

**CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL**

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

**JUNE 2006**

**MUSIC**

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**MUSIC**  
**GENERAL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION**  
**JUNE 2006**

**GENERAL COMMENTS**

**Introduction**

The CSEC Music examination consists of three papers in three profiles - Listening and Appraising (LIAP), Performing (PERF) and Composing (COMP).

Paper 01 consists of three compulsory sections which constitute what is termed the listening profile - Musical Perception, Musical Literacy and Set Works. Paper 02 is a practical paper consisting of two profiles — Performing (PERF) and Composing (COMP). Paper 03 is the School-Based Assessment (SBA) which offers five options based on the listening and appraising profile.

The schedule set out below presents the framework within which the profiles have been conceived:

<b>PAPER</b>	<b>PROFILE/SECTION/OPTION</b>				
<b>01</b>	LIAP (Profile 1) Section I - Musical Perception	LIAP (Profile 1) Section II - Musical Literacy		LIAP (Profile 1) Section III - Set Works	
<b>02</b>	PERF (Profile 2) Section I - Performing		COMP (Profile 3) Section II - Composing		
<b>03</b>	SBA (Profile 1)				
	LIAP I Worship	LIAP II Live Performance	LIAP III Musical Advertisements	LIAP IV Caribbean Performer/Composer	LIAP V Caribbean Folk Form/Practice

**Paper 01**

Paper 01 addresses issues of form and expression in music. In their responses to the questions, candidates must show that they have developed a critical ear for those features by their ability to identify structural and expressive elements in the music they listen to and by their proficient use of the appropriate vocabulary.

In Section I of this paper, recordings of excerpts from various types of music are played to which the candidates must listen keenly. This section is assessed through short response questions. In Section II (Musical Literacy) a printed score and corresponding audio-tape are provided. Questions based on this material require candidates to show their practical and theoretical knowledge of music. Section III (Set Works) presents questions based on three prepared musical works, of which candidates will have chosen ONE for study over a period of some months. This section tests the analytical skills of the candidates and their ability to apply their general knowledge to a specific text that they have prepared.

**Paper 02**

Paper 02 consists of two profiles: Performing and Composing, and it affords candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their practical skills in playing an instrument and in creating music for an instrument (or voice). Their technical proficiency in Performing is assessed at three levels: elementary, intermediate and advanced, by qualified territorial examiners. This profile requires candidates not only to present a prepared programme of pieces, but also to display ability to perform in an ensemble. The composing profile requires the presentation

of a portfolio of four works, two of which must be recorded on audio-tape for inclusion in the portfolio, which is sent to the examination committee for assessment. In 2006, there has been some excellent work in this section, confirming our faith in the creative talents of our school-children.

### **Paper 03 – School-Based Assessment (SBA)**

Paper 03 (School-Based Assessment) expects candidates to demonstrate their potential for critical listening and research. Candidates have a choice of five options: Worship, Musical Performance, Musical Advertisements, Caribbean Performer/Composer, Caribbean Folk Form/Practice. The intention is to encourage students' interaction with the major actors in the selected category and to stimulate enquiry into the mechanisms that operate within the chosen option. As the instructions in the syllabus indicate, the emphasis is on musical analysis. Teachers are expected to mark candidates' research according to the format established by CXC and to submit a sample of their marked scripts for moderation at the level of the examining committee. As in 2005, a number of excellent SBA samples were received for moderation.

## **DETAILED COMMENTS**

### **PAPER 01 - LIAP**

#### **Section I – Musical Perception**

##### **Question 1**

This question tested the ability of candidates to identify the basic genres in music through the recognition of style, instrumentation and performance techniques, in a selection of six short excerpts played in sequence twice. A certain degree of guidance was given by providing a list of genres from which the candidates might choose. The responses were generally good, except that some few candidates seemed not to discern the difference between "Pop" and "Gospel".

##### **Question 2**

The first part of Question 2 required candidates to recognize two textural / timbral changes that took place in a short excerpt played three times. On the other hand, the second and third parts of Question 2 tested the candidates' ability to identify harmonic texture using the vocabulary of music. Some candidates encountered difficulty in the use of musical vocabulary.

##### **Question 3**

Unlike Question 2, Question 3 sought response to a mixed range of abilities such as classifying instruments according to the ethnographic approach, identifying tonalities and recording tonalities, identifying differences in articulation in a musical selection. The focus was therefore most particularly on musical literacy. In this section, candidates showed a good grasp of the ethnographic classification of instruments, and in the identification of differences in articulation in the music.

##### **Question 4**

Question 4 appealed to the candidates' knowledge of structure in music and the various musical devices related to structure. While the majority of students accurately recognized the use of ostinato, and identified the tonality of the excerpt, approximately forty percent of the candidates missed out on the absence of modulation in the excerpt. This means that teachers need to encourage students to listen to a wide variety of music in order to improve their skills in spotting tonal changes.

### **Question 5**

This question tested candidates' working knowledge of the contemporary gospel idiom and the instrumentation which is one of its important features. While most candidates were able to give accurate responses to parts (a) and (b), part (c) seems to have presented a challenge, calling as it did for the auditive identification of the timbre of the aerophone heard in the excerpt. One cannot stress enough the fact that music is an auditive art and it relies on the keenness of the hearing faculty.

### **Section II – Musical Literacy**

The questions in this section were based on a given musical text intended to test candidates' knowledge of a wide range of elements relative to musical "reading and writing". As has been pointed out in previous reports, this section continued to be as before, "a challenging one for the more intuitive student musician who plays well but has never learnt to read and write music". As a result, the responses to the questions in this section were the least satisfactory. In particular, teachers need to pay more attention to the recognition of chords and cadences, and the identification of modulations in a selected text.

### **Question 6**

Question 6, parts (a) to (f), tested knowledge of key-signatures, scales, chords, tonalities, intervals, note-values, terms, symbols and metre. Questions 6 (g) and 6 (h) related to metre, tempo and dynamics. Candidates were asked to identify symbols and terms appearing in a list of those used in the given musical text. Although there were some outstanding responses, for too many candidates, this was the section that was least satisfactorily responded to.

### **Section III – Set Works**

#### **Question 7 – "Faces of Trinidad and Tobago"**

Approximately 40% of the candidates attempted questions based on this set work. They responded generally quite well to the questions on the form of the piece and on the technical devices used by the composer. However, responses to the question on the socio-cultural significance of the work generally missed the mark. Teachers therefore need to allocate some more time for discussion about the social context and relevance of the work.

#### **Question 8 – "Gospel Mass"**

Some 50% of the examination population opted for the set work, "Gospel Mass" by Robert Ray. Candidates' performance on this question was generally good, although Question 8 (d) generated some responses which spoke more to issues of religious belief than to issues of the actual music of the Gospel Mass. Here, as in the other papers, the emphasis should be understood to be on the music, rather than on issues of theology or literature.

Questions 8 (g) and 8 (h) required familiarity with the actual written text and the keys in which the various movements of the Mass were written. Responses were generally adequate.

#### **Question 9 – "Pictures at an Exhibition"**

This was the least popular of the Set Works, but it solicited the largest proportion of correct answers. Questions 9 (a) and 9 (b) addressed the history of the work and the instrumentation featured in it. Questions 9 (c) and 9 (d) tested candidates' grasp of the basic structure and the main motifs developed in the work. The issue of the composer's use of register and other devices to portray the characters, was addressed in Questions 9 (f) and 9 (g). These questions called for familiarity with the instruments of the orchestra and details of orchestral technique as used by composers in the pertinent era.

## **PAPER 02**

### **Profile II – PERF**

The Performance Profile required candidates to present a practical programme of pieces on an instrument or with voice, displaying understanding of and sensitivity to musical structure and style. The syllabus was devised so as to give opportunities to the candidates to: “develop technical competence, instrumental / vocal control and musicality in performance; develop co-operation and musical sensitivity when performing with others; develop musical literacy through performance from scores commensurate with their level of technical competence”. In other words, this Profile supplements and complements the requirements in the written papers and should be taken quite seriously.

Unfortunately, in the 2006 examination there were cases of candidates not turning up for this practical examination, and candidates omitting pieces from their portfolio, and yet other candidates coming to the practical examination unprepared. Teachers are asked to familiarize themselves with the regulations governing the Performance Profile, which constitutes 30% of the total marks allotted to candidates in music.

### **Profile III – COMP**

At the level of the CSEC examination, candidates are required to present compositions created by themselves, which display some evidence of their ability to harmonize using suitable chords and to explore creation of compositions in a variety of styles, or for different instruments. They are expected to produce much more than isolated melodic lines sixteen bars in length. Again, the trend of relying on the synthesizer to harmonize melodies and otherwise produce support material needs to be carefully monitored by the teacher, so that the synthesizer is not allowed to dominate, when it should merely be a tool for the creativity of the young composer.

In Profile III – COMP, the issue of preparation of the portfolio was once again challenging. Some portfolios were presented without some of the required documents / compositions / recordings. So that although there was an encouraging number of candidates presenting excellent work in their composition profile, there were others who were careless in the preparation of their portfolio, and therefore lost marks.

It may be useful to remind teachers that the Composition file should contain the following:

- (i) Four compositions
- (ii) The audio-tape on which two of the compositions are recorded
- (iii) The completed Composition Profile Analysis forms
- (iv) The completed Music Declaration form
- (v) The Composition Mark Sheet on which the territorial practical examiner will have completed the Viva Voce section and affixed his/her signature.

## **PAPER 03 – SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENT (SBA)**

Paper 03 (School-Based Assessment) required candidates to demonstrate their potential for critical listening in the context of research. Candidates had a choice of five options: Worship, Musical Performance, Musical Advertisements, Caribbean Performer/Composer, Caribbean Folk Form/Practice. The intention was to encourage interaction with the major actors in the selected option, and to stimulate enquiry into the mechanisms that operate within the chosen option. As the instructions in the syllabus indicate, the emphasis is on musical analysis.

In the preparation of the music SBAs the teacher is called upon to guide the candidates, mark the final product according to the format established by CXC, and submit a sample of the marked scripts for moderation at the level of the examining committee.

In the 2006 examination, the majority of responses received were projects under the Musical Advertisements option, followed closely by the Worship and Caribbean Performer/Composer options. The Caribbean Folk Form/Practice presented evidence of the anomaly in which some candidates sourced information solely from books and relied on commercial tapes for their musical analysis. This was completely in opposition to the intention of the music syllabus guidelines which indicate that this Paper 03 is an opportunity for candidates to experience, enquire and interact with the practitioners in the field. In the Advertisements' option, candidates needed to avoid the pitfall of dwelling too much on the product being advertised, and forgetting to focus on the analysis of the music which is its vehicle.

### **GENERAL REMARKS**

The year 2006 has shown a great increase in the number of entrants to the CSEC examination in Music. There were over five hundred candidates from ten territories in the region. Our records of the Practical examination in Music reveal that apart from the preponderance of performers on the Steel Pan, who numbered one hundred and fifty, candidates offered Voice, Recorder, Piano, Violin, Drum, Keyboard, Cello, Guitar, as their instrument of choice, with a growing number of woodwinds and brass. The wide variety of interests gives cause for celebration and leads us to hope that the creative trend will continue to grow in the generations to come.

### **CONCLUSION**

As the report reveals, the CSEC examination in Music is a cooperative effort in which the Caribbean Examinations Council provides an unequalled opportunity for candidates, teachers, parents and the community at large to come together in the interest of preserving, promoting and developing music in the region.