
GCSE DANCE

8236/W Dance appreciation
Report on the Examination

8236/W
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General Comments

It is pleasing to see that the majority of questions were attempted. Very few questions were left blank and many responses were contained within the answer booklet.

Section A was answered well and included some interesting responses to the given stimulus. There was a good range of choreographic intents including equality, racism, layers and personalities. Students who indicated a choreographic intent in Q1 were able to achieve marks to linked questions throughout the first part of Section A.

Section B was generally well answered, particularly Q11 and Q13. Q12 was less well answered. Students who had a clear understanding of the link between their practical learning in the studio and how to apply that learning to written responses achieved higher marks. Students who had a clear understanding of dance terminology as given in the specification also achieved well. It is vitally important that students read the questions carefully so as not to confuse performance of a set phrase with performance in a duet/trio, and performance in a duet/trio with choreography.

Section C responses were generally good. Q15 was either answered really well or with limited understanding. Q18 demonstrated a good range of responses for both dance works. Q17 was less well answered. It is important that students can analyse, interpret and evaluate features of production for the professional dance works in a balanced way in order to achieve the full range of marks available in the 12 mark questions.

Section A

Question 01

This was well answered with the majority of students achieving full marks. Students achieved fewer marks when they did not reference three dancers or did not offer a choreographic intent. Students who did not outline a choreographic intent in Q01 could not access marks in further linked questions.

Question 02.1

This was well answered with the majority of students achieving both marks for accurately identifying two dance relationships. A small number of students misunderstood the question, offering answers referring to human relationships rather than dance relationships.

Question 02.2

The majority of students achieved a minimum of 1 mark with many being awarded full marks. Two marks were awarded when students provided evidence of their understanding of the dance relationship by giving a specific example of how it could be used to link to the named choreographic intent.

Question 03

A very well answered question with the majority of students achieving both marks.

Question 04

This question was less well answered. Some students did not attempt the question and some confused choreographic devices with structuring devices, choreographic processes, dynamics or dance relationships. Students who are familiar with the choreographic content from the specification gave accurate responses.

Question 05.1

The vast majority of students could identify a site-sensitive location. Where marks were not awarded students did not understand the term site-sensitive and offered theatrical settings as a response. Popular locations were a field and town centres.

Question 05.2

The majority of students were awarded at least 1 mark. When 2 marks were awarded there was a clear link between the chosen location and the choreographic intent. Some students stated that the location supported their choreographic intent without giving specific detail of how the location supported the choreographic intent.

Question 06.1

Students who understood the term aural setting achieved well in this question. Many responses did not refer to a type of aural setting and named instruments. Some students confused aural setting with lighting or performance environments.

Question 06.2

The majority of students achieved at least 1 mark for this question. Where 2 marks were awarded students picked out aspects of their chosen type of aural setting and made the connection to the choreographic intent.

Question 07

This question was answered well. Where students were not awarded a mark the most common error was in selecting the fourth option. Option 2 was the next most common error.

Question 08.1

A well answered question where most students achieved at least 1 mark for this question with many achieving both marks. The most common incorrect answers were focus and other named expressive skills.

Question 08.2

A well answered question that showed a clear understanding of why mental skills are important for a dancer.

Question 09.1

A reasonably well answered question where many students offered either the term 'range' or the term 'joints' which achieved 1 mark each, rather than using both terms for 2 marks. Incorrect answers referred to how the body bends or gave examples of flexibility such as the ability to do the splits rather than offer the definition.

Question 09.2

The vast majority of students achieved 1 mark for this question.

Question 09.3

The students who selected stamina, strength or posture often gained marks for this question. Those who selected isolation, co-ordination, extension or control were less successful. Students who achieved both marks described an exercise and included a way to improve by increasing length of run over time to improve stamina, increasing weights or number of repetitions over time to improve strength.

Question 10.1

Very few students achieved both marks for this question. Reference to performance artistry was needed for 1 mark and reference to an audience for another. Students often identified an expressive skill and this was awarded.

Question 10.2

A very well answered question.

Section B**Question 11**

This question was well answered with many students achieving 4 or 5 marks. Students clearly knew and understood the importance of safe working practices and gave a range of examples such as hydration, nutrition, suitable clothing and footwear, obstacles, spillages and jewellery. There were fewer examples of safe execution of action, but when used included specific moments within the set phrase and explained how to perform them safely. The students who could offer a range of contributions other than avoiding injury achieved well. Areas of safe practice out with a student's control such as ceiling height were not awarded. Some students referenced their performance in a duet/trio performance and were not awarded marks.

Question 12

This question was not answered so well with the majority of students achieving 3-5 marks. Of all questions in the paper this was the question that many students did not attempt. Some students confused technical skills with technical aspects of a performance such as editing music. When well answered, students referred to action, dynamic, space, relationship and timing content, and occasionally rhythmic and style content. Many of the responses discussed how technical skills supported the choreographic intent rather than how they supported the performance of the duet/trio but were awarded marks where relevant. Some responses referred to choreography and repeated the choreographic intent in questions 12 and 13. These were not awarded marks.

Question 13

This was a well answered question with many students achieving 4 or 5 marks. Weaker responses mainly focused on fast/slow dynamics but many students offered a wide range of dynamic qualities including explosive, staccato, smooth and explained how those dynamic choices supported the choreographic intent of their choreography.

Section C**Question 14**

The majority of students correctly identified a property (prop) used in Artificial Things. The most common responses related to paper snow, the wheelchair and the headless mannequin. Some students confused Artificial Things with Shadows and named the coat hanger/coat stand.

Question 15

The majority of students achieved 3 marks and above in this question. The most commonly discussed props were the wheel chair and fake snow and comments connected these to life's limitations and being trapped in a snow globe. Many students identified several props, provided clear examples of their use in the work and discussed these in relation to the choreographic intent.

Question 16

Almost all students correctly identified a dance style from Emancipation of Expressionism.

Question 17

The majority of students achieved between 4 and 6 marks for this question. There was a stronger response to aural setting and its contribution to the choreographic intent than dance styles. Many students could identify the dance styles but could not say how these supported the choreographic intent other than stating freedom to express yourself. There was also an imbalance between personal interpretation evaluative comments and contributory analysis comments. Some of the personal interpretation comments are unrelated to the work and do not achieve marks. Personal interpretations should be considered and offer a personal insight into an interpretation into the student's understanding of the meaning of the work. Some of the responses referred to the wrong dance work.

Question 18

This was a well answered question with the majority of marks in level 2 or 3 in the levels of response mark scheme. Students did well when they identified aspects of costume and discussing/analysing it for each work resulting in a balanced response. Students who referred to costumes in general did not achieve so well. There were many inaccuracies of costume for Shadows such as ripped, dirty, torn, ragged, shorts, oversized (generally rather than just the overcoats) or stating that Aaron wears a black t-shirt in Within Her Eyes which were not credited and had a knock-on effect of not achieving marks for links to appreciation. Many of the personal interpretations were interesting and had strong links to the meaning of the work. Personal interpretations were not credited if they did not offer a personal insight into the student's understanding of the work. A few responses referred to the costumes used in Artificial Things.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.