Design Movements
Issues associated with twentieth century design movements are regularly tested in the written paper. You should be able to describe one or two movements and explain the key areas which define the movement.
Towards product design

Although we have always made products of one form or another, these were generally for our own use or traded for other products. The blacksmith, baker, cabinet maker, cobbler all manufactured products in very small quantities and it was only in the late nineteenth century that products began to be designed by people other than the maker and manufactured in larger quantities.
Throughout the twentieth century design history can be grouped into time periods and fashions. Product design has been dominated by the growth in new materials and manufacturing techniques and the latest thinking at any period in time. We often call these periods Design Movements and it is useful to have a general understanding of what these mean.
Design movements

- Arts & Crafts movement
- Art Nouveau
- Modernism
- Art Deco
- De Stijl
- Bauhaus
- The Streamlined Age
- The 1960s
- Memphis
- Post Modernism
- Designer brands
- Blobjects
Arts & Crafts movement

• Quality craftsmanship led by William Morris
• Inspired by nature, often very decorative
• Quality materials were used
• Only really available for the wealthy
Art Nouveau

- Early part of century
- Popular in Europe
- Based on the flowing lines found in nature
- Charles Rennie Mackintosh is famous for working in this style.
- The lamps of Louis Comfort Tiffany are often used as fine examples of this period.
Modernism

• As Art Nouveau was beginning to peak so we saw the rise in the industrialised designs which are typical of this movement. Charles Rennie Mackintosh began to use geometric shapes which were easier to mass produce.
Between 1919 and 1933 the German school of art and design called the Bauhaus was producing designs which were truly made for mass production but it was thirty years later that industry caught up with this thinking and was able to manufacture the designs for products such as furniture and lighting cheaply enough and in large quantities. Many of the designs we now regard as design classics originate from the Bauhaus.
Art Deco

- Began with an exhibition of products in Paris in 1925
- Typically involved the use of geometric shapes and the influences from the Egyptian tomb of Tutankhamen.
- Often regarded as a very glamorous period of design.
- Ceramicist Claris Cliff is a famous designer from that period
De Stijl (The Style)

- In Holland in the mid 1920s "The Style" movement was taking geometric design to an extreme. The use of basic rectangles and primary colours became the inspiration for looking at furniture and architecture in a totally new way. The painter Piet Mondrian was typical of this style and Gerrit Rietveld's Red and blue chair is certainly a design classic.
Streamlined age

- The rapid growth in transport design was often the design influence for products in the 1940s and 50s which began to suggest speed and movement. Interest in Science and the race to put the first man on the moon started to be a feature of product styling. New materials and production methods opened the doors for streamlined designs which could be manufactured cheaply.
This was the period of massive consumer growth. The "Mods" of the 1960s were probably the first real sign of teenagers becoming a separate consumer market. The fashion designer Mary Quant is credited with the introduction of the mini-skirt and the "Swinging Sixties" really took off as consumers craved for new ideas. Alec Issigonis' Morris Mini remains a design classic of that period.
Memphis

• As a reaction to the clinical lines and lack of decoration which was typical of the Modernist movement a group of Italian designers, led by Ettore Sottsass exhibited an alternative viewpoint to minimalism. Known as the Memphis Group they introduced highly decorative laminates and produced products which were amusing. Whilst the movement was restricted to the early 1980s their post-modernism influence can be seen in many of today's products.
• Sophisticated CAD software allows us to produce complex flowing forms and be able to create the machine files to manufacture them. We now see a growth of products that have no straight lines and are produced in a variety of ways. This current trend has been labelled as blobjects.
In the style of….

- It is much better to design “in the style of…” rather than to copy or reproduce the design.
In the style of....

- Lamp inspired by Philippe Starck’s Juicy Salif
In the style of....

- Hat inspired by a Philip Treacy design
Retro design

- Modern products based on styling from the past
Design Icons

Classic design
• Innovative
• Often copied