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Moderators' Report/ Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2014

Pearson Edexcel GCSE in Design and Technology: Textiles Technology (2TT01)

Creative Design and Make Activities (5TT01)

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Summer 2014
Publications Code UG038541

Introduction

Students are expected to Design and Make a textile product. This activity can be divided into two parts or worked on as a whole project.

It was interesting to see how many different ways students used the Task titles to influence their project work. Natural Forms appears to remain a favourite topic, offering a breadth of opportunity. Designer Dressing saw a significant increase in use this year too.

Centres are reminded of a few practical details that aid the moderation process:

- there was an increase in poorly calculated marks, adding up teacher awarded marks accurately is important.
- there was an increase in the number of centres who sent in toiles and final products; these must be photographed any images inserted into the portfolios or onto the CMRBs.
- centres continue to send work in bulky fixed plastic wallet portfolios; if centres are concerned about the learners work returning undamaged can we suggest that one ziplock envelope is used per student to keep work safe, but reducing storage bulk.
- good quality, in focus photographs of the final product are crucial; when dark fabric is used the photograph might need editing to improve the visibility of the features. It is essential we see reference to the inside of the products, especially when students are aiming for the very high marks.
- Student work needs clearly labelling with their student number and centre number. A lot of work was left unnamed this year; CMRBs are removed from the portfolios and should not be the only form of identifying who the portfolio belongs to.

Design Activity

The main areas that teachers may wish to highlight to students are issues relating to: Specification; Review; Develop; & Test.

Analysing the Brief

There continues to be a few misconceptions about the purpose and value of this criterion. Most low band students can identify the brief and mind map some possible solution 'words' that they need to consider. This is a very loose analysis. Mid band students can usually turn their mind-maps into a list of actions, usually not overly specific to their personal project. Completing a questionnaire, analysing a product, and producing a mood board are all basic tasks. What product will the student analysis and why? What benefit will it have on the project? What do they need to find out?

Research

Those students that tended to achieve in the high band were usually led by their specific action points from the analysis. Students that understood the value of comparing two different products and justifying why one was machine washable whilst the other needed hand washing; that one was fastened with a back zip and the other a side zip, often did well. This stage of the project is very good for engaging students in the 'testing' of a product. If a client questionnaire identifies that it is important that the product is easy to into and out of, then why not test the product being analysed to see how easy it is. Encouraging students to Test a product that they haven't made often helps them to be critical and start to understand the value of the process. Identifying that a product has a zip and therefore is easy to get into is not wholly valuable: where is the zip, how long is the zip, what makes the zip useful? Any fabric testing of small pieces of fabric, undertaken at any point in the project supports the Research mark.

Specification

Engaging with practically testing the product whilst analysing above is likely to help students understand a little more about what specification points are. There are still a considerable number of students that think 'the product needs have a zip' or 'the product needs to be made from polyester' measurable points. These points have limited measurability: the test is reduced to an observation that 'yes or no' the product has a zip or was made in polyester, but does it measure the functionality and purpose of the zip? Do encourage students to have at least 2 specification points that can be judged on a scale of success when they test their product. This will enhance the development of the product as well as the final Testing stage.

Initial Ideas

Students seemed to enjoy this section and mid band to high band marks were often awarded. Those students that had a broader technical knowledge were able to access high band marks.

Review

Students were good at presenting feedback from others: the most successful form of presentation seemed to be a separate page of short, snappy comments, sometimes in the 'others' handwriting. This kind of evidence generally enabled students to achieve full low band marks. When remarks were constructive and you could see the students had guided the user to find out more critical details about the product, this was when marks crept into the high band. It was when students then summarised this feedback and explained how they intended to use it to Develop their ideas, that it started to provide evidence for full marks. Good summaries showed a clear link between the Specification, the Ideas, and the coming Development. They were usually no more than a few sentences long and included some form of simple actions, maybe to Develop a particular sample or test a feature that had been mentioned in the Review.

Communication

There was mixed achievement in this criterion, most students achieved full low band marks, moving into the high band when evidence showed precise and accurate skills.

Development

There are a number of centres that appear to have a present range of samples to complete in this section, in a fixed fabric type, for example a zip sample, french seam, open seam and rolled hem, all completed in a basic white cotton. This type of evidence is barely worthy of credit as it solves no design problems. Those students that make a toile to practice making the product are in a similar situation: not solving design problems. However those students that explore several different decorative techniques and determine which would be most suitable, along with maybe exploring different fastenings on a section of their product do better. Some students have sampled 4 different neck shapes on their dress toile and used this to base some user feedback on to develop their design. Another student tried 3 different ways of fixing the felt letters onto a baby mat: with applique, with glue, with block printing. She then tested them like she did her researched product for strength and durability and determined that although the applique was the most time consuming it was strong enough and looked nicest. She could have equally justified the block printing or the glue for other reasons. These are examples of the type of problem solving exercises that aid achievement in the high band.

Final Design

Fewer students this year seemed to have been encouraged to use a manufacturing template, so recording the seam types, hem details etc. and refined annotations where more likely to be missing as they went unprompted.

Make Activity

Plan

Achievement within this band was often in the mid band with many students being able to identify the main stages of manufacture for their product. Some students were then able to extend this by being more explicit about the task involved (e.g. stipulating the seam type, width, pressing instructions, machine settings etc. but very few students fully understand what a detailed quality control check is. To achieve full marks a student needs to explain: what the quality standard is for each set task (e.g. a 1.5cm seam allowance); determine what standard is not acceptable; how to measure the success of the task; and to then determine how to rectify the error if the task doesn't meet the standards.

Quality of Manufacture

Annotated visual diaries are a crucial aspect of this criterion if a student wishes to achieve in the high band. The annotations are going to support evidence that the student has knowledge and understand of the processes being completed. The witness statement is used to back up the findings in the diary. Sometimes they conflict, resulting in assessment appearing lenient. It is crucial to gauge the level of making to the ability of the student. Do seriously consider the complexity of the making activity, consider: the fabric choice, basic woven cotton and felt are easy to handle in comparison to satin; the construction processes, gluing velcro onto fabric and sewing only straight lines are less complex than inserting a zip or applying an even gather or pleats; the decorative technique, operating a pre-set digital embroidery design or tie-dying is less challenging than applying a personally design applique.

Quality of Outcome

This criterion is about the quality and finish of the product. Most students finish their product they are making, and most make an adequate job of it. Sometimes products have poorly inserted zips, uneven gathering, badly finished hems, unfinished seams etc. These reduce the mark for this criterion. Often centres send us too few images to moderate this criterion easily.

Health & Safety

This is a centre assessed mark.

Test & Evaluate

We do not want to read a descriptive piece of writing about what the student did during the project. Those students that did well within this criterion had a strong specification that had some measurable points that needed judging for their success. For example, easy to get into. The students were able test this practically. Another good example of testing seen was a product comparison where students reviewed their product against a manufactured product they tested in Research. All this evidence was backed up with photographs of the testing, results and then opinions about what needed improving and why. Suggesting design improvements is unnecessary. Assessment was generally in the low band, with some success in the mid band and odd examples of high band achievement.

Grade Boundaries

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