



ASSESSMENT & EXAMINATIONS

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NSC 2011 CHIEF MARKER'S REPORT

SUBJECT	MUSIC
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PAPER	2
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DATE OF EXAMINATION:	15-11-2011	DURATION:	1 ½ Hours
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SECTION 1:

(General overview of Learner Performance in the question paper as a whole)

Learners performed poorly in this Question Paper. The level performance was considerably lower in comparison with previous years. There are a number of reasons for the poor performance: some have to do with the level of difficulty of the questions, some required a good command of language as the manner in which some questions were asked could be very confusing and the way in which questions were answered was generally poor. One other reason is a complete lack of knowledge and understanding of basic music concepts. Teachers need to be aware that the subject material for Paper 1 and Paper 2 cannot be isolated. There is a possible tendency that Paper 2 is seen as an easier question paper and not much time is spent on listening, score reading and the aural teaching of musical concepts for example: a learner may understand the concept of a melodic sequence in theory but they neither able to recognise it aurally or in a score.
Comments to teachers
The importance of listening in music and developing this skill cannot be over-emphasized. This must always be done when discussing a particular concept relating to genre, style, composer etc. As far as possible teachers must also provide learners with a musical score so that all concepts can be discussed in class. For example when listening to an movement from a symphony, there are so many different concepts that can be discussed. The elements of music should always be touched on when listening to a musical work – dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture as well as form. Teachers must also strive to be more innovative in preparing learners for Paper 2.

SECTION 2:

Comment on candidates' performance in individual questions

(It is expected that a comment will be provided for each question on a separate sheet).

QUESTION 1
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
This question was poorly answered despite the fact that it was relatively easy.
(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
The possible reason that learners performed poorly in Question 1.1 is that in previous years learners were merely asked to recognize the rhythmic pattern and not the melodic pattern.
Question 2 proved that there is a serious lack of understanding of musical terminology. Most candidates were not able to identify the answer correctly in this question.
(a) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
Teachers are advised not to become complacent with the preparation of learners for this question paper. Music terminology is to be used at all times and teachers must encourage learners to do the same. Learners must be encouraged to look at all aspects of a music when listening to an extract or reading a music score. For example when listening to an excerpt, no matter how long or short, learners must look and pay attention to all concepts such as melody, rhythm, harmony, dynamics etc.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
This particular question would prove especially difficult to learners who have not been exposed to Romantic Piano Music, as the concept of <i>rubato</i> is most effectively taught and learnt when listening to this particular genre of music.
(e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
QUESTION 2
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
This question was generally poorly answered on the whole. Most learners were not able to do the melodic dictation and the reason for the poor responses in other sub-questions is a lack of understanding of musical concepts and expressing themselves.
(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
There were errors that were common in all the questions. Most learners could not answer the melodic dictation. This has been a problem over the years and it is not something that seems to be improving. The other sub-questions in this question required descriptions of concepts using music terminology. The concepts that were tested in this question were that of texture, pitch, cadences and compositional techniques. Learners had difficulty expressing themselves and answer the questions successfully because they lacked the knowledge to do so.

(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
Here, a good understanding of the music is absolutely vital. When listening to musical works, in-depth and detailed discussions and explanations should take place where learners should describe the works using the correct and appropriate terminology.
Teachers must spend more time teaching dictation. This is not simply a skill that can be picked up along the way. Only a few learners who are gifted are able to do so. Learners must be taught to listen to both rhythm and pitch as these two concepts cannot be separated. It is not merely melodic or rhythmic dictation. Learners need to be able to perceive pitch and melody together.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
It is quite alarming that learners do not understand the concept of a cadence. This forms such a fundamental part of music and it is unacceptable that learners are still not able to describe cadences. The problem here is not the fact that learners were not able to identify the cadence correctly, but that responses include reference to intervals for example.
e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
QUESTION 3
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
This question had better responses compared to the others, but the performance of learners was relatively poor again. This question was based entirely on listening and teachers and invigilators must be made aware of the importance of a good quality sound system.
(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
One reason that this question was poorly answered was the quality of the recording. It was based on Jazz music and the questions were centred around mostly brass and woodwind instruments. Most learners were not able to identify the instruments correctly.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
Teachers must ensure that learners are familiar with the different instruments of the orchestra. This must be covered in Grade 10 already. However, this must not simply be left alone in Grade 11 and Grade 12. Learners must be exposed to as much recorded music as possible so that they listen and become familiar with all the instruments. Teachers must encourage to discuss and describe music as much as possible and not only be given the opportunity to do so in Examinations or tests. In this way, they get feedback from teachers as well as other learners.
It seems that some learners are not exposed to the sound of instruments and are therefore not able to identify what they hear. Some answers referred to instrument that were totally irrelevant.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
In question 3.3 most learners identified the excerpt correctly. However, the problems lie in the motivation of their answer. They are not able to describe using simple language and music terminology. For example if the question asks to identify whether a musical excerpt is an example of 12-bar blues and the learner must motivate why it is, they cannot expect to be awarded marks if their motivation is for example: <i>because it in the style of 12-bar blues</i> . This is the type of question that learners should be encouraged to discuss in class.

e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
QUESTION 4
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
This question was poorly answered by learners. Again, this question deals with listening and identifying different instruments that can be heard. It also includes questions where learners were required to name similarities and differences between excerpts.
(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
The reason why this question was poorly answered, again is that learners are not exposed to listening and especially to be able to identify the different instruments. The other part of the question involved describing differences and similarities between different extracts. Learners had great difficulty doing this, and poor language use also proved to be a concern.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
Learners must be taught and trained that if whenever they compare two different excerpts, they must always compare or contrast the same concepts in respect of rhythm, genre, tempo, etc.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
Learners had great difficulty comparing the same concept in two different excerpts. They must be aware that when comparing the same concept they must refer to both examples. For example comparing the tempo of a piece they must state that excerpt 1 is fast and excerpt 2 is slow. They will then be awarded one mark for this. If they say excerpt 1 is fast and say nothing about excerpt 2 there is no comparison and they will not be awarded any marks.
e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
Learners must also be taught to use the correct terminology to describe concepts. For example dynamics include <i>piano</i> , <i>forte</i> , etc. Too often learners mix up concepts and describe texture for example as loud and soft.
QUESTION 5
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
Learners performed poorly in this question.
(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
Learners could have misinterpreted this questions as it does specify how many statements apply to the excerpt.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
Learners must always look at mark allocations to guide them. It is also important that learners are aware that in a question that requires TWO facts and learners name FIVE, only the first TWO will be marked whether the correct answers appear later or not. This is a basic principle of all marking and learners need to made aware of this and teachers must utilise this in their own marking as well.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
Learners must read questions before listening to musical excerpts so that they know what exactly they are listening for.

e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
QUESTION 6
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
This proved to be the most difficult question and learners performed poorly in this question. Although it is section is clearly stated in the syllabus, it seems as if this particular section was not well prepared for.
(b) Why was the question poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
This question was poorly answered learners did not have enough knowledge of sonata form to be able to answer this question well. This is the question where learners lost most of their marks as this question counted 7 marks out of the 33. This is 21% of the total marks and made a huge difference in learners' final marks.
(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
The subject material stated in the syllabus serves to guide teachers in it is of the utmost importance that it be followed carefully. Sonata form is the probably the most difficult form to grasp and teachers must make sure that learners are familiar with all the simpler forms before doing sonata form. Teachers must also attempt to cover this area earlier, for example in Grade 11, although it is only prescribed for Grade 12. This will afford learners the opportunity to gain enough practice with this particular form. Listening as well as score is equally important and for this reason, class discussions are important.
(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
Learners were able to identify different sections of the musical excerpt but were unable to identify them properly using the correct terminology.
e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

SIGNATURE OF CHIEF MARKER: J.HAARHOFF



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