

2025 NCEA Assessment Report

Subject:	Art History
Level:	3
Achievement standard(s):	91482, 91483, 91484

General commentary

It was again pleasing to note that many candidates responded by attempting to directly address their chosen question.

Overall, answers were of a higher quality than in the last few years. Candidates used appropriate information and answered the questions directly and with relevant art historical details.

While some candidates selected art works from contrasting periods, uneven understanding across the two areas sometimes led to less fluent and coherent responses.

This year the responses were much longer than in previous years and there were very few short responses – Not Achieved responses tended to be wrong information rather than providing insufficient evidence.

Some of the long responses tended to include information that was not directly related to the question. Many of these appeared to be rote-learned answers where candidates attempted to modify the information they had learnt about art works and their related art movement to answer the question in the exam.

Report on individual achievement standard(s)

Achievement standard 91482: Demonstrate understanding of style in art works

Assessment

One written response to one question – approximately 800–900 words.

Commentary

Candidates were most successful when they demonstrated a clear understanding of two distinct styles, accurately situating each art work within its art movement through the appropriate use of relevant terminology and contextual knowledge.

Some responses showed a misunderstanding of modernist design principles, and others commonly displayed confusion around the definition of media, at times conflating it with subject matter or technique.

Composition, space, form, and line were commonly selected features that generally supported effective analysis.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- described and began to explain the chosen stylistic characteristics in both art works
- gave an analysis using descriptive language rather than consistent use of art historical terminology
- identified some similarities and/or differences between the chosen art works
- gave a brief conclusion to the response without providing reasons or explanations for them
- explained some similarities and/or differences, demonstrating an understanding about the artists and their contexts, but did not use this information as part of a stylistic discussion of the two art works.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- provided reasons and/or justifications for the similarities and/or differences with detailed comparison of how the chosen stylistic characteristics had been treated
- used a range of specific evidence from the art works to support their visual analysis, making clear links to relevant art historical terminology
- included generalised contextual references such as key events or influences to discuss broader characteristics of the movement, rather than specifically relating to the stylistic similarities and/or differences.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- compared the treatment of stylistic characteristics consistently throughout their response, using comparative language and integrating justified reasons and context
- explained a range of specific features from both art works, consistently using purposeful art terminology
- maintained a balanced approach within a visual analysis of both art works and the reasons for stylistic similarities and differences
- integrated relevant contextual information within a comparative analysis to provide an insightful discussion of how this directly impacted on the stylistic elements.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- demonstrated confusion or misunderstanding of the stylistic characteristics, for example, confusing media with subject matter or describing the narrative of the art work rather than its style
- discussed only one art work, or described one in detail while providing only a minimal discussion of the second art work
- did not provide any comparison or identification of similarities and/or differences of the stylistic features of the two art works
- attempted to compare the selected art works but discussed the subject matter or meaning
- did not use specific visual evidence from the art works to describe the chosen stylistic characteristics
- selected one or both art works outside those provided in the resource booklet.

Achievement standard 91483: Examine how meanings are communicated through art works

Assessment

One written response to one selected question – approximately 800–900 words.

Commentary

Overall, answers were of a higher quality than in the last few years. Candidates used appropriate information and answered the questions directly and with relevant art historical details. The open question continued to be the most popular, yet many candidates did not select art works that were appropriate to discuss the theme of the everyday.

There were less stylistic descriptions of art works than in previous years, although stylistic features were sometimes discussed in terms of the meanings that they conveyed, which were relevant for modernist art works.

There were more apparently rote-learned answers, which resulted in repetitive wording, motifs, and explanations, particularly for Questions 1 and 5 where information on humanism and popular culture were adapted to fit the question. Most of these candidates discussed the same art works and motifs and wrote paragraphs of generic contextual information. This prevented many candidates from demonstrating the depth of understanding and perception required for Excellence.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- correctly named the two artists and the titles of the two art works
- related their discussion of meanings to the theme specified in the question
- identified two suitable motifs and features in each of the two works in relation to the question, and explained their meanings
- addressed the question directly through referencing the question within their discussion of the artists and their art work.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- provided an in-depth explanation of the meaning of two motifs in two art works by two appropriate artists, referencing the question and outlining their relevance
- linked some general contextual information that referenced the timeframe that the art works were from
- demonstrated a good knowledge of the artists' aims and the particular artistic style they identified with
- discussed other relevant art works by their selected artists that further reinforced the meaning and intentions of the artists.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- wrote a perceptive and critical response about the meaning of the motifs and their significance to the art works and the artists' work.
- included a significant discussion of relevant contextual material for both art works and explained the impact that these historical events had on shaping the artists' work
- demonstrated in their response an in-depth knowledge of the artists' intentions and their artistic aims, style influences, and cultural backgrounds
- integrated a discussion of motifs, meanings, and themes/ideas and made direct links to relevant contextual information.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- discussed only one art work or only one motif in each art work
- did not name the artists and/or art works correctly
- wrote personal interpretations of the art works, rather than informed interpretations based upon study of appropriate meanings
- did not provide enough specific detail in their explanation of the meanings of motifs and features in the art works
- selected incorrect or inappropriate art works for the question, for example, art works from the wrong area of study.

Achievement standard 91484: Examine the relationship(s) between art and context

Assessment

One written response to one selected question – approximately 800–900 words.

Commentary

The majority of candidates responded by attempting to directly address their chosen question. Candidates would benefit from avoiding vague generalised introductions and instead focus on directly addressing the contextual aspects of their chosen question that focused on some key point(s), which can be later elaborated on in relation to specific features in their chosen art works.

Candidates would benefit from selecting a range of art works that they have a sound knowledge of from their chosen area(s) of study. In preparation for the examination, they could then consider the contextual evidence that could be discussed with reference to those art works.

Candidates who selected specific art works that may be the most appropriate to respond to in relation to each of the specific topics of the question were most successful in their answers.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- responded to their chosen question using two relevant art works
- made appropriate links between art work(s) and the context
- demonstrated an understanding of the relationship(s) between art works and the context by explaining the link(s) between them, for example, by referring to specific features
- clarified relationship(s) between the context and the art works sufficiently enough to demonstrate an understanding of the context.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- directly addressed and gave an in-depth response to their chosen question using relevant art works, linking several details between their chosen art works and context
- clarified their response in a discussion of the relationships between the context and art works, giving a detailed explanation of how the art works exemplified the specific context.
- integrated supporting evidence to demonstrate a depth of understanding.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- demonstrated a perceptive understanding of their chosen question and art works in a fluent response, using a wide range of relevant evidence
- explained a range of relationships between art works and context

- demonstrated a comprehensive knowledge of the standard using analytical and evaluative language in a coherent discussion, supported with evidence from art works and other sources.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not respond to their chosen question and/or context
- presented statements that were limited to descriptions of aspects of art works and/or context
- presented limited and/or irrelevant information in an attempt to address to their chosen question
- selected art works that were inappropriate for their chosen question and the contextual relationship(s) that they attempted to respond to.