well as processes. Minor challenges were observed with resizing, resulting in distortion of

images. Many images were pixilated and others were in black and white when the candidate was describing colours used.

Most candidates presented the required number of samples of the artist's work; however, more visuals would have been helpful in demonstrating the stages in the candidates' process. There was marked improvement in labelling and most candidates included the name of the artist, the title of the work, date, media and size. In the weaker journals, many images were unrelated to the theme. There was some confusion evident as to the number of images to be included from artists related to the themes.

Samples of Artists'/Artisans' Works

Candidates researched artists within their territory, the wider Caribbean as well as international artists.

In most cases candidates submitted the required five samples of the artist's work, with some submitting as many as ten samples. It must be noted that the five samples of artists work can be divided between both expressive forms studied.

The links between the artists and candidates' work was satisfactory. Samples of the artists' work were clearly linked to the candidates' work and or themes. In most cases, candidates successfully articulated the relevance of the artists' work to their own art-making process via media, subject matter, technique and/or style. Weaker candidates showed no link between the work of the artists and their own work. Unfortunately, a few candidates copied random images from the Internet and presented them as the works of noted Caribbean artists.

A number of candidates (many sharing the same school code) submitted identical artist samples, artist biography and interview questions and responses. This is overt plagiarism and contrary to regulations in the CSEC Visual Arts Syllabus.

Candidates utilized a variety of research methods inclusive of interviews (some via means of social media), the Internet, books, magazines and journals. The proper labelling of the artist's work still proved challenging to some candidates. Many illustrations were attributed to the wrong artist.

Samples of Candidates' Work

Most candidates submitted the required ten samples of their work with the required description of process and illustrations for each step of the process. There was proper labelling and analysis of the images. There was also logical exploration of processes, materials, techniques and concepts.

In many instances candidates referred to 'Drawing' as 'Painting and Mixed Media', and to 'technique' as 'medium'. It is obvious that they lacked a sound knowledge of the terms and vocabulary used in Visual Arts. Many samples which were included had no relevance to the concept or theme. Many centres submitted three samples for each expressive form instead of the required five.

In some cases the organization of information was poor and did not adequately demonstrate the candidate's process, and the over-decoration of pages made the information difficult to follow. In commenting on their work, candidates often limited their discussion to description of the work, ignoring interpretation and outcome (i.e. what I have learnt and how this will affect future decision making). The overarching purpose of the Reflective Journal was to encourage candidates to develop the habit of thinking in a critical and analytical way about their art-making processes and to show how different aspects of their work and the world interconnect. This interconnection includes the works and ideas of other artists and the social, political, aesthetic and ideological contexts of the candidates' living environment. Instead of this, some candidates persist in submitting research papers (reminiscent of the Illustrated Paper from the previous syllabus) in place of the Reflective Journal.

Appropriateness of Title

Many titles were appropriate and creative and were carried through in the body of the journal. However, there were far too many instances where all candidates in the same centre presented the same themes, including “Sports”, “Nature” and “Fashion”. Some even carried titles such as, “My Reflective Journal”. The themes were vague and non-specific and had no relevance to the artist or candidates’ work or themes. In a few instances, there were no titles or the title was not connected to the body of work. Many candidates neglected to introduce their title at the beginning of the journal.

Communication of Information

In the majority of journals, candidates demonstrated good communication skills. An improvement was noted in grammar, spelling and the use of vocabulary and correct art jargon.

Issues pertinent to the candidates’ themes and art-making processes were usually well articulated.

In other journals, candidates had difficulty expressing their thoughts and observations and were clearly unfamiliar with the technical language appropriate to the critique of works of art.

Legibility

Many candidates met this requirement as most of the journals were typewritten and thus were easy to read. Fonts were appropriate for the theme and the font size was legible. There were, however, cases where the font size was too small and the style used made it difficult to read. There were some instances of illegibility and untidiness in some of the hand-written journals.

Content

Generally, the information presented in the journals was relevant. In a majority of cases, adequate research was conducted and presented. There was comprehensive coverage of historical, cultural and contemporary supporting information for the themes and techniques and artists being researched. Generally, exploration of concepts and/or themes was done in a logical and sequential manner.

In other, less successful journals there was lack of in-depth research to support concepts and themes. There was also some evidence of several candidates submitting similar information, and plagiarism was evident. Some candidates copied and pasted directly from the Internet.

Data Gathering Processes

Many candidates explored a variety of sources and used information effectively to support their concepts, artists and themes. These candidates explored books, journals, interviews and the Internet and included a reference page in the journals. Overall, the information gathered was relevant to the themes/titles or art-making processes. There was also evidence of personal reflection by many candidates. However, in general, more variety in the collection and effective use of the information gathered is needed. Many candidates printed information from the Internet and glued it directly onto the pages of the journals. Teachers need to spend some time explaining ‘plagiarism’ to students. A consequence of the lack of understanding of plagiarism on the part of some candidates was a lot of padding of the journals with irrelevant information. In some instances, books and catalogues were cut up and pasted into journals.

Critical Analysis

Although there were many outstanding journals, there were some weaknesses shown in this area. There needs to be more evidence of insight, analysis and conclusions drawn. There was often limited reference to the elements and principles of design in reference to pieces shown or produced by candidates. There was lack of depth and substance in the discourse. This trend has continued from previous years.

However, when compared with previous years there was an improvement in candidates' attempts to describe, interpret and evaluate both the artist and their own artworks. The less successful candidates limited their analysis to brief descriptions.

Overall, there has to be better guidance and supervision of candidates when preparing journals. It is recommended that Ministries of Education assist teachers by holding workshops to address the concerns raised.

Production Paper

Two-Dimensional Expressive Forms

Expressive Form A — Drawing

This continues to be one of the more popular expressive forms. All questions were attempted.

Overall, the skills demonstrated in this area did not meet the required standard expected at this level. Basic observational skills, understanding of proportion, perspective, foreshortening, the human form and structure need improvement. Candidates need more exposure and practice in drawing from observation and live forms and NOT photographs.

Question 1

Candidates were required to draw a profile of a figure with braided hair and the chin resting on one hand. The objectives of this question were to demonstrate knowledge of the human structure and proportions. In addition, it demanded correct use of tonal values to show an understanding of form, light source and shadows.

In the more successful responses, the dominant media used were graphite and pencil crayons on paper. A wide range of tone and colour values and texture were explored. Candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the shape and proportion of the head and other limbs in relation to the body. They were able to capture the personality of the model in great detail. They also demonstrated understanding of light sources and shadows. It must be noted that there was some measure of success in the treatment of the braided hair which often times lent to a visual, tactile feeling, seemingly coming off the page and the feeling of the tension of the scalp was also evident due to the successful handling of the medium. However, with regard to limbs, facial expression, treatment of the eyes, caricature, and shoulder to head ratio there was evidence of some challenges.

In the less successful responses, the candidates lacked understanding of the form and proportion of the human body. Many neglected to draw the figure 'in profile' as required by the question and some candidates produced a frontal drawing rather than a profile. Careful consideration must be given to the reading and interpretation of examination questions.

Many candidates were not competent in the use of media such as charcoal, pastels and pen and ink. Some candidates attempted to mix media and this was unsuccessful. Some candidates worked from still photographs as opposed to live models. There was also evidence of many irrelevant background images in the drawings as well.

Question 2

Question 2 asked for a drawing of a figure sitting astride a chair with the elbows resting on the back of the chair. It required a sound knowledge of the human form, proportion, tonal values and the treatment of clothing and folds. Generally, the responses to this question were fairly good.

In the successful responses, candidates demonstrated some understanding of the form and proportion of the human body. Candidates used tonal values to show shadows and light sources effectively. The exploration of a variety of media was evident and successful. A range of textures was explored and the fabric and folds of the clothing were handled well. The most popular media were graphite and pencil crayons on paper.

The less successful responses demonstrated difficulty with proportion, tonal values and the use of media. Many candidates had difficulty with foreshortening of limbs. Attempts at mixing media were unsuccessful. Many of the candidates did not understand the meaning of the term "astride". In many instances where the model sat astride the chair there were exaggerations in the rendering of the legs. This challenge resulted in issues with foreshortening of the legs and the proportions of the hands and feet. Many candidates also focused on irrelevant background images.

Question 3

Question 3 required candidates to draw an arrangement of five boxes of varying sizes. The boxes were to be stacked in the corner of a room, with two of the boxes opened to show their contents. This question demanded good knowledge of multiple perspectives, the creation of cuboids and the use of tone and colour values to show form, depth, texture and light.

For the more successful responses, candidates showed the illusion of depth and space, in and around the boxes. The majority had a basic knowledge of perspective. Candidates were able to use tonal values to show the effect of light and shadows. They were also proficient in demonstrating various textures on the boxes. The dominant media used were graphite and pencil crayons on paper. Most compositions were effectively arranged.

In the less successful responses, candidates did not demonstrate sufficient knowledge of perspective and basic line construction techniques. Many of the candidates presented poorly constructed compositions with little or no thought given to the arrangement of the boxes or variation in the size of the boxes. On the other hand, there was the extreme where some candidates chose boxes that were much too small and some compositions were also rendered on a very small scale, which made it very difficult to decipher exactly what the subject matter was really about.

Many did not show mastery of the media used, such as wax crayons, oil pastels and charcoal. In many instances, the design and composition were weak because the background or negative space was too loud and distracting, and basically overpowered the composition. In some instances, candidates spent time dealing with peripheral aspects of the composition, such as cupboards, doors, windows, brick walls, grill work and distressed wood rather than focusing on developing the required subject matter. Often times, the inclusion of a background proved distracting and because of little to no tonal variation the boxes were virtually nonexistent in the composition.

In some instances, contents presented in the boxes seemed like an afterthought or mere drawing requirement as specified by the question rather than a sincere commitment to the drawing exercise, and there was an overwhelming absence of objects in many of the boxes as well.

Question 4

This question required candidates to draw a composition made up of a variety of organic and manmade forms; specifically a kitchen towel, half of a cabbage, a hand of bananas and two other fruits or vegetables, all arranged on a table. It required some knowledge of composition, form, light, shadow and texture.

Both graphite and pencil crayons were used for this composition. With the use of coloured crayons and pencils the candidates explored tonal values, contrast and texture very skilfully. There were some good examples using pen and ink with stippling and crosshatching techniques. The compositions were generally bold and dramatic with some filling the picture frame.

The less successful responses displayed difficulty with the arrangement of the items into a pleasing composition. Some compositions included patterned fabric, which increased the level of difficulty for the candidates. Many of these candidates struggled with representing the folds in the fabric and in some instances became overwhelmed with the patterned fabric of the kitchen towel. They spent too much time on the fabric and neglected the organic items in the arrangement. Some lacked a sound grasp of form, tonal values as well as light and shadow and texture. This was evident as there was an absence of critical transitioning from light areas to mid-tones, to darker tones in many of the submissions. Some candidates did not pay attention to grounding the composition and this resulted in the floating effect. It was also evident that candidates needed to become much more intimate with their subject matter and pay attention to the examination specifications of the question. While there was the requirement to draw half of the cabbage, many of the candidates instead chose to draw a full cabbage head. Such is important, as it is an indication as to how time should be valued in the execution of the examination requirements.

Expressive Form B — Painting and Mixed Media

There has been quite a lot of improvement seen in this expressive form. Most responses were innovative and aesthetically pleasing. Preparatory work with development of the concept and design was submitted with the pieces. A high level of skill was seen with the use of a wide variety of media.

There was a marked improvement in the work submitted for this expressive form. The majority of candidates attached preparatory studies which in most cases gave additional insight and meaning to the pieces. There was considerable originality and innovation seen in the approach and interpretation of the themes. A high level of skill was demonstrated in the handling of a variety of media and there were some excellent examples of mixed media work. In the outstanding compositions, candidates demonstrated a sound knowledge of the elements and principles of design and the work was aesthetically pleasing.

Question 1

The theme was “Invasion”. The more successful responses showed good research and candidates generally thought outside of the box. The theme was widely interpreted as it lent itself to an array of serious messages and humorous expression. Portrayals ranged from physical invasions of soldiers, ants, snails, aliens from outer space and other real or imagined creatures. There were also metaphorical interpretations of cultural invasions and even personal interpretations by candidates with images of invasions of their thoughts and feelings. Several submissions demonstrated good levels of research and preparation. Some pieces, though well planned, fairly intricate and detailed apparently required time beyond that allowed by the examination and as a result some artworks were incomplete.

A variety of materials and techniques were explored. The less successful responses lacked research on the theme and demonstrated little creativity and originality. The final pieces were poorly executed and showed no exploration of media.

Question 2

The theme was “Submerged”. There were few outstanding responses to this theme demonstrated through preparatory studies, detailed sketches as well as research from the Internet and books. While most candidates chose to render underwater scenes, it was evident that many pieces required further studies of water, waves and reflections. There was a fair amount of creativity and dramatic renderings in candidates’ presentations. Some candidates provided written statements that unfortunately tended to be solely descriptive rather than explaining the symbolism and meaning of their work.

The weaker responses lacked depth, perspective and interest. A few showed skill in the use of techniques and materials. Several candidates found a particular image on the Internet and many from a number of territories simply reproduced this image, some with some slight variation. In these cases, the scores for originality were minimal. There were basic flaws in the interpretation of this theme. Many used inappropriate materials that were poorly applied.

Question 3

The theme was “Chequered”, and there was a limited number of successful responses. Many of the candidates who selected this question simply created a chequered background with images superimposed in the foreground. Some created patterned chequered designs with optical illusions that were very successful. The less successful responses were weak in craftsmanship and design. They included irrelevant and distracting elements. There were significant errors in the application of skills. Overall, the responses did not meet the standards required at this level.

This question appeared to have posed some difficulty in its interpretation, since quite a few pieces were received without written statements. The few artworks that were submitted tended to be more descriptive than interpretive. Successful responses were clearly articulated in the preparatory work for the question and demonstrated detailed planning, such as sketches that showed chequered plains in perspective or how chequered patterns would appear as it flowed and folded.

Question 4

The theme was “Graffiti”, and there were some highly successful responses illustrating different types of graffiti. Many employed mixed-media techniques and were very successful. There was some attempt to create aesthetically pleasing compositions with a variety of lines, shapes and the illusion of depth. Many candidates thought outside of the box to create some exciting compositions, approaching the response to this question from familiar and personal perspectives or highlighting current social and community issues.

In converse, some candidates chose literal interpretations of painted words and images against a brick wall. It was felt that in many instances very little research of the theme was carried out and many candidates chose to approach this theme intuitively. Many paid little attention to design and composition and layouts were weak. A variety of media and materials were explored but they were not skillfully applied.

Expressive Form C — Graphic and Communication Design

This was one of the most popular expressive forms. Question 2 was the most popular and Question 3 the least popular.

The responses displayed a vast improvement in terms of layout, lettering styles and the use of appropriate illustrations. The computer-aided work has shown a vast improvement in the level of skill in manipulating the media.

Most candidates submitted preparatory work and the quality has improved. Successful responses demonstrated good placement of text, good choice of images, font, colour and font size. The weak responses showed that candidates did not adequately demonstrate an understanding of effective use of space, particularly in arranging illustration and text.

Question 1

This question required candidates to design and produce a poster promoting a community cricket match.

Candidates utilized a variety of media such as watercolour, pen and ink, pencil markers, oil and chalk pastels and paint to answer the question. The question required candidates to produce a poster to promote a community cricket match. The rudiments of a cricket competition were evident in the majority of the illustrations. In the successful responses, candidates demonstrated the creative use of elements of cricket, (wickets, balls and players) the playful use of lettering and illustration in creating the design. Most candidates included all the relevant information required for an event poster (such as date, time, venue and admission) using headlines and secondary information.

Some candidates demonstrated a high level of experience and research that exceeded the conventional standards of what an advertising poster should look like. Other candidates used the computer to produce the preliminary studies but completed the final piece by hand, and achieved a lower grade due to the final

outcome. Large numbers of candidates also took images from the Internet, but many also took their own photographs indicating that more candidates are using various technological devices to support their art-making process. These pieces stood out because of their originality.

The less successful responses had a lot of secondary information that tended to dominate the primary information. The overcrowding of lettering was noticeable. For example, some posters were designed with more lettering than illustration. In others, too many font styles were used. The use of design elements in many posters was confusing. There was a lack of skill in using certain media. Some images were downloaded directly from the Internet and pasted to the posters.

In the weaker responses, there was usually little or no originality. Although there were some potentially good illustrations using a variety of media, they were poorly executed. The images appeared flat and some candidates lacked the skill to construct and render lettering/text effectively. Layout was poor due in some measure to poor colour choices and a lack of contrast between background and text. In some instances, handwriting was used instead of a lettering style.

Question 2

This question required candidates to design and produce the cover of a child's book entitled, "Caribbean Bedtime Stories". It was the most popular question and there were some excellent responses, many demonstrating appropriate layout, images, and overall good designs.

Many utilized unconventional methods of cover design by cutting and pasting elements to create relief. Some candidates incorporated folklore and other symbols of the Caribbean lifestyle, providing the viewer with much insight into a variety of local and regional cultural aspects such as the 'Rolling Calf' from Jamaica, 'Tata Duende' from Belize and 'The Mermaid' of Trinidad and Tobago, which demonstrated some meaningful level of research. Some candidates displayed superior understanding of preliminary studies, evidence of research, processes, the computer graphics software used and the inclusion of the appropriate jargon. Suitable illustrations related to the Caribbean theme were also selected. Some candidates designed the front, spine and back covers and these were accepted as they were done within the required measurements. Successful book covers also showed an understanding of the style and age group for whom the book was suited.

In the less successful responses, candidates needed to spend more time researching the theme. There were many clichéd images and interpretations using coconut trees with hammocks and beaches. More attention should have been paid to size requirements. These responses demonstrated that candidates did not spend enough time researching and understanding the requirements of the questions. Some embellished and unsuitable lettering styles made the words difficult to read. The final designs generally lacked aesthetic appeal. Some candidates misinterpreted the question, producing book covers for horror stories, which were poorly executed and inappropriate for children. Text included hand-drawn lettering, computer fonts and handwriting. There were instances where candidates used stencils to create their lettered information.

Question 3

This was the least popular question, attempted by a few candidates. The question required the use of appropriate computer software to produce a four-fold tourism poster promoting the 2015 calendar of events in the candidates' country. Generally, the candidates who attempted this question achieved positive results that conceptualized and developed excellent designs. In the less successful responses candidates experienced difficulty with size, concepts and the rudiments for producing a fold-out folder.

Question 4

This was the third most popular question. There were some excellent responses which displayed a superior understanding of design elements and layout techniques. The question asked for appropriate computer software to be used to illustrate a page of a children's story-book entitled, "The Enchanted River". Candidates were asked to include the text provided in their illustrations. For the most exciting responses,

candidates pulled elements from the text to create aesthetically pleasing compositions. Candidates displayed a superior understanding of the elements and principles of good design.

Candidates need to do more research on font styles and their uses. They must remember that preparatory studies are a requirement of this examination. Schools are to note that multiple candidate studies are not to be submitted on the same CD. Each candidate's work is to be submitted on his or her individual CD. Information and illustrations are not to be duplicated and reproduced as the candidate's own work. They must be manipulated to make the design their own. Candidates must label both the CD and the examination piece with their registration number. Candidates are reminded to submit preparatory studies on CDs and not flash drives or on memory cards. Candidates using computer-aided designs must provide evidence of resources by submitting a folder of the pictures copied on to the CD which also accompanies the references.

Expressive Form D — Printmaking

For this expressive form Question 2 was the most popular and Question 4 the least popular, and there were some good responses to some of the questions. However, most candidates showed a lack of basic understanding of printmaking. The elements and principles of design were not observed in the compositions. The use of line, texture, contrast and form were not evident in the prints. There is still some confusion about printmaking and printing in textiles. Candidates are still presenting prints on fabric. The idea of 'editions' is also misunderstood as candidates continue to do three prints on one sheet of paper, quite often doing each print in a different colour.

However there was evidence of a better understanding of some of the technical requirements of this expressive form.

Question 1

The theme was "The Bridge", and there were some very good responses for this question. Preliminary studies accompanied most pieces. In the less successful pieces, candidates had difficulty with registration and there was a lot of bleeding of the ink and smudging of the prints. The elements and principles of design were not fully explored in the designs. The prints did not always show variety of lines, textures and contrast.

Question 2

The theme was "Coconuts" and there were some excellent prints, accompanied by preparatory studies, based on this theme. Bunches of coconuts lent themselves to very interesting textures, lines and areas of contrast. Some responses, however, did not meet the required standard and the designs lacked creativity, originality and imagination. The designs were minimal and did not utilize the elements and principles of design. Many had poor registration. Some candidates concentrated more on the use of colour to the detriment of the other elements of design. The improper inking of blocks affected registration and the intensity and value of colours.

Question 3

Very few candidates responded to this question for which the theme was "Shadows". There were some good responses, which were very creative and original. Poor execution marred some of these responses. There was little variety shown in the use of lines and textures and compositions appeared uninteresting. Some more research and preparatory studies would have helped to shape more successful compositions.

Question 4

The theme was "Inside Out", and this question it was attempted by very few candidates. There were some good responses. This question pushed candidates to think outside of the box. Some candidates had good ideas but fell down in their execution. Much attention was not paid to the elements and principles of design. Registration was weak in many instances.

Expressive Form E — Textile Design and Manipulation

Question 3 was the most popular question and Question 2 was the least popular.

There were some excellent responses with the tie-dye techniques complementing the printed motifs. The prints were done in more than one colour and they were clean with excellent registration. Preparatory studies showed the development of the designs. There was improvement in the understanding and execution of fabric manipulation techniques. There was also improvement in the use of other surface decoration techniques. However, more attention should be paid to the number of techniques the question required. Many tie-dyed pieces were pale and ineffective because the candidates used synthetic fabrics for dyeing. It should be noted that research and preparatory studies would assist with more interesting designs.

Question 1

Question 1 required candidates to produce the front panel of an evening bag, using three fabric manipulation techniques. The more successful responses consisted of interesting, balanced designs that used the three manipulative techniques. The most popular techniques were pleating, tucking, quilting and gathering. Fewer candidates attempted smocking and trapunto. The less successful responses did not have the required number of techniques. In many instances, there was obvious misunderstanding about fabric manipulation and surface decoration techniques.

Question 2

This question required candidates to design and produce a wall hanging titled “Market Day”, using a combination of tie-dye, appliqué and embroidery techniques. This was the least popular question. The more successful responses showed evidence of research and the candidates created aesthetically pleasing designs of Caribbean market settings. Fabrics were appropriately dyed to portray blue skies, hills and brown earth. Then appliqué and embroidery were used to apply figures such as vendors and shoppers with boxes and baskets of fruits, vegetables and other ware.

The less successful responses showed little evidence of preparatory study and therefore compositions were a bit disordered. Instead of using hand or machine stitches to apply fabric to the background many candidates used glue.

Question 3

This question required candidates to design and produce a metre of fabric using a combination of tie-dye and printing techniques. In the more successful responses, candidates demonstrated thorough research and planning in the selection of appropriate fabrics. The tie-dyeing used techniques and colours which complemented the designs. The candidates demonstrated a high level of skill in the registration and printing of the designs, and utilized the required number of colours. Prints were done using block and stencil techniques.

There was some confusion interpreting the term ‘all over’ design. The random and spotting layout was used in many instances and this tended to minimize the overall strength of the designs. Registration posed a challenge to many candidates. Weaker pieces selected inappropriate and synthetic fabrics which affected the quality of the tie dye.

Many designs were more suitable for drapery than for evening wear.

Question 4

This question required candidates to design and produce a decorative wall panel using batik techniques. The design was to be based on the theme “Coral Reef”. The design was to be enhanced, using techniques such as appliqué and/or embroidery. The more successful pieces demonstrated that candidates had a good understanding of how to create the illusion of depth in a piece. This was done through overlapping and differentiation in size of elements. Candidates also had a sound understanding of batik techniques. Instead of stitching fabric elements to the background, many candidates used glue. Perhaps due to improper time management many responses were incomplete.

Three-Dimensional Expressive Forms

Expressive Form F — Sculpture and Ceramics

Few candidates attempted this expressive form. There were some outstanding responses, especially for Question 4. The figures were well thought out and executed. Many other responses demonstrated poor designs and weak execution of techniques.

Question 1

Question 1 required candidates to design and produce a pair of wall sconces for candles. The design was to be based on a leaf. There were some outstanding examples which utilized appropriate materials and techniques. A variety of media, materials and techniques were used to create the sconces. Clay was the most popular medium although this medium was sometimes poorly handled. The majority of candidates fired the clay pieces to a bisque form, but the submissions of green-ware and improper packaging resulted in breakage. The candidates showed a fairly good level of skill in the manipulation of this medium but there was little innovation seen in creative interpretation of the question.

The finished items were not always up to the standard required by this examination. Some candidates experimented with other materials such as wood, tin, wire and cardboard, paper and plastic, but these pieces were not successful due to inappropriate materials for the function of candle sconces. They were not functional and many of these materials were inappropriate and could create a fire hazard. Research and preparatory work should help candidates to make the right decisions regarding choice of materials and techniques. Many responses were much more decorative than functional. Some candidates produced one sconce instead of a pair as required by the question.

Question 2

Candidates were required to create a nameplate for a historical building. The design was to feature architectural details and the name of the building. This question was mostly done using clay; some candidates produced work in plaster of Paris and others in papier mâché. In some cases, the designs of the buildings and nameplates demonstrated little research and imagination and lacked basic elements and principles of design. Some of the buildings identified were not historic. Many designs were extremely poor and did not include any architectural details or the name of the building.

Question 3

Candidates were required to design and produce a relief sculpture entitled “Flamingoes”. In the most successful responses, candidates showed evidence of research and preparatory studies which resulted in really exciting designs. Clay was the most popular medium used, followed by papier mâché, plaster of Paris and wood. The most successful entries, however, explored a variety of materials that led to good textural compositions. Appropriateness of materials was observed in most cases. There was a play of colours, lines and shapes to produce aesthetically pleasing designs. Some candidates did sculpture in the round instead of relief. Much more interest and variety could have been achieved with the creation of more high and low relief. In some instances, designs were poor and no care was taken in finishing of the pieces. Some responses were more appropriate for decorative craft than for sculpture and ceramics.

Question 4

This question required candidates to design and produce a three-dimensional sculpture entitled “Vendor”. There were some excellent responses, utilizing a variety of techniques, media and materials. The successful pieces demonstrated a lot of creativity and innovation. Clay was the most popular medium used followed by papier mâché. Most designs were original and unique and the craftsmanship was very good. Many responses lacked preparatory studies and research. The quality of the photographs that should accompany and support the finished pieces was poor, while others pieces had no such documentation.

Expressive Form G — Leather craft

This year saw a relatively low number of registered candidates for this expressive form. Despite this, the quality of work submitted was of a high standard. There were some fairly good responses which demonstrated a fair level of skill in craftsmanship and design of the items produced. More attention must be paid to research and preparatory studies.

Question 1

This question required candidates to design and produce the front panel of a handbag, using two panels laced together. Both panels were to be decorated by using at least two leather-craft techniques. Designs were poor and tooling techniques were limited and weak. Most candidates used stamping and dyeing techniques as opposed to carving and tooling. There needed to be better use of positive and negative space. The lacing technique was generally of a good standard. Candidates need to do more planning and research in the two-week period given, as this will assist in producing work of a higher quality.

Question 2

This question required the candidates to design and produce a place mat. The mat was to have a border design and central motif.

In the more successful responses, the design and execution of the central motif was excellent, but the border designs were weak or non-existent. Some candidates attempted to use leather dyes but these were poorly applied.

Question 3

The question required the candidates to produce a belt. The design was to be based on the theme, “Insects” and the belt was to be decorated using stamping and carving techniques.

The responses were extremely weak. Designs were poor, inappropriate and not functional. Candidates attempting this question gave a very literal interpretation of the theme. The attempts at appliqué were not up to the standard required at this level. Most candidates used the appliqué to demonstrate the theme “Insects” and complemented the design with the stamping and carving techniques. Candidates’ approach to belt making was very poor as most of the pieces had no fastening device or proper finishing. The level of craftsmanship demonstrated was below the required standards of the syllabus.

Question 4

This question required candidates to design and produce a letter holder with two pockets, to be hung on the wall. Candidates attempting this question displayed good skills in tooling as well as other skills, for example, stamping, lacing, dyeing and, appliqué. The level of craftsmanship demonstrated was in keeping with the required standards of the syllabus. Candidates also displayed good knowledge of the use of design elements such as use of lines, shapes, form and texture. There was evidence that candidates were able to successfully manipulate a variety of tools to produce these elements.

Expressive Form H — Fibre and Decorative Arts

Question 4 was the most popular question and Question 1 was the least popular for this expressive form.

The work submitted for this expressive form continues to be weak to fairly good, with some outstanding pieces. Generally speaking, candidates paid little attention to proper research and preparatory work for this expressive form. This contributed significantly to the poor designs and craftsmanship. Generally, the dimensions and techniques were adhered to. Some schools submitted very poor responses that showed a lack of understanding of design and use of appropriate materials and techniques. The responses were well below the standard of work expected at this level.

Question 1

This question required candidates to produce a woven panel based on the theme “Roots”. At least three weaving techniques and three colours were to be used. In the most successful responses, candidates demonstrated mastery in the execution of the techniques. These candidates selected appropriate colours to interpret the theme and complement the design.

The interpretation of the theme varied from the metaphorical presentations of culture, history and religion to the literal, with the incorporation of actual roots into the design, to the abstract. Appropriate materials were utilized.

In some responses candidates were not successful in utilizing the required number of colours and techniques. There were some instances of plaiting instead of weaving techniques. The most popular weaving technique was the tabby.

Question 2

This question required candidates to use a combination of plastic and paper to design and produce the front panel of a woven beach bag. At least two weaving techniques and three colours were to be used. The responses to this question were relatively good, with some above average pieces. Most candidates understood the requirements of the question and the more successful pieces integrated the use of the two media into the actual weave. The most popular technique used was the tabby weave. Most observed the requirements for colours and numbers of weaving techniques.

Question 3

This question required candidates to design and produce a wall hanging based on the theme “Rain Forest”. At least three macramé techniques and fabric and natural fibres were to be used. There were some outstanding responses to this question. The successful responses demonstrated proficiency in the choice of materials, colour schemes and techniques required for the theme. The responses varied from attempts at realism to conceptual interpretations. Many candidates fell short of the three required macramé techniques. With proper research and preparation this could have been overcome. The most popular knot was the square knot followed by the half hitch and half knot twist. A few candidates attempted the Josephine knot. There were a few candidates who lacked the requisite knowledge and skills and were extremely minimalistic in their approach. They approached the question by covering large areas with paints and then pasting on some small macramé knots.

Question 4

Question 4 required candidates to design and produce a toy box with a lid. Four sides of the box and the lid were to be decorated using a letter of the alphabet along with appropriate illustration using découpage or collage techniques. There were some outstanding responses for this question. This was the most popular question in the expressive form. Most candidates displayed a fairly good understanding of the skills that were required to complete this task. In the most successful responses, they demonstrated a strong grasp of good design and managed to create interest and the illusion of depth through overlapping and deliberate

attempts to work from the back forward. These candidates demonstrated evidence of careful research and planning through the meticulous placement of the images to create aesthetic appeal. Some candidates had challenges to effectively execute the *découpage* and collage techniques. There was poor use of space and weak craftsmanship in these pieces.