

State Exam Questions 2024-2025

Graphic and Media Design

1. **a) From Artistic Graphics to early Modernism in Graphic Design (1890–1914)**, lithography emerged as a technological means of advertising, self-promotion, and birth to lithographic design. Poster design and printing evolved through Jules Cheret’s three-stone (red, yellow, and blue) lithographic process circa 1880. Art Nouveau, exemplified by Alphonse Mucha’s iconic posters, transformed with the rise of functionalism influenced by the Vienna Secession (Union of Austrian Artists) and Germany’s Deutscher Werkbund (German Association of Craftsmen), later impacting US World War I propaganda posters.
b) Introduction to the creation of a logotype (logo [for short] or wordmark) – specifics of brand implementation, procedures, and limitations in inventing and creating a logotype (low-fidelity single key-color to high-fidelity four color). Brand application within a unified visual style. Logo manual. Pictogram (graphic mark, symbol, icon, etc.) versus logotype. Adobe Illustrator and InDesign or Figma. Basic typographic rules. Color swatches, their use (sources), and where to find suitable fonts and vector graphics.

2. **a) Arts and Crafts Movement**, William Morris, John Ruskin, Red House, Art Nouveau, Henry van de Velde, Antoni Gaudí, Gesamtkunstwerk (a term meaning “total work of art”), The Vienna Secession, Gustav Klimt, Koloman Moser, Wiener Werkstätte (a design workshop), Josef Hoffmann, Peter Behrens, AEG corporate visual style, Deutsche Werkbund (German Association of Craftsmen), Bauhaus, Walter Gropius, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, László Moholy-Nagy, and Sachplakat (a German design style).
b) Introduction to the theoretical foundations of typography – historical context and world-renowned designers (legacy and impact of these designers on contemporary design). An overview of typeface genres, including serif, sans-serif, script, and display. Professional typographic terminology. Evolution of typeface design over time.

3. **a) Futurism in Italy and the expressive typography revolution.** F. T. Marinetti, Fortunato Depero, and Bruno Munari.
b) Procedures for developing a graphic design – how to effectively proceed when creating a graphic design (analysis of the order, research, schedule, determination of the procedure, and resources). Basic typographic and compositional rules. Image and illustration vs. font and handwriting and calligraphy. Composition rules.

4. **a) Soviet Russia. From lubok to constructivism.** Rosta windows. Dmitry S. Moor, Viktor Deni, Cheremnykh, Mayakovsky. Constructivism. El Lisitsky, Alexander Rodchenko, Gustav Klucis. Photomontage. A revolution in book design. The influence of film and photography.
b) Introduction to visual identity design – specifics of the intention, procedures, and aspects of functionality in the development of visual identity (branding and rebranding). Graphic manual of a unified visual style and its practical use for the client. Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign, and Figma. Image and illustration vs. font and handwriting and calligraphy. Composition rules. Colors and their use. Graphic versus logo manual and where to find suitable resources and visual tools.

5. **a) Vanguard Germany. From Expressionism to Bauhaus and its importance for standardization in graphic design.** Bauhaus fonts. Paul Renner, Jan Tschichold, Kurt Schwitters, Herbert Bayer, László Moholy-Nagy. Walter Dexel, Willi Baumeister and Max Burchartz. Avant-garde in the service of advertising professionalization. Typo-foto. John Heartfield.
b) Presentation of graphic design – ways of presenting graphic design (types and forms and strategies for the presentation of graphic design). Discuss with the client and decide how you will work together. Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign, and Figma. Basic typographic and compositional rules. Image and illustration versus font. Composition rules. Color, their use, and where to find suitable resources.

6.
 - a) **The avant-garde in the Netherlands.** De Stijl. Van Doesburg at the Bauhaus. Piet Zwart & Paul Schuitem and their influence on the professionalization of graphic design in industrial practice. H. N. Werkman and hot printing as a counterpart to the professionalization of design.
 - b) **Creating a business card as a model example of structured thinking** – creative business card. Six essential elements (color, typography, composition, format, material, budget) of business card design. Standard specifications and formats for business cards, including standard paper sizes, materials, and printing methods. Technical limitations (typography, materials, colors, types and sizes, and overall composition). Continuity with other parts of the unified visual style. Pre-press preparation and printing. Adobe Illustrator and InDesign. Basic typographic rules. Color swatches and their use (sources).

7.
 - a) **Switzerland on the way to “Swiss style.”** Otto Baumberger, Herbert Matter, Anton Stankowski, and Max Bill.
 - b) **Branding and rebranding** – fundamental characteristics and differences in branding creation and rebranding (when to choose branding and when to rebrand and practical examples). Justification for the choice and procedure (presentation strategy). Factual importance (what successful branding/rebranding should respond to). Content parts and basic ideological directions. Brand essence and tonality. Examples of successful brands and specifications of their functionality.

8.
 - a) **The Swiss Style of the 1950s and 1960s** brought a clean and minimalist approach to graphic design, influencing logo design with its use of sans-serif fonts, geometric shapes, and a restrained color palette. Logos from this period often reflected a modernist aesthetic, emphasizing clarity and simplicity.
 - b) **Analyze a specific logo design in light of the Swiss Style** and consider how the logo captures the essence of the brand’s values, mission, and personality and whether it adheres to the principles of simplicity and clarity. Reflect on whether the logo has undergone redesigns, and if so, how these changes might reflect shifts in the brand’s identity or the influence of other design trends. Finally, examine how the brand maintains its corporate culture and image through the visual representation of its logo.

9. **a) Interwar Britain.** An exploration of typographic forms and the birth of modern typography. Stanley Morison and monotype. Edward Johnston, Eric Gill, Edward McKnight Kauffer, Ashley Havinden. Henry Charles Beck and a map of the London Underground.
- b) Creating a strong visual identity using analysis and planning:** learn how to develop a complete visual identity by considering SWOT analysis, target audiences, research, and creative approaches. Explore case studies to understand how this process has been successfully applied and reflect on the author's concepts.
10. **a) Information design in the 1940s.** Ladislav Sutnar, pioneer of information design (catalog design and design systems) and information architecture (laid the groundwork for modern web design) in the United States.
- b) Digital communication** – corporate identity and communication in the online environment (content strategy, specifics of online communication tools and their advantages from the point of view of the company/client, web/app, UX/UI) and case studies.
11. **a) The United States in the 1930s and the “Art Director.”** Raymond Loewy, Vogue, Vanity Fair, and M. F. Agha. Alexei Brodovič, Herbert Bayer, Lester Beall and Paul Rand.
- b) A brand book is a guide that helps companies stay consistent with their visual identity, messaging, and communication style.** Essential parts of a brand book include the company's values, look, messaging, and communication style. Online tools, like BrandBuilder and Brandcloud, make it easier to create a brand book. Research real-life instances where designers and marketers have successfully employed similar tools to maintain consistent branding across various channels.
12. **a) War and propaganda in the years 1920 to 1945.** New means of propaganda. Xanti Schawinsky, Jean Carlu, Pere Català Pic, Abram Games, F. H. K. Henrion, Herbert Matter and Leo Lionni.
- b) Corporate identity** – the main parts and characteristics of the company's identity (image, design, culture). Role of corporate design (case studies of unified and functional corporate identity).

13. **a) The United States, 1945 to the 1960s** – on the way to the complexity of modern graphic work. Post-war works by Paul Rand, Ladislav Sutnar, Saul Bass, Herb Lubalin, and Milton Glaser.
- b) Understanding the differences between commercial and non-profit campaigns:** learn how campaigns differ when promoting products or services versus supporting a cause or organization. Using design in marketing: understanding the importance of a creative brief and the role of art directors. Different tools of communication and visual solutions in both industries and case studies.
14. **a) Switzerland and “new graphics,” “Swiss Style,” or “International Typographic Style” after World War II.** Armin Hofmann, Wolfgang Weingart, Josef Müller-Brockmann, Karl Gerstner, and Herb Lubalin.
- b) Publications in the offline and online environment** – the role of book and publication design in the context of offline and online environments and their interactivity. Content versus layout and the communication of the language and typography (magazine, book, e-zine, professional literature).
15. **a) The Swiss International Style**, emerging in the 1950s, profoundly influenced graphic design by emphasizing cleanliness, readability, and objectivity. Helvetica, a ubiquitous typeface, exemplifies its enduring impact from 1960 to the present. Designed by Max Miedinger and Eduard Hoffmann, evangelized by Wim Crouwel and Experimental Jetset, and criticized by Massimo Vignelli, David Carson, and Erik Spiekermann.
- b) Discuss and demonstrate (through examples) the significance of Helvetica**, the pros and cons of its cultural impact on graphic design and designers, its influence, and the resulting debates within the design community, from Helvetica’s dominance in branding through its everyday use in commercial wordmarks to its limitations surface in onscreen legibility and small print sizes. Helvetica’s prevalence, despite these challenges, demonstrates the prioritization of form over function in graphic design, raising questions about balancing aesthetics and practicality and the roles of stylist versus designer.

16. **a) Seeing with fresh eyes:** Ideation and iteration in graphic and information design. Drawing inspiration from the works of Edward Tufte, Inge Druckrey, Massimo Vignelli, and Milton Glaser, explore the importance of visual thinking and experimentation in the design process while referencing the tenets of these influential figures.
- b) Analysis and presentation of data as design:** From an icon or letterform to a word or information on paper or screen, understand the role of data visualization and typography in effective communication. Discuss the use of grids and the practice of generating 8–16 ideations within a set time frame to refine design solutions. Balancing design elements: Evaluate design decisions, techniques, and communication effectiveness in various examples. Explore the significance of aesthetics and practicality balance in creating successful graphic and information designs.
17. **a) From Information Design to Product Design:** A Historical Perspective on Design Thinking Principles Consider the historical contributions of Ladislav Sutnar, Edward Tufte, Jakob Nielsen, and Don Norman in shaping the fields of information design and product design.
- b) Discuss and demonstrate the six rules of design thinking** (quality over quantity; defer judgment; embrace wild ideas; fail fast, cheap, and often; show, don't tell; and build on ideas of others) and reflect on how historical figures may have applied them. Select two rules and share examples from your work or others' to illustrate their application. Describe the challenges and benefits encountered when applying these principles. Discuss the relevance and impact of design thinking in your chosen field and how you plan to use it in your future career.
18. **a) The Netherlands after World War II.** Willem Sandberg, Friedrich Vordemberge-Gildewart, Otto Treumann, Pieter Brattinga, Wim Crouwel and Total Design.
- b) Brand communication strategy and its impact on sales** – a marketing strategy targeting current and potential customers, adaptable to changing market conditions, and enabling the company to achieve its goals through appropriate selection of marketing messages.

19. **a) New Wave (or New Typography).** The emergence of electronic technologies in the 70s and the advent of desktop publishing in the 80s. Pioneers such as Wim Crouwel and Wolfgang Weingart established the foundation for this revolutionary period in design. Prominent American graphic designers like Paul Rand, Saul Bass, Herb Lubalin, Massimo Vignelli, April Greiman, and Rudy VanderLans of Emigré magazine played significant roles in furthering the design style.
- b) Identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis)** when planning to change the position or image of a brand or product, also known as repositioning. Since the market and its requirements are constantly evolving and expanding, the brand must adapt by considering the strengths and weaknesses of the product or service and the opportunities and risks in the current market environment.
20. **a) After modernism – the end of design — the end of print?** 1990s to the new millennium. The early 1990s marked the end of an era, as the postmodern design movement gave rise to experimental typography and a grunge aesthetic championed by Ray Gun magazine and David Carson. At the same time, Cranbrook Academy in the United States fostered an innovative approach to design education that further contributed to the evolution of design during this transformative period. Despite the provocative title of Carson’s book, “The End of Print,” the end of modernism and the advent of digital technology did not mark the end of design but rather a new chapter in its ongoing evolution.
- b) Subliminal messaging in advertising** can affect how consumers feel and think about products and influence their buying choices. Carefully crafted claims and slogans are essential to this process, showing how important it is for marketers to use effective strategies and messages. Consider the following questions: What are some examples of subliminal messaging in advertising, and how do they influence consumer behavior?