

ART

Paper 6090/01
Observation Assignment

Key messages

- Some persuasive personal responses were seen.
- Less successful responses generally relied disproportionately on secondary sources.
- Some beautiful examples of work with colour demonstrated a mastery of technique.

General comments

This session saw responses across the entire ability range. Some very good work was seen which was characterised by strengths in recording from observation, exploration of images, visual organisation, experimentation, and critical thinking demonstrated by the candidates. Commendable visual language skills were evident across the responses for all questions. Overall, the presentation of scripts was very good. Work was often clearly labelled and presented in a methodical system that was clear to follow. Candidates presented work in a range of media including pen and ink, pencil, water colour, mixed media and oil pastel. The more successful submissions were where candidates had worked from first-hand observation and explored their subject by making strong connections between their subject and the media chosen to depict them. Critical thinking and personal engagement was evident in many responses. Some beautiful examples of oil pastel work with vibrant colour and lively yet precise application of the media were seen where the mastery of technique was recognised. Less successful responses generally relied more on secondary sources that were often copied without experimentation or the exercise of aesthetic judgement. This approach often resulted in submissions that lacked exploration in, or engagement with the subject. The most popular question was number **1**. **Question 2** was the next most popular, followed by **Question 6** and **Questions 3** and **4**. Marks were awarded across the range for **Questions 1** and **4**. Very few scripts were seen for **Question 5**. The more successful candidates used media which is appropriate to the task. There was a preference for dry media although some candidates used paint effectively. This included the accomplished use of both watercolour and oil paint. Some candidates successfully used the properties of the media to make visual equivalents for the surfaces and textures observed. Elsewhere, candidates used coloured pencils to good effect. Some persuasive personal responses were seen from candidates whose observational work also demonstrated creativity, visual awareness, critical and cultural understanding.

Question 1 *Spiral or spirals*

This was the most popular question. This question presented the challenge of finding subjects or objects which were spiral or which contained spirals. The curved character and regular pattern of the subject were also a challenge unique to this question. Often candidates would address the subject with reference to the Fibonacci series on numbers and proportions. Drawings overlaid by diagrams were used as explanation and these scripts attracted marks in AO2. Where candidates had looked at the work of other artists, attention to detail, integrity of the rendering of form and inquisitive drawing were among the key characteristics noted. European artists of the 16th and 17th Century were often cited. The reliability of depiction was a significant factor among successful responses to this question. This applied to both natural and man-made subjects. As well as staircases and some springs, many scripts observed shells. However, some scripts were not seen to have based the work on sustained direct observation. Weaker submissions were seen to have used secondary sources and included images made in response to them. Subsequently, this approach was seen to lack an understanding of form, shape and space. An understanding of these elements is frustrated when candidates are not consistently working from direct observation. Stronger scripts made appropriate and interesting connections between their chosen object such as shells, and other subjects such as spiral staircases, decorations, wood shavings and hair. When observed from first-hand and rendered with appropriate media, such connections were rewarded towards the higher end. Other higher scoring scripts showed how candidates had considered different viewpoints and compositional arrangements as well as experimenting with media in order to select the most successful method for their final outcome.

Question 2 *Work in progress*

This was the second most popular question. Scripts were mostly seen in the middle and higher ability range. Some excellent and highly accomplished work was seen in response to this question. Such scripts often relied on an accomplished use of oil pastel. The challenge of this question was in the motion of progress. Candidates were required to not only observe work, but also the participation in work. Candidates used both domestic and public locations to record their observations. Subjects such as food preparation, sewing and agricultural work were seen. Candidates often used photography among supporting studies. However, some successful submissions avoided an over reliance on photographs. Among these scripts photography was used to show various and original interpretations of the question such as, ironing, sewing, ploughing fields, market sellers and cooking. Insightful observations and everyday occurrences often gave the work a sense of originality and integrity. Such activity was rewarded in assessment strands AO1 and AO5. This approach also demonstrated a productive investigation of the subject by close observation. This typically included a focus on facial expressions, body language, posture and textures. For example, depictions of people working at machines typically recognised the delicacy of fragile materials. The fragility of fingers for example, was contrasted with the resilient metal of machines or tools. Here both critical judgement and the skill of manipulating the chosen media were demonstrated.

Question 3 *First aid kit*

This was the fourth most popular question along with **Question 4**. The challenge of this question was to convey the way in which a kit is composed of both the container and its contents. Some examples of excellent work were seen. The variety of objects found in First Aid kits were observed equally carefully. Candidates frequently sought to convey a variety of textures, surfaces and materials with sensitivity and tenacity. Some candidates approached the subject using a variety of viewpoints and lighting conditions. Where the composition of objects was seen to reveal more about the form and shape of objects, candidates were rewarded in assessment strands AO1 and AO3. Some more personal and original responses were seen. Among higher scoring scripts some candidates experimented with the use of some of the items observed in their work. Examples of using gauze to print from, and plasters and medical packets used as collage material were seen. Among weaker submissions, scripts often depicted a collection of isolated objects that did not form a coherent understanding of a First Aid Kit. This frustrated marks in assessment strands AO3 and AO5. Some candidates introduced a narrative to their scripts by connecting the first aid kit with violent circumstances. In such cases the activity of recording risked losing its focus on direct observation.

Question 4 *Trying on boots or shoes*

This was the fourth most popular question along with **Question 3**. Responses to this question included some well-considered observational drawing. The challenge of this question was to combine the hollow shape of a boot or shoe with parts of the human form such as feet or hands. Some scripts focused closely on the shoe or boot with commendable attention to the intricacies of laces or buckles. Other scripts took on the whole figure describing the posture, and sometimes contortions, of trying on boots or shoes. The question also posed a challenge to those candidates who attempted to deal with the delicacies of skin tone, the complex forms of feet, and foreshortening of a shoe. Where such candidates were seen to be less successful, marks were frustrated in assessment strands AO1 and AO4. More competent candidates however, showed skill in the selection of appropriate media with which to tackle these challenges and thoroughly explored the shape and surface texture of their subjects to produce robust and convincing outcomes. Some scripts were seen at the lower end. These tended to be characterized by a lack of recording, investigating, developing and communicating ideas. Candidates are reminded not to allow their supporting studies to be over-reliant on images found on the internet. Some scripts at the lower ability range showed a lack in control and selection of media. Weaker candidates could still demonstrate good ideas, research and development even if their rendering skills are not strong.

Question 5 *Puzzle*

Very few scripts were seen for this question. No discernible pattern emerged.

Question 6 *Glasses and papers*

This was the third most popular question and attracted a wide range of responses. The challenge of this question was to be able to combine and contrast the rigid and transparent character of glass with the flexible and often opaque character of paper. The content of scripts included a variety of objects from drinking glasses and spectacles, to folded newspapers and patterned cards. The challenges of this question were met well by higher scoring candidates. Research into the work of other artists was often seen to be appropriate and beneficial. Artist research is most useful when it is consistent with the subject of the question. Often candidates were able to show how looking at the work of other artists is of genuine value. These candidates gained insight into the subject provided by the artist studied and were able to demonstrate how this had informed their work. Some candidates took the opportunity to showcase an understanding of visual elements and demonstrate skills in the manipulation of media selected to render both transparent and opaque objects. Some excellent examples of experimentation with reflection and refraction of glass were seen. Some scripts developed this understanding into examples of sophisticated abstraction. Such work was rewarded in assessment strands AO3 and AO5. Commendably sensitive renditions of paper were seen and were rewarded for the choice of media and the skill demonstrated in depicting the delicate nature of the material. Newspapers and letters were also used to form collages and backgrounds in additional work. Lower range responses were often seen to have worked from downloaded images of glasses. This approach was seen to limit ideas and the work often lacked a sense of convincing and reliable observation.

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<p>Paper 6090/02 Interpretative Assignment</p>
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Key messages

- Candidates were able to demonstrate how their creative ideas had evolved into a final exam piece and in many cases, made effective use of the preparatory period.
- There were many examples where candidates had carefully selected work and thoughtfully edited their presentation of the supporting studies.
- There was inventive use of collage, stencil, print and a range of media. Conceptual and interpretative ideas were creative.

General comments

Most submissions showed that centres and candidates had engaged well with the revised syllabus and managed to meet the submission requirements. Candidates are expected to work through ideas from their selected examination questions and should evidence their research, experimentation, development and planning in the supporting studies before completing their final piece during the examination period. There were still some examples where candidates had simply drawn the same idea a few times or had submitted a series of unconnected images for their supporting studies. On the whole, ideas were strong and candidates showed skill with the media they had selected and had taken care over the presentation and completion of their work.

Question 1 *Recycling*

This question attracted the fewest responses. Those in the mid-range had explored ideas such as recycling and re-purposing materials, especially textiles and garments. Responses were mainly drawn and painted but candidates are reminded that they can attempt any of the questions in any material or area of study in the syllabus.

Question 2 *Communicate*

This was the second most popular question and some strong figurative responses were seen. Some submissions at the lower ability end had chosen fairly simplistic aspects such as faces with mouths open, and had the potential to develop ideas through interesting story lines of hands and telephone receivers and the cord.

Some mid-range submissions showed interesting ideas such as cave paintings and animals communicating in different ways. Stronger ideas such as communicating through dances, costumes and expressions were also seen.

The most successful submissions had inventive and creative ideas that were well-researched and completed. Ideas had been thought through and the most appropriate media and materials had been used with care and skill.

Question 3 *Transparency*

This was the most popular question and attracted some very engaging ideas that were well-rendered in acrylic. Themes explored included still life set ups of bottles, see-through containers, objects in see-through bags and more conceptual ideas such as veiled faces, figures running through water and carefully observed water droplets.

In the mid-range some interesting ideas were seen including candidates exploring themes such as pop art, surrealism and hyper-realist painting. Candidates had researched artists such as Rene Magritte, Roy Lichtenstein, Jenny Saville and Francis Bacon.

The strongest submissions showed interpretative ideas such as reflections in eyes and orbs and explored curved surfaces and transparency in skilled and creative ways. Candidates at the higher end were confident with materials and demonstrated skill with painting combined with strong ideas and thorough research and development throughout the preparatory period.

Question 4 *There and back*

There were only a few responses seen for this question and candidates explored themes such as rocking horses, swings and playing board games.

Question 5 *Sport*

Third most popular question and those responses at the lower end were characterised by very straightforward storylines developed either as a game relating to figures players or a still life of sporting equipment.

The more successful responses used photography well to capture first-hand observation, such as photos of sports in action or scoring goals. These were often well-developed through different media and candidates explored their ideas well and used strong drawing skills to communicate their ideas and experimentation.

Question 6 *Last time*

This was the fourth most popular question and responses were seen across the ability range. Some of the concepts and imagery were quite emotional as candidates explored ideas around loss, illness and death.

Weaker submissions concentrated on themes such as terrorism and violence, with little development of ideas or skill in drawing and refinement.

Stronger submissions were seen where candidate had thoughtfully approached the subject and made careful observations such as exploring the texture of skin and materials of older skin and worn out clothing.

The most successful submissions had explored an interesting idea well and tried out different approaches and different ideas before committing to a final theme.

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<p>Paper 6090/03 Design Assignment</p>
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Key messages

- Delightful and creative responses to the Design Assignment were seen.
- Some candidates tended to neglect the study of historical and contemporary practice relevant to the chosen question.
- Higher ability candidates had typically recognised the importance of typography as a design element where required.

General comments

Entries for this paper were relatively low this session. However, some delightful and creative responses to the Design Assignment were seen. Pattern designs and book cover illustrations were the most popular responses to the paper. Most questions were attempted although **Questions 3, 6 and 8** attracted very few responses. The most popular questions were numbers **2 and 4**. **Question 1** was the next most popular, followed by **Questions 7, 8, and 3** respectively. The least popular question was number **6**. A broad range of work was seen across questions and among answers to individual questions. Responses were seen across the full ability range, although few scripts were seen in the very top range. Very few scripts were seen for **Question 5**. Few scripts were seen to fully explore the design constraints which affect the commercial application of design. Candidates also tended to neglect the study of historical and contemporary practice relevant to their chosen question. Candidates are reminded that in their supporting studies they should show that alternative solutions to the initial brief have been considered. The scripts that were rewarded in the lower band typically relied on a few similar ideas or variations of the same idea throughout the assignment. In such cases candidates' ability to develop and test an idea against experimentation was not evident. This approach was seen to restrict the potential exploration of materials and limited the opportunity to demonstrate creative and technical ability. Where letterforms were required by the question, candidates who had typically recognised the importance of typography as a significant design element were most successful.

Question 1 *Three typographic layouts for the word Designer*

This was the second most popular question; some examples of very good work were seen. The challenge of this question was essentially typography. Typography is concerned with the arrangement of letterforms so that letterforms are both readable and attractive. This question required candidates to consider both the design of letterforms, and the relative position of letters in the word DESIGNER. Some responses to this question clearly demonstrated this understanding. Among higher scoring scripts candidates combined an expressive use of formal elements with an ability to communicate ideas and feelings in a convincing and original way. Some of the ideas associated with the word DESIGNER were communicated in more successful scripts. This was typically achieved where images or motifs gleaned from observing a design studio or workshop were incorporated into the design of individual letterforms. In other scripts, candidates used simple visual devices well, to communicate a strong sense of typographical design. These scripts demonstrated good control of colour fields, tone, line and form. Some very weak submissions were seen. At the lower range, candidates handle the selected media with a lack of confidence. These scripts lacked the degree of skill required to create, arrange and display letterforms adequately.

Question 2 *Book cover Weather Watching*

This was the most popular question along with **Question 4**. The challenge of this question was to combine text and illustration. Candidates were invited to work within the discipline of a book cover. However, many scripts were not seen to have clearly understood the structure of a book cover which includes a spine and a front and back section. Where this aspect of the question was neglected marks were frustrated in assessment strands AO2 and AO3. Some candidates were not seen to have completed their work using

appropriate media. For example, where darkly coloured textured card was used to support drawing with coloured pencils or painting with watercolours, the design work was visually compromised and much visual impact was seen to have been lost. Such potential misjudgement risked limiting the creative potential of the script. Although scripts displayed some limited recording, development of ideas and aesthetic judgements, many scripts included rudimentary renderings of weather related motifs, and weak presentations of lettering. Many such scripts were not seen to combine text and illustration satisfactorily. These are both components of potentially expressive visual language and can be used in visually stimulating compositions.

Question 3 *Illustration for a Digital download site*

Too few scripts were seen to determine a pattern.

Question 4 *A pattern based on industry*

This was the most popular question along with **Question 2**. The challenge of this question was to create a pattern based on a theme. Candidates were required to find images and motifs which were reflective of industry and to manipulate these images to create a core design which could be developed and then deployed (with other visual devices) to form a pattern. This question attracted few responses at the mid-higher end. Higher scoring scripts included some imaginative responses where candidates often relied on their ability to control materials and to render shapes, lines and fields of colour effectively. Although individual examples of competent work were seen, most responses were awarded towards the lower end of the ability range. These scripts were not seen to make sufficiently expressive use of visual elements such as line, tone and colour in convincing combinations. Scripts at the lower end were also seen to be limited in the development of ideas, resulting in designs which were seen to be without structure and somewhat unresolved. Such scripts had marks frustrated in assessment strands AO2, AO3 and AO4. The most successful scripts often used secondary research effectively, with good use made of cultural and contextual references to industry.

Question 5 *A fashion garment based on These Foolish Things*

Too few scripts were seen to determine a pattern.

Question 6 *Shoe design based on sugar and spice*

Too few scripts were seen to determine a pattern.

Question 7 *Stained glass window based on Growth*

This was the third most popular question however few scripts were seen. The challenge of the question was to use the static format of a stained glass window to communicate the dynamic idea of growth. Examples of both very limited and excellent work were seen. Some scripts at the lower band employed devices such as collage to imitate the appearance of a stained glass window and to unify the surface. Whilst this work demonstrated an attempt to work with media and materials, higher marks would be attracted by a more careful deployment of individual visual elements and a more convincing connection between them. The scripts that were awarded in the higher band demonstrated a systematic approach to the recording and development of ideas. This was seen to result in competent and attractive translations of fluid ideas into the structure of a stained glass window. Such final responses were seen to organise visual elements well and to exercise aesthetic judgements effectively.

Question 8 *Skate Park called Close Up*

Too few scripts were seen to determine a pattern.