

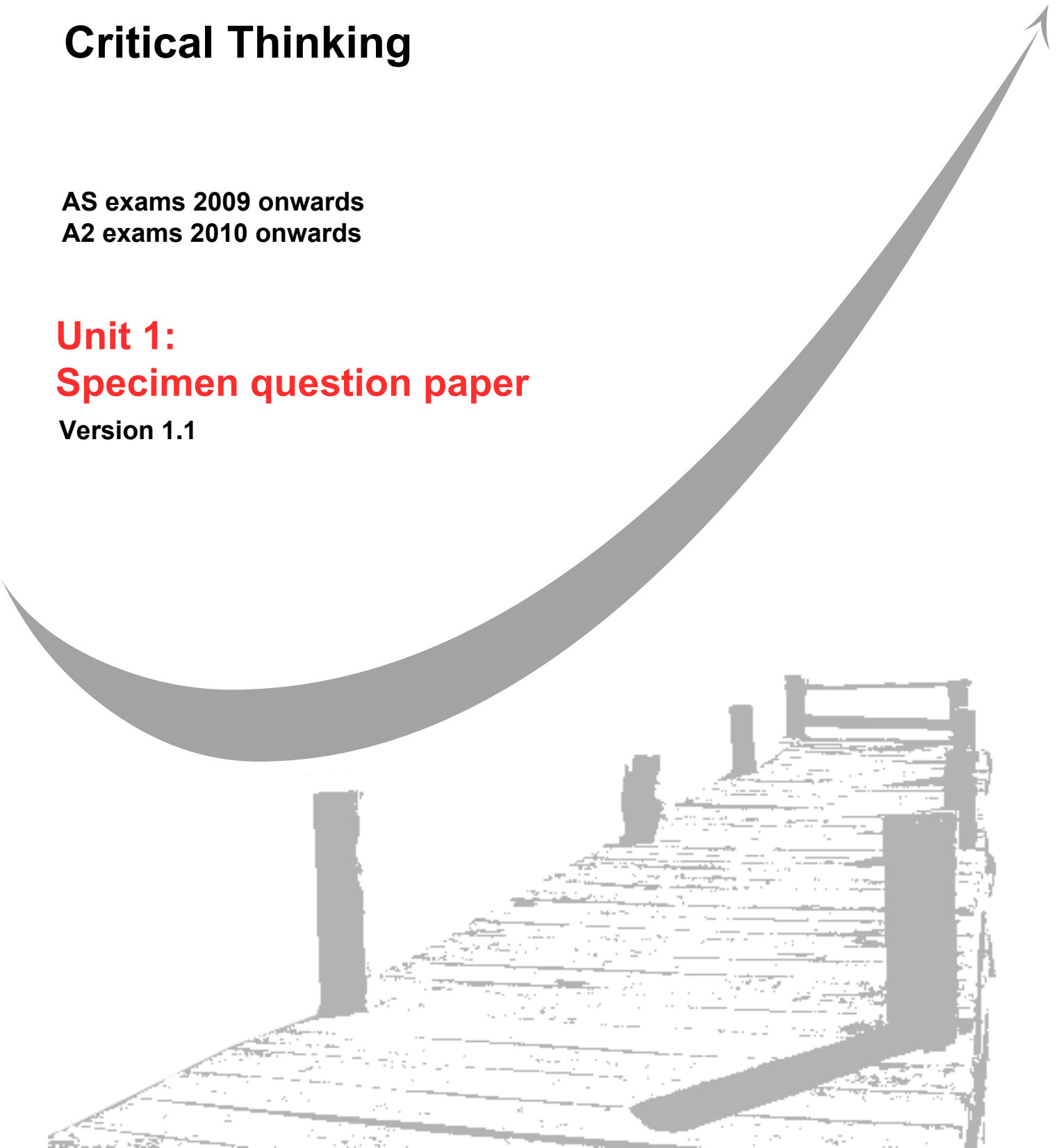
GCE
AS and A Level

Critical Thinking

AS exams 2009 onwards
A2 exams 2010 onwards

Unit 1: **Specimen question paper**

Version 1.1



SPECIMEN PAPER TO PREPARE FOR THE JUNE 2009 AND SUBSEQUENT EXAMINATIONS

General Certificate of Education
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



CRITICAL THINKING CRIT1
Unit 1 Foundation Unit

SOURCE MATERIAL

This source material is to be read in conjunction with question unit CRIT1.

DOCUMENT A

Macabre new exhibition opens in Mexico

from our Art Correspondent

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Source: Adapted from <http://closedcafeteria.blogspot.com> 'The Cafeteria is Closed'

DOCUMENT B

- JED All I can say is that's not art
- KATE So what is, then?
- JED Not that rubbish
- KATE You don't know anything about art. You never go into a gallery. You never look at a picture intelligently. And yet you pick up a paper, see a picture and make rude comments about it as if you are an expert or something.
- JED You don't have to be an expert to know that shoving two skeletons under a pub table is not real art. It doesn't take any skill to do that. It's also disrespectful to the dead. After all, they were real people. It's not like the unmade bed or the pile of bricks. It's tasteless.
- KATE The trouble with people like you is you think art has got to be pretty scenery and sunsets. But why shouldn't art be disrespectful sometimes? And skill's got nothing to do with whether it's art. You can be skilled at something and not produce art. My brother's an engineer but no one would say he produces art.
- JED I never said he did.
- KATE But you just said skill was what made something art.
- JED No I didn't. What I said was that it didn't take any skill to make that thing.
- KATE Well you implied it. It was the same with Picasso. People used to say 'my child could do better than that'. He upset people. But everybody thinks *Guernica* is a masterpiece nowadays. Surely you're going to say that Picasso's not art.
- JED But there's a major difference. Picasso put shapes and colours on the canvas and created his own effects. Hirst didn't create anything. He just got some objects and plonked them on the floor any old how.
- KATE But that's because he's a conceptual artist. For him art's all about ideas, not objects or how they're made. I think artists should have the right to see things in their own way and try and get other people to see things differently. As long as they do that and make people think, that's all that really matters.
- JED Ever think you've been taken for a ride?
- KATE Yeah, sure, me and thousands of others, including critics and collectors and all those kinds of people. But you know better of course!
- JED Well, I know what's good and what isn't.

DOCUMENT C

Conceptual Art: What's the Idea?



- 1 Every time the Turner Prize comes around, there is a debate about whether conceptual art is real art. But what is conceptual art - and what isn't 'proper' about it?
pieces in the Turner Prize involve significant craftsmanship, and most aim to create a striking visual effect.
- 2 Conceptual art is concerned with ideas and meanings, rather than forms and materials. The making of the art object is seen as something incidental that could be assigned to assistants or abandoned entirely.
- 3 However, it is hard to see how art can ever be *just* an 'idea'; art only really works when it is a visual experience of some kind. Of course, this visual experience represents ideas, but not pure ideas as are found in speech or writing.
- 4 Much of the criticism of 'conceptual art' today, is levelled at works that are not really conceptual art at all. The label of conceptual art is liberally bandied around, and stuck on to any piece of modern art that somebody wants to discredit. Most of the art in the Saatchi Gallery or the Turner Prize, for example, couldn't really be described as conceptual. Some of the
- 5 There is little point in opposing the art in the Turner Prize and elsewhere with some fixed idea of 'proper' art. The Stuckists, a group who demonstrate against the prize every year, show how this position easily slips into absurdity. Proper art is paint and canvas, they say - which ends up with a ridiculous fixation on the medium. It is as if they attribute paint with almost magic qualities, so that you only need take a few brushstrokes in order for it to be real art. The conclusion must be that, while every primary schoolchild produces art, Damien Hirst does not.
- 6 In actual fact, painting is just one medium among many - arguably no better or worse than video art, readymades* or installations. Rather than demonstrating outside Tate Britain calling for a return to painting, it would be far better to head inside.

* *'readymades' are objects the artist obtains rather than creates*

Source: Adapted from www.spiked-online.com

APPENDIX

The picture of Guernica is not reproduced here due to third-party copyright constraints.

Guernica

Pablo Picasso, 1937
Oil on canvas, 349 × 776 cm

The text is not reproduced here due to third-party copyright constraints.

Source: www.wikipedia.com

END OF SOURCE MATERIAL

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CRITICAL THINKING CRIT1 Unit 1 Critical Thinking Foundation Unit

For this paper you must have:

- an 8-page answer book
- You may use a calculator

Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes

Instructions

- Use blue or black ink or ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is CRIT1.
- Answer all questions.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work you do not want marked.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 70.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- You will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- The recommended time allocation for this unit is as follows:
 - Initial reading: 10-15 minutes
 - Section A: 45-50 minutes
 - Section B: 30 minutes.

SECTION A

Study **Documents A, B, C** and the **Appendix** before answering all the following questions.

Questions 1 to 3 relate primarily to Document A

1 In the first of the two *Comments on the Show*, Javier claims that

(a) a backlash (from the Church etc.) is certain;
and that

(b) it (a backlash) will be 'a good thing'.

How justified is Javier in making each of these claims, given the available information?

(4 marks)

2 How must the words 'provoke' and 'provocative' be understood if we are to believe the gallery owner's claims? (1 mark)

Are his claims credible?

(2 marks)

3 To what extent, if at all, do Javier's comments raise doubts about the gallery owner's claims regarding provocation? (1 mark)

Questions 4 to 11 relate primarily to Document B

4 Document B is a transcript of a dispute between two people, Kate and Jed.

Identify the **general** issue on which they disagree.

(1 mark)

5 Consider Jed's reasoning in the paragraph:

JED: You don't have to be an expert to know that shoving two skeletons under a pub table is not real art. It doesn't take any skill to do that. Anyone could do it. It's also disrespectful to the dead. After all, they were real people. It's not like the unmade bed or the pile of bricks. It's tasteless.

(a) Explain Jed's argument here by identifying the conclusion, and outlining two reasons that are given in support. (3 marks)

(b) Identify **two** implicit assumptions that Jed makes in this argument? (2 marks)

(c) Comment critically on Jed's use of the word 'shoving' in the same paragraph.

(2 marks)

- 6 Suppose someone were to point out to Jed that Picasso didn't make the canvas, the oils or the brushes which he used for his paintings:
- (a) At which part of Jed's argument would this be aimed? (1 mark)
- (b) To what extent, if at all, does the observation challenge Jed's argument? (2 marks)

- 7 Give an example from Text B of *ad hominem* reasoning, and say whether or not – and why – you think it is acceptable in the context of this debate. (3 marks)

- 8 KATE: The trouble with people like you is that you think art has all got to be pretty scenery and sunsets. Why shouldn't art be disrespectful sometimes?

Explain any weakness or flaw you see in this response by Kate to the claim that Hirst's exhibit is 'disrespectful' etc. (2 marks)

- 9 Consider Kate's counter-argument about skill, and the short exchange which follows it:

KATE: ...skill's got nothing to do with whether it's art. You can be skilled at something and not produce art. My brother's an engineer but no one would say he produces art.

JED: I never said he did

KATE: But you just said skill was what made something art.

JED: No I didn't. What I said was that it didn't take any skill to make that thing.

KATE: Well you implied it.

Explain and evaluate Kate's reasoning here, and assess who is right – Jed or Kate. (4 marks)

- 10 KATE: Yeah, sure, me and thousands of others, including critics and collectors and all those kinds of people. But you know better of course.

(a) What argument is Kate using here, and how effective is it? (3 marks)

(b) What is the purpose and effect of Kate's use of language here? (2 marks)

- 11 What role does **definition** play in the debate between Jed and Kate? Does it help to resolve the dispute? (3 marks)

Questions 12 to 14 relate primarily to Document C

- 12** Josie Appleton's article (**Document C**) was written three years before Damien Hirst's Mexico exhibition.

Can it reasonably be inferred from the article that she would have classed Hirst's *Adam and Eve under the Table* as

- (a) conceptual art?
(b) 'proper' art?

(4 marks)

- 13** The author's main conclusion is a recommendation concerning the way people should respond to modern art. What is the recommendation? (1 mark)

- 14** Explain and evaluate the author's argument against the Stuckists, identifying any possible weaknesses or flaws in the reasoning. (Paragraphs 5-6). (4 marks)

SECTION B

Compare and contrast the two photographs depicting *Guernica* and *Adam and Eve under the table* and then answer the following questions.

- 15** (a) List some ways in which the two exhibits are alike as works of art, and other ways in which they are different. (5 marks)
- (b) With the help of the comparisons you drew, decide which of the two works has greater artistic merit, and write a reasoned argument to support your conclusion. (You may consider that both have equal merit, or that neither has much merit.)

In answering this question you should:

- state your **conclusion** (or conclusions) clearly
- offer effective **reasoning** to support your conclusion(s)
- use the information, and respond to issues or arguments, in the **source documents**
- make it clear what **criterion** (or criteria) you consider important when judging or comparing works of art.

(20 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS