MUSIC 2

GENERAL COMMENTS

1. STANDARD OF THE PAPER

The standard of the paper compared favourably with that of the previous years and the questions effectively aligned with the syllabus content, thoroughly covering the various topics.

2. PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES

The overall performance of the candidates was average, reflecting a slight improvement compared to previous assessments.

3. SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' STRENGTHS

The candidates were able to answer questions on the following areas well:

(1) Music theory and rudiments;
(2) Elements of various types of music;
(3) Identification of instruments by their sounds;
(4) Classification of instruments.

4. SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' WEAKNESSES

Candidates found the following areas challenging and therefore could not answer question on them satisfactorily:

(1) Cadences;
(2) Chord progressions;
(3) Melody writing;
(4) Modulating to related keys.

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5. SUGGESTED REMEDIES FOR THE WEAKNESSES

(1) Candidates must ensure they study the cadences and their traits well;
(2) Teachers must engage candidates to study basic chord progressions and how to apply them effectively;
(3) Music teachers should help candidates learn to write scales and melodies right;
(4) Candidates must ensure they master how to modulate to related keys by trying as many examples as possible.

6. DETAILED COMMENTS;

(a) (i) Melody Writing

Candidates were required to continue a given melody to form a passage of not less than 12 and not more than 16 bars. The candidates were also to modulate to the dominant in the course of the passage and return to the original key.

The given melody was in F major and was in simple duple time. Most of the candidates continue to struggle with demonstrating a thorough understanding of balance in melody writing, form, and modulation to the dominant. Most candidates who attempted modulation lacked adequate knowledge, relying solely on raising other degrees instead of utilizing the natural on the fourth to modulate. Few candidates successfully modulated and returned to the home key of F major. Almost all candidates neglected phrasing in their melodies.

Some candidates incorrectly used the sharp to raise the fourth in the key of F. Responses to this question was not satisfactory.

(ii) Setting melody to a given text:

Candidates were required to set a given text to a suitable melody indicating tempo, phrasing and dynamic marks. Credit was to be given to originality of the composition and proper alignment of texts to the notes. The marking scheme suggested:

(i) Breaking down syllables to strong and weak beats;
(ii) Suitability of rhythm to the text (meter, barring, alignment, etc);
(iii) Melodic interest;
(iv) Phrasing, tempo and dynamics;
(v) Originality.

Very few candidates attempted the question, and their performance was generally poor. Candidates failed to set the given texts to suitable melodies. Syllable alignment was often incorrect, with multiple syllables assigned to a single pitch. Important texts were frequently placed on weak beats, demonstrating a lack of understanding of musical phrasing and emphasis. The submitted compositions lacked essential musical markings, including, phrase markings, tempo markings, and dynamic indications.

(b) Two-part writing:

Candidates were required to write/add a bass part below a given melody of four bars and in key B(flat) major in simple quadruple time. Candidates demonstrated a poor understanding of two-part writing. Most candidates demonstrated inadequate preparation for this question, exhibiting significant weaknesses in two-part writing. Many candidates correctly duplicated the key signature, time signature, clef, and bar lines but struggled with the musical content. Others could not get the bass clef, the key signature, the time signature, and the bar lines correct. The counterpoint lacked independence, failing to create a coherent melody. Melodic curves, interest, contrast, rhythm, contour, and harmonic interest were poorly developed or absent. Final cadences were unclear or missing, including inaccurate phrasing, alignment, and copying of

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the given melody. Overall, candidates' submissions revealed a limited understanding of two-part writing principles.

(c) Four-part harmony:
Candidates were required to harmonise a given melody in F major. They were required to add alto, tenor and bass parts. Their performance is however an improvement over the previous years. The marking scheme suggested the following points:

(i) Correct key signature;
(ii) Correct Time signature;
(iii) Correct Clef;
(iv) Appropriate barring;
(v) Harmonic interest (Progression);
(vi) Final Cadential progression;
(vii) Added Parts;
(viii) Copying/phrase marks/alignment.

While most candidates accurately notated the time signature, key signature, clefs, and bar lines, they struggled with the musical aspects. These include harmonic interest and progressions, final cadential progression, accurate copying of the given material, proper use of phrase marks, and alignment of musical elements.

Question 2

Set-Pieces
The pieces have been provided to the candidates in advance to study. Candidates were therefore required to recall the features of the pieces as demanded by the questions.

(i) ***Sonata in D minor by Domenico Scarlatti***
Candidates were asked to:
(a) Indicate the instrument the piece was written for.
(b) State the period of Western music history the piece is taken from.
(c) Quote the first four bars of the right-hand part of the music.
(d) List any five dynamic marks or signs used in the music.
(e) List any two ornaments used in the composition.

Or

(ii) Emilo Anyi Kpoo by C.W.K. Mereku
Candidates were required to:
(a) Identify the medium the music was written for.
(b) The performance indicator for tempo in the music.
(c) State the nationality of the composer.
(d) List any five dynamic marks or signs used in the music.
(e) State the key of the music.
(f) Quote the first three bars of the opening section in the music.

The instruction to this question required candidates to answer only one out of the two questions. Most candidates lacked understanding in answering the

questions, hence performing poorly. A notable difficulty was observed in distinguishing between dynamic marks (indicating volume), and tempo markings (indicating speed). Candidates who answered this question were quite few and performed averagely on the whole.

Question 3

Western Music

This question consisted of (a) Defining Opera and (b)writing short notes on the Baroque period of western music history focusing on the span of the period, two major composers of the period and describing any five characteristics. They could not assign the right dates for the period.

Only a handful of candidates attempted this question and their performance was poor.

Question 4

African Music

Gahu, Gome, Akom, Tora, Kpanlogo, Adowa, Kete, Gota, Apatampa, Bamaya.

(a) Candidates were required to group the above musical types according to their origin as Ewe, Fante, Ashanti, Ga, and Dagomba.

This question was widely attempted, and most of the candidates delivered outstanding performances.

Expected answers were:

Ewe – Gahu, Gota

Fante – Akom, Apatampa

Ashanti – Adowa, Kete

Ga – Kpanlogo, Gome

Dagomba – Bamaya, Tora

(b) Candidates were expected to list any five instruments of Atsiagbeko ensemble.

Most candidates' performances on this question were underwhelming. To address this gap, teachers are encouraged to provide comprehensive coverage of traditional musical ensembles and their distinctive characteristics in their instruction.

Some expected answers were Totodzi, sogo, Atimevu, voice and Kagan

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Question 5

African American Music in the Diaspora

The question was in three parts. The **(a)** part demanded five brass instruments used in Hip hop musical performance which most candidates deviated because they could not differentiate between brass instruments and woodwind instruments. The following were some answers expected by the chief examiner:

(i) French Horn;

(ii) Trumpet,

(iii) Tuba,

(iv) Bass trombone.

The **(b)** part of the question demanded elements of hip-hop music. Only a few candidates were able to answer this question well. The majority of the Candidates' answers disappointed the chief examiner. Answers expected included deejaying, beat boxing, graff, break-in and Emceeing.

The third part of the question **(c)** asked Candidates to classify a list of musicians into their various musical genres. This was done successfully by majority of candidates and demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of different categories of music. Below are a few of the answers candidates provided:

Reggae – Bob Marley, Jimmy Cliff, Ken Boothe, Peter Tosh
Rhythm and Blues – Sam Cooke, Ray Charles, Aretha Franklin

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MUSIC 3A

GENERAL COMMENTS

1. STANDARD OF THE PAPER

The paper was well-organized and aligned effectively with the WASSCE Music 3A syllabus. It also compared favourably with that of the previous years.

2. PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES

The overall performance of the candidates was better than that of the previous year as some few candidates excelled exceptionally well.

3. SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' STRENGTHS

The candidates were able to answer questions on the following areas well:

(1) Identification and description of themes;
(2) Identification of basic chords;
(3) Rhythmic and melodic dictation;
(4) Writing the upper part melody of a harmonic extract.

4. SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' WEAKNESSES

Candidates found the following areas challenging and therefore could not answer question on them as expected:

(1) Identifying modulations of an extract;
(2) Improper placement of key signatures on the staff;
(3) Improper placement of time signatures on the staff;
(4) Wrong spellings of technical terms.

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5. SUGGESTED REMEDIES FOR THE WEAKNESSES

(1) Candidates must have more practice time on identification of modulations with their music teachers;
(2) Teachers must ensure from first year; candidates understand the rudiments very well to avoid improper placement of key signatures and time signatures;
(3) Correct spellings of technical terms must be emphasized upon from the early stages of the course;
(4) Guided Listening with Visual Aids can significantly enhance aural skills as well.

6. DETAILED COMMENTS

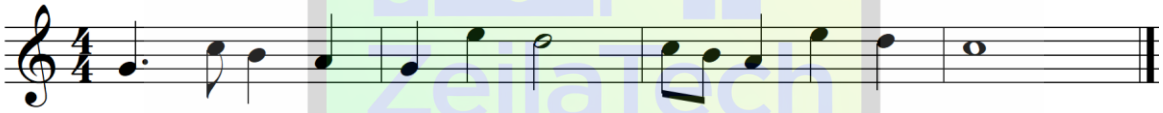
TEST I: RHYTHMIC DICTATION

Candidates were tasked to listen to a four-bar melody in $\frac{4}{4}$ time and notating the rhythm on a monotone. This question carried a total of 8 marks, with each bar valued at 2 marks. The majority of candidates performed well, successfully identifying the rhythmic structure. However, a few candidates struggled to provide the correct rhythmic structure for the $\frac{4}{4}$ time signature. The correct answer expected to be provided is notated below:

TEST II: MELODY WRITING

Candidates were tasked with listening to a four-bar melody in $\frac{4}{4}$ time as played and transcribe in C Major on the treble staff. A considerable number of candidates successfully notated the melody, although there was a recurring issue with incorrect time signatures being positioned on the treble staff.

The correct melody for this question is as follows:



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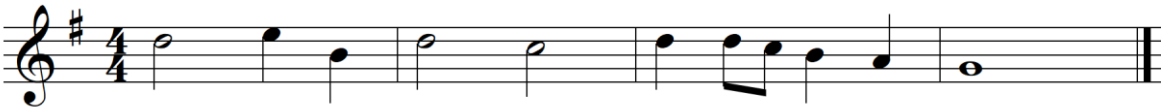
TEST III: TWO-PART WRITING

Candidates were tasked with composing the upper part of a two-part musical piece, consisting of four bars, for 8 marks. This was to be written on the treble staff in the key of **G Major**. Overall, the performance in this section was commendable. However, some candidates interchanged the positions of the key signature and the time signature, leading to inaccuracies. Additionally, a number of candidates struggled to properly notate or draw the treble clef, which is a foundational element of staff notation.

The correct response to this task is provided below:



TEST IV: CHORD PROGRESSIONS

Candidates were required to identify and write eight chords in the order they were played, using Roman numerals or technical descriptions for a total of 8 marks.

The identity of the chords were as follows:

i. VI – (Submediant Root Position)
ii. V – (Dominant Root Position)
iii. I – (Tonic Root Position)
iv. I – (Tonic Root Position)
v. Ib – (Tonic First Inversion)
vi. IIb – (Supertonic First Inversion)
vii. V7 – (Dominant Seventh Root Position)
viii. I – (Tonic Root Position)

The overall performance in this question was highly impressive. Most candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of chord identification and effectively used both Roman numerals and technical descriptions.

TEST V: CADENCES

Candidates were tasked with identifying four cadences in the order they were played, with a total of six marks allocated; two marks for each of any three correct responses. The correct order of the cadences was:

i. Imperfect
ii. Imperfect
iii. Interrupted
iv. Plagal

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Overall, candidates performed well on this question, with most demonstrating a solid understanding of the different cadences. However, a few candidates made spelling mistakes in their written responses.

TEST VI: MODULATIONS

Candidates were asked to listen to excerpts of musical pieces and identify the modulations as subdominant, dominant or relative minor, then indicate the new key of modulation. While most candidates were able to identify the modulations correctly, many failed to indicate the new key modulated to, which affected their overall performance in this question.

The correct answers expected by the chief examiner were as follows:

1. Subdominant – C major
2. Dominant – D major
3. Relative minor – E minor
4. Dominant – D major

Although the modulation identification was generally accurate, the inability to identify the new key of modulation contributed to a lower overall score for many candidates. It is essential for students to practice both identifying modulations and confirming the new key to improve their aural recognition skills.

TEST VII: IDENTIFICATION OF THEMES

Three different themes or excerpts of musical pieces were played, and candidates were asked to identify the form of the music, the time signature of the second excerpt, and list two of the instruments used in the third excerpt. As has been the case in previous years, most candidates performed well in this question, demonstrating a good understanding of musical forms and the ability to identify time signatures and instruments in the excerpts played. Their overall performance in this section was commendable.

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MUSIC 3B (PERFORMANCE TEST)

GENERAL COMMENTS

1. STANDARD OF THE PAPER

The standard of the paper compares well with that of previous years. The pieces were the same and were suitable for the abilities of the candidates.

2. PERFORMANCE OF PAPER

The overall performance of the candidates in the performance test was better than that of the past years.

3. SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' STRENGTHS

(1) Candidates rehearsed the technical exercise in the major key quite well and presented it accordingly.
(2) Many were confident and presented their pieces with seriousness.
(3) Fingering abilities of candidates who used musical instruments has improved.

4. SUMMARY OF CANDIDATES' WEAKNESSES

(1) Some candidates were generally ill-prepared for the paper and displayed a lack of confidence.
(2) Many candidates found it challenging to sight-read pieces the first time.
(3) Dynamic marks and musical expressions were poorly presented to convey proper interpretation in their performances.
(4) Technical exercises in minor mode were quite a challenge for many candidates to pitch and present.

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5. SUGGESTED REMEDIES TO THE WEAKNESSES

(1) Candidates must be serious with their studies and prepare well for the examination.
(2) Teachers must engage students in sight reading lessons from the early stages of the course.
(3) Dynamic marks and musical expressions in pieces should be given more attention than usual to improve performance.
(4) Teachers should help candidates to master the technical exercises in the minor key.

6. DETAILED COMMENTS

(1) Technical Exercises

Candidates were expected to perform two technical exercises. One in a major key and the other in a minor key. Majority of candidates performed the exercises satisfactorily using the tonic solfa or otherwise. Few candidates mentioned the tonic solfa instead of singing them.
Candidates generally performed well in this area.

(2) Set Pieces

Candidates were required to perform two pieces from the given Set-Works/pieces. All the candidates performed from the selected performance Set-Pieces. In some cases, phrasing, dynamics, articulation and diction were not presented as expected by the chief examiner. Some voice candidates lacked the precision of knowledge with the accompanist and could not come in timely to join accompanist as expected whenever necessary.
The performance of candidates on the Set-Pieces was however encouraging.

(3) Sight Singing

Candidates were expected to sing from two music scores at sight for the first time. There was a poor performance in this area. Only few candidates succeeded to read the pieces correctly. Many were able to read the letter names of notes in the score but without their correct pitches.
Teachers are advised to do the following to help candidates gain mastery at sight reading:

(a) begin sight reading exercises with candidates from the first year in school;
(b) assist candidates to identify keys and time signatures of various pieces more often in class;
(c) include a lot of rhythm exercises to class activities;
(d) direct and assist candidates to identify and understand the use of dynamic signs and other performance directions in music scores.

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