

<b>Student name</b>	<b>Candidate C waistcoat 3<sup>rd</sup> identification</b>		
<b>Centre No</b>		<b>Candidate No</b>	
<b>Title of text and playwright</b>	The Arabian Nights by Mary Zimmerman		
<b>Mono/Duo/group</b>	Group 1		
<b>What role(s) are you playing?</b> [expand as necessary]:  Kasim  Ali's Son  Captain (from 'The Story of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves continues' onwards)  Sidi 1 (in 'The Story if the Wife Who Wouldn't Eat')  ensemble			
<b>What is happening to your character(s) in the key extract?</b> [expand as necessary]:  <p><b>Kasim:</b> Kasim and Ali Baba are brothers, with my character being the richer of the two. However, this dynamic turns on its head when Ali Baba discovers endless riches in the cave. Ali Baba tells Kasim of his good fortune and he too goes to the cave out of jealousy. Although, he forgets the magic word to open the cave door again and becomes trapped. His greed backfires when the thieves return and he is found out and killed by them, being cut brutally into quarters. Kasim's body is carted home with the gold and sown together again by Baba Mustafa (the tailor). His body is taken to the forest and buried, ending Kasim's journey in the play with that.</p> <p><b>Ali's son:</b> He inherits Ali Baba's (his father) newfound riches found in the cave. As a result of Kasim's death, his shop is handed over to Ali Baba's son with the promise of more riches once married if he behaves as advised. This is where my role as Ali's son ends – this character is taken on by another member of my group for the rest of the extract for logistical reasons.</p> <p><b>Captain:</b> In the extract where I play the role of the Captain, he disguises himself and arrives at the first shop he saw open. Here he meets Baba Mustapha whom he bribes for information about the dead man, using gold coins as bait. He blindfolds Baba so he can retrace his steps back to Kasim's house (where Ali Baba is now living), remembering the location of the house. The Captain's devious plot is set in motion when he disguises the thieves as jars of oil and himself as an oil-merchant and goes to Ali Bab's house. However, Marjanah discovers the Captain's plot by seeing a knife through his clothes and devises her own scheme to kill him and the thieves before the Captain can kill his enemy himself. Her plan involves dancing performatively with a dagger, mesmerising the Captain and eventually stabs him as part of her routine, killing him.</p>			

**Sidi 1:** My character narrates the story of 'the Wife Who Wouldn't Eat' whilst Sidi 2 enacts his words. Sidi is summoned by the King when caught whipping his horse mercilessly in the street. Defending his actions to the King, he tells the story of how he secretly followed his wife downstairs one night to find her eating a dead body with a ghoul. Sidi soon discovers that his wife is an evil sorceress who turns him into a dog. Sidi 2 performs being chased by other dogs, running around the village whilst I narrate the action. The dog is taken in by a baker and shocks him with his 'magic gift' of telling good money from bad. Sidi 1 narrates how people travelled to see him (as a dog), amazed at his talent until a woman brings him to her daughter (a sorceress) with the suspicion that he used to be human. The Sorceress transforms him back into a man and together they seek revenge on Amina, turning her into a horse as punishment. Sidi then explains that this is why he mercilessly beats his horse everyday as a form of revenge. The King says he is let off if he forgives Amina so the story ends as Sidi strokes her gently and leads her off, showing him listening to the King's advice.

**How does the key extract relate to the context of the whole play?** [expand as necessary]:

Both stories chosen ('The Story of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves' and 'The Story of the Wife Who Wouldn't Eat') are two of a collection of tales read by Sharhazad, daughter to the King's Vizier. Both are dark comedies that include lighthearted moments alongside death and betrayal. Sharhazad bravely marries the King despite his threat to marry a queen every night and kill her in the morning. She tells a new story to the King every night to protect her and other women's lives, each with an incomplete ending so she can finish the story the next night. With every story comes a unique message as Sharhazad weaves her magic to gently challenge and teach the King. She narrates these stories for 1001 nights until she presents the king with three sons that she has conceived during his visits. Charmed by this and her stories, he releases her and they live happily ever after. Therefore, both tales we have chosen contribute to a much larger message of liberation by the plays end.

**What are your character's objectives/motivations/feelings?** [expand as necessary]:

**Kasim:** Before Ali Baba discovers the riches within the cave, Kasim lived a life of ease, wealth and satisfaction unlike his brother, harbouring a grotesque superiority complex. Therefore, on hearing the news of his brother's new fortune, Kasim's feelings of pride and superiority for his own success transform into emotions of jealousy. His new motivation becomes to overtake his brother oncemore and find the cave to retrieve his own riches. Once entering the cave, Kasim is flooded with emotions of greed and longing, fixated on nothing but the treasure inside. However, he is blinded by his greed so much so that he forgets the magic word to free himself from the cave. His feelings of power and arrogance are obliterated. His motivation changes from becoming obscenely rich to not being stuck in the cave forevermore, evident as he helplessly tries to guess the word and bangs on the cave in hope of release. When the Captain declares the magic word, the cave doors fly open and Kasim is filled with emotions of relief and liberty, only to have those snatched away from him in seconds. He is killed mercilessly by the thieves, causing Kasim to feel raw emotions of terror and vulnerability, removing all his previous arguably. In the final moments of his life, this is arguably the most relatable and real Kasim is throughout the whole story. His final feelings before he dies include excruciating pain, regret and betrayal, losing everything he's ever known at the hands of greed.

**Ali's son:** He is an ambitious young man, filled with hope and excitement when being gifted Kasim's shop by his father. Although wearing the mask of maturity and ambition beyond his years, there must also be an element of pressure felt by Ali's son being given such a large responsibility.

**Captain:** Just before I begin acting as the Captain, he gives a speech to the thieves revealing how someone must know their secret (that they killed Kasim and stole his treasure) upon finding his body missing. He employs a new plan to head to the city disguised to find whoever else knows about the cave and, with that, kill him. When devising this new plan, he will feel devious and full of energy, excited to watch his plan roll into action, whilst also remaining his air of authority. He cons an old merchant into showing him where Kasim's house lies, in exchange for gold coins, feeling witty and intelligent in those moment as well as determined to win him over. Blindfolding the blind old tailor, the Captain would feel very in control and powerful as they near the house and his plan comes into action. He hurries back to the slaves in excitement and apprehension. Instructing them to disguise themselves in oil jars, his motivations would be to behave very clear and direct giving orders so that the thieves do exactly as he pleases. They arrive at Kasim's house and the Captain disguises himself as an oil merchant, performing his new role confidently and convincingly to not give away his disguise. In the final moments of his life, he experiences a rollercoaster of emotions from grotesque lust for Marjanah, almost salivating over her, transforming into intense shock, pain and betrayal when she stabs him.

**How are you interpreting this character(s) in performance? (i.e., vocal, physical, communication of intent) [expand as necessary]:**

**Kasim:** I thought it was important to differentiate Kasim from his brother, Ali Baba, from the offset to show the duality of their characters. As the richer brother, I portray Kasim as arrogant, stuck up and grotesque. To create this characterisation, I give Kasim a constantly slumped posture, exaggerating my 'groin' area by thrust my hips forward to give a comic effect and evoke a piggish persona, lazy due to his immense wealth. Bending my knees to create this stance makes me look more over wight and shorter in height on stage and therefore casting Kasim as a short man allowing his character to be even more comical as he demands so much power and control for a man of his size, defying the typical stereotypes of power. I also elected a 'cockney', rougher-sounding accent to further than idea that Kasim is a short man with a tall man's complex, using his voice and physicality to establish his masculinity. To differentiate from my normal speaking voice used as a narrator, I use a much lower pitch. I believe that his arrogant characterisation would include being a womaniser, lusting for female-contact, exemplified by uncomfortable stroking of his wife's arm and looking at the treasure in the cave insatiably, touching it sexually at one moment. These moments of physicality will make the audience uncomfortable and dislike Kasim as he is the more grotesque of the two brothers, enhancing his comic effect as the audience laugh at his misfortune. When opening and closing the cave I perform a range of exercise stretches, such as a failed press-up, to show how he is unfit hence his being overweight. To add to the comic effect of this moment I also pant profusely to emulate being out of breath. When Kasim is finally released from the cave, I run out screaming frantically whilst being lifted into the air and down onto the ground again, mimicking my fall in a dramatic comic way following the dark comedy style. As each thief stabs my I let out a noise of pain, getting more and more loud until I am finally 'dead'. When the thieves chop my body into quarters, I tuck my arms and legs behind my body to create a dimorphic shape and amuse the audience by satirising his death.

**Ali's Son:** To characterise his youth compared to his parents, I gave Ali's son a lisp as it's a voice often associated with younger people. The accent also is a stark contrast from the rougher, aggressive tone used as Kasim, clearly showcasing a switch in character. Portraying his pride at being given the key to the shop, I smile out at the audience, holding my head high causing them to warm to him as one of the only truly innocent characters in the play.

**Captain:** When dressed as himself, I elected a well-spoken voice with a medium pitch, punchy, loud volume and stern tone to mimic an archetypal Captain. I keep the same vocal features until disguised as the oil-merchant showing how the Captain has a constant sternness and intensity, marking him out as a dislikeable character. Another key feature of my characterisation is an upright posture, wide stance and arm salute when addressing others. When walking (or rather, marching) across stage as the Captain I maintain the same physicality to show a sense of authority and self-importance, taking large fast strides to further this portrayal. Addressing the thieves in my plot, I point directly at each giving them a direct order to show how lamenting authority and being devious is second nature to him. The physicality and voice here provide a contrast to my other characters therefore showing the audience that I am multi-rolling.

**Captain disguised as the Oil Merchant:** To clearly indicate my disguise to the characters on stage and the audience, I once again change my accent. Shocking and amusing the audience at the sudden change in voice, this time I adopt a 'slimier' sounding accent, hissing my 's' sounds and speaking at a lower pitch and volume, differing from the well-spoken Captain profoundly, cleverly keeping up his disguise. When whispering instructions to the slaves in the jars, I ensure to switch back to the Captain speaking voice to allow the plot to make sense for the audience and remind them that it's a disguise. Contrasting the reserved, stern Captain, enticed by Marjanah's beauty, I salivate at the sight of her and look her up and down, lustful and grotesque, making the audience laugh as they feel uncomfortable. My sexual physicality only intensifies when she begins to dance with me, growing in excitement as a method to elevate the audience's shock when she suddenly stabs me to death, falling onto my knees as if to perform a sexual act, but instead dying.

**Sidi 1:** Unlike the other characters I perform as, Sidi 1 doesn't actively join in with the action on stage and instead narrates it. To establish myself as a narrator to the audience, when acting I ensure to always leave a somewhat large proximity between where I am standing and the action being enacted, showing that I am not part of the story. Enhancing my narrator persona, I voice out almost all of my lines to the audience so that no lines are lost, and they can follow the narrative clearly but also to engage them with what I'm saying. To differentiate Sidi 1 from the previous characters I performed as, I perform using a Northern accent to indicate how Sidi has a completely different character than the ones in the previous story and to show my variation as an actor, grappling with a range of accents throughout the piece. The only moments in the story where Sidi 1 is acting as himself and not a narrator is at the beginning and end of the piece, therefore I showed this change in role by voicing my lines to the characters on stage and out to the audience less. At the start of the story, I imitate riding a horse by standing behind Aisha (acting as the horse, Amina) with an upright posture, brutally whipping her with my upstage arm, making sure not to cover my fierce, intense facial expressions (knitting my eyebrows and making my eyes small). Whilst whipping the horse, I call out 'yah!' at a loud volume to reflect that Sidi not only has control but enjoys it. However, I portray a stark change in attitude when brought in front of the King, kneeling on the ground to show my respect, fear and lack of authority in the face of royalty. To also convey Sidi's fear, I shake my voice and hands when beginning to defend myself. My facial expression of a furrowed brow and slightly pouting lip also aims to show this frightened attitude. Mirroring this scene, at the end of the story I return to kneeling at the King's feet at DSL (as we did at the start) to remind the audience that the string of actions that just played out were my explanation to the King. In contrast, at the end I adopt a far more confident tone showing how Sidi has grown in confidence throughout his narration and believes in the power of his story. Finally, to show that Sidi respects and listens to the King's wishes for him to forgive, I stroke the horse compassionately before leading her off stage.

<b>Word count</b>	
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150–250 words per character played	
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