



Examiners' Report

June 2022

GCE Drama and Theatre 9DR0 03

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Introduction

This is the fifth year of examination for this Component (9DR0/03) Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice. Papers were sat in 2020 and 2021 with exceptionally small cohorts due to the pandemic and, in essence, were offered for resit purposes. The AS Drama and Theatre qualification was discontinued in 2019.

The component takes the form of a two-and-a-half hour written examination, and requires candidates to consider, analyse and evaluate how different theatre makers create impact.

Throughout the component, candidates will have studied how production ideas and dramatic elements are communicated to an audience from the perspective of a director, a performer and a designer, as well as an informed member of an audience themselves.

There are three areas to be covered:

Section A: A live theatre evaluation (20 Marks)

Section B: Page to Stage: realisation of a complete performance text (18 marks + 18 marks = 36 marks)

Section C: Interpreting one complete performance text, in light of one practitioner for a contemporary audience (24 marks).

Section A: Live theatre evaluation

Section A gives candidates a choice of questions that are designed to give opportunities to discuss performance elements, as well as design elements. At the heart of the question is a statement that invites a personal response from the candidate, whilst analysing what they have seen or heard, and then going on to evaluate it. Perceptive evaluation cannot really occur without detailed analysis and candidates responded well to this challenge. For this series, candidates were able to evaluate either a live performance they had seen **or** a digital/recorded performance of a live theatre production.

The most popular performances written about included a number of plays that have been around for some time now and ones that are readily available on a digital platform in particular: *Things I Know to be True*, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time* and *Frankenstein*. Live performances that were written about were far less popular than recorded ones but *Small Island* and *Yerma* both proved to be very successful. Frantic Assembly, and The National Theatre were the most popular companies seen.

Unfortunately, there was an increase in candidates writing about musicals or dance shows that contained no dialogue. Consequently, such candidates were unable to meet the required demands of this Drama and Theatre specification, which is quite clear that sung-through productions or productions without the spoken word are not allowed. Similarly, a very small number of candidates wrote about performance texts from Section B or Section C, which are forbidden texts and had to be awarded zero marks.

Question 1 was more popular than Question 2 although it was perfectly possible to talk about the key issues from either question. For example, Technology was often talked about in Question 1 and ways of communicating to an audience in 2022 could also be referenced in Q2.

Very few candidates expressed a dislike for the production they had seen and even if they did, this had no impact on the quality of their response. However, where they had particularly enjoyed the production, this passion seemed to elicit a stronger response, particularly when connecting to the statement. It was felt that where candidates had been able to see a live production, rather than a digital one, it was easier to offer personal evaluation that captured the joy and spontaneity of the moment.

For Q1, candidates talked about the issues of the play they had seen, as well as the way it was presented within the broader context of how theatre could, or could not, communicate successfully in 2022. Higher-scoring responses were able to analyse and evaluate, in equal measure, the issues within the play seen and how they were staged, often commenting on how themes and issues resonated with their lives.

There was definitely much more discussion about mental health issues and the impact of the pandemic on themselves and others, which was something that occurred throughout all responses on the paper.

Repeated references to the statement helped keep candidates on track and ensured that they were responding to the question. Repeating the statement, and then citing key moments with the support of the 500 words that candidates are allowed to take into the examination room with them, seemed to be a logical way to approach Question 1 or 2. It is difficult to say whether candidates performed better having seen something probably just once live at a theatre, or many times, while watching a recorded performance. There are advantages and disadvantages to both formats.

Section B: Page to Stage: Realising a Performance text. Candidates must explore a performance text practically, to consider how theatrical ideas might be realised in performance and communicated to an audience. They must write about one of the texts below:

Accidental Death Of An Anarchist

Colder Than Here

Equus

Fences

Machinal

That Face

The texts cannot be taken into the examination room. Candidates are given an unseen extract which they should place at the heart of their response.

NOTE: For the 2022 series, centres were given Advance Information (AI) in February 2022. This AI gave centres a targeted extract for each of the set texts of around 300 lines, from which the 100 lines in the examination would come. They were asked to consider a possible staging of the selected unseen extract and the intended impact their creative ideas would have on an audience.

Equus remained the most popular text but only just. There were definitely many more candidates writing about all of the other five texts, which seemed to be represented in almost equal measure. There was nothing in the responses seen to suggest that any one text leant itself to the questions more readily than any other.

This section of the examination gives no choice of question: candidates have to respond as both a performer and as a designer.

Examiners felt that question 3, where candidates were in the role of a performer, was answered slightly better than question 4, where they assume the role of a designer. However, responses to Q4 were definitely much stronger than in previous series'.

These questions also asked candidates to make reference to the performance text as a whole. It was this last aspect that many candidates neglected and this meant that a really strong, detailed response on the extract alone could not gain higher marks.

The AI provided such a tight focus to one of the two unseen aspects for these questions that there were many more centre responses that were exceptionally similar. Indeed, there were many strikingly similar responses from all candidates, irrespective of a centre style.

Question 3 clearly states that they are the performer ('As a performer...') and while most candidates wrote in the first person there were still many who blurred the boundaries of a performer with that of a Director. They are not a director in Section B: they are a performer or a designer and, as such, must write as if they were that particular theatre maker.

Many candidates wrote in multiple voices throughout their response, sometimes as the performer, sometimes as the director. This could lead to confused ideas, which limited the response overall.

Some candidates wrote exclusively about the extract, which meant they had not referred to the rest of the text. Higher-scoring candidates readily connected the extract to the rest of the performance text. They were clear about how they would use voice and non-verbal communication to show the audience their relationship with one other character in the extract.

A clear working knowledge of the performance text is essential to success. Many candidates had an impressive idea of exactly how they would stage their chosen performance text and had well-crafted responses to being both a performer and a designer. The AI had clearly allowed centres to consider every performance and design aspect in great detail, although in some cases, this was at the expense of the performance text as a whole.

Question 4 was exactly the same, in that responses felt well-practised and very detailed. A small number of candidates referenced more than **one** theatrical element so could only be awarded marks for the element that featured most prominently.

Section C : Theatre Makers in Practice: Interpreting a Performance Text.

Candidates must explore a complete performance text practically, in the light of a chosen practitioner, in order to outline and justify their ideas for a production concept. They must write about one of the texts below:

- Antigone
- Doctor Faustus *
- Hedda Gabler
- Lysistrata *
- The Maids
- The School for Scandal
- The Tempest
- Waiting for Godot
- Woyzeck *

* These are carry-over texts from the legacy qualification and are available as a free download from the Edexcel website. It is recommended that candidates use these editions.

The practitioner must come from the list below:

- Artaud
- Brecht
- Berkoff
- Complicite
- Kneehigh
- Joan Littlewood
- Punchdrunk
- Stanislavski

The most popular texts for this section continue to be *Woyzeck* and *Lysistrata* – in fact, there seemed to be more of these than ever, this year. *Antigone* and *Hedda Gabler* appear to be the next most popular, with a very small number of *The Maids*, *The Tempest*, *Waiting for Godot*, *Dr Faustus*, and *The School for Scandal*.

Popular practitioners were Kneehigh, Punchdrunk and Brecht: although all the others were seen, even if in small numbers. Stanislavski was popular, particularly with *Hedda Gabler*, although some responses dwelt too long on rehearsal techniques, rather than their overall performance concept. Some candidates had difficulty with the choice of practitioner when their methodologies did not sit easily with the choice of playtext.

Candidates respond to one question from a choice of two. They take clean copies of their chosen text into the examination room with them, then respond to an unseen named extract, as well as to the rest of the play.

Note: For the 2022 series, centres were given Advance Information (AI). This AI gave centres a targeted extract for each of the set texts of around 300 lines, from which the 100 lines in the examination would be taken.

Candidates already know that they will be asked to respond 'As a director...' and it was notable that many higher-level responses kept this phrase running throughout their answer. Candidates must also research the original performance conditions and show relevant knowledge and understanding of the social, cultural and historical factors that were central to the original text.

High-scoring candidates used this information particularly well, connecting the past to the present with insight and respect for the playwright's intentions. They were aware of the staging implications from 'then and now' as well as cultural shifts in recent years in relation to a 21st century audience.

Some candidates seemed intent in getting their concept down on paper at the expense of focussing on the question, which was (Q5), how they would highlight one key character or (Q6), how they would support the use of design elements. Questions 5 and 6 were answered in almost equal measure.

Rather as in Section B, the AI resulted in some candidates writing exclusively about the extract, which meant they had not referred to the rest of the text. Higher-scoring candidates readily connected the extract to the rest of the performance text. The more successful responses tended to choose a practitioner that was more suited to the performance text.

The concept also has to be seen to work in practical terms and with due regard to health and safety. Punchdrunk and Artaud, in particular, sometimes exposed the audience to gruelling experiences, which in some cases were dangerous and/or unworkable.

For candidates using Punchdrunk, a number had seen *The Burnt City* and had used a range of techniques seen in that production, some more effectively than others.

There were some strong responses that were just too short to warrant the higher levels. This was either because they had not had enough time to cover the demands of the question in sufficient detail, or there was repetition of ideas, rather than development.

In this section, more than any other, there was a sense of a 'prepared', answer with some candidates not mentioning the focus at all until the final paragraph or 'bolting on' a comment about the question focus. Less-able candidates often referred to the OPC. They regurgitated information from their notes and used the points out of the context of the question or the example they were discussing. Simplistic application of Original Performance Conditions (OPC) with dates and names did not always work supportively for the candidate. Some candidates found it difficult to justify their ideas and tended to describe what they would do, without regard for the desired impact on the audience.

There are numerous aspects to this section and many candidates were unable to cover all of them. The release of the AI led to many centres producing a 'centre response' that, in some cases, were so similar in detail and phrasing that examiners escalated several responses querying plagiarism; this was not the case, but it was an aspect of providing AI.

Unfortunately, some practitioners did not always support the texts chosen by the centre. There was a very small number of responses that had used a practitioner that was not on the set list. This meant that all references to the practitioner could not be awarded any marks. The practitioner's methodologies need to be supportive to the text that is being studied. It is important that centres reflect carefully on how the practitioner links to the chosen play.

Lysistrata is still generating the least plausible concepts – rival football fans or gangs, The Troubles in Ireland scenario is still seen frequently, with many almost identical concepts. This year more than ever before, a small number of concepts were so ridiculous and/or far removed from the text that they were creating quite a different play from the original. At best, they made it very difficult to award marks, and at worst, they were bordering on offensive.

There were many excellent responses to *Woyzeck*, with ideas that seemed sincere in their awareness of the poverty issue and how some people are ill-treated. These were always well-researched. PTSD and mental health issues were definitely more prevalent, with some candidates referring specifically to the pandemic.

There were many other concepts connected to current affairs using world leaders as the protagonist or antagonist, but these were only really successful when the ideas genuinely did have a connection to the playwrights' original intentions. The more successful candidates were able to root their responses in the extract given, and then discuss other moments from the play text.

There were some very interesting directorial interpretations that were imaginative and were clearly presented for a contemporary audience. Successful candidates were able to keep their directorial concept at the root of the response, whilst also addressing the other elements. The theories and methodologies of key practitioners were usually all understood successfully and clearly connected to the candidate's own concepts.

Question 1

This question was more popular than Q2.

Whilst many candidates chose to talk about a range of contemporary ways of communicating to an audience in 2022, such as Netflix, social media etc, they were very adept at focussing on the production they had seen. They were able to connect it with the contemporary issues it raised, or the advances in theatre production that made it resonate with an audience in 2022.

Higher-level responses demonstrated a wide socio-political awareness that reflected on them as individuals, often commenting on how themes and issues resonated with their lives. The issues included climate change, politics, war and the plight of refugees, as well as more personal issues such as LGBTQ+ and mental health problems.

It was not surprising that the pandemic was also referenced; on one level, candidates were saying that they were watching the performance on a digital platform because of the pandemic and on another level, they were citing the difficulties the pandemic had created for them and others.

Stronger responses made reference to the decisions made by theatre makers and their planned/actual impact on audiences. Strong responses also balanced personal response with subject-specific language. Thus, a context was placed around the candidate's experience as an audience member in the light of wider theatrical processes. Higher-scoring responses also made good use of both acting and design decisions. They explored the notion of communication in its widest remit – without losing track of the question and a suitable line of argument.

A number of candidates found it difficult to balance analysis and evaluation, favouring one over the other. It was felt that many responses had incredible attention to detail but, as one candidate said, 'I've watched this countless times'. Conversely, examiners did feel that when a candidate had been fortunate enough to see something LIVE, the evaluation had a spontaneity and joy about it that was difficult to obtain with a recorded performance.

Unfortunately, quite a number of candidates wrote about musicals, which can make it very challenging to respond in depth and detail to a question that reflects the Assessment Objectives of the A level Drama and Theatre qualification. It was very disappointing to have to award zero marks for performances seen where there was no spoken dialogue at all. Similarly, a small number of Section B and C texts were used for Q01 or Q02 and could not achieve any marks.

Examiners also noted that some candidates had made use of the wording from Q02, by citing examples where technology enhanced communication in 2022.

Performance details

Title:

Yerma

Venue:

The Young Vic

Date seen:

31st August 2017

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box . If you change your mind, put a line through the box and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen question number: Question 1 Question 2

I watched ^{a recording of} ~~a production of~~ Simon Stone's adaptation of F. Lorca's 'Yerma', ~~on~~ performed at The Young Vic theatre on the 31st August 2017. Set on a traverse stage with the audience separated from the playing space by glass walls, the play painfully depicted Her's descent into madness because of her struggle with infertility, culminating in her suicide, the psychological realist play was definitely a powerful force of communication with the audience in 2022. I was left ~~debrate~~ because of the combination of Stone's direction, Lizzie Clachan's set design and Piper's central performance as her and felt that the performance communicated

effectively the maddening effects of obsession on the domestic sphere.

Lizzie Clachan's nuanced and powerful set design was essential to my understanding of the sense of completion a baby would bring Her. Where it was mostly an entirely barren set with props only occasionally brought on during blackouts, ~~and~~ in a scene titled ~~'disillusionment'~~ 'disillusioned', the stage appeared fully furnished. Furnished with a table, plants, a kitchen island and familial clutter, ~~the~~ this moment coincided with Her being seen holding a baby. Clachan's set design suggested the sense of completion and hope that came with a baby and gave me something to refer back to as an ideal. As the only time we saw ^{both} a domestic setting and a baby depicted, I understood ~~that~~ ^{why} Her's desperation to conceive, ~~and~~ proving that live theatre is one of the most powerful ways of communicating to an audience in 2022.

Simon Stone's direction created a stylistic and visceral experience that allowed me to fully immerse myself in Her's struggle with infertility. His direction of the festival scene created a sensory overload and pulled me into Her's insanity. Accompanied by strobe lighting and a maddening underlying hum, the scene shifted my perception of reality and amplified the mania before the draining climax. Stone's decision to have the actors of Victor, John and Mum all multi-role as random men was the distortion of Her's relationships and how she could only view men as potential sperm. The chaos created by Stone was central to the ~~in~~ my experience as an audience member and created an alienation effect — a powerful tool in communicating and creating empathy for a woman driven mad by her obsession. This proves that live theatre is definitely a powerful way of communicating to ~~an~~ ^{a modern} audience.

Finally, it was Billie Piper's central performance as Her that made me fully realise the destruction infertility and obsession can cause. Initially warm and comical in the first scene, Piper's performance in the final scene became terrifyingly erratic. In the first scene she was constantly very physically affectionate with John and even feigned a masturbation gesture. This was deeply contrasted with the final scene where Piper switched suddenly from ^{laughing} happy to crying to angry. She ran around screaming and waving a knife before plunging it into her womb on the line 'I'm coming to you my son'. This image was devastating and without Piper's performance the intense catharsis could not have been achieved. I could not have understood a woman's struggle with infertility without her performance. Instrumental to the intense disillusionment imposed on the audience, Piper shows exactly how live theatre is a powerful way of communicating to an audience in 2022.

In conclusion, the combination of Piper's performance, Clachan's design and Stone's direction in 'Yerma' allowed me as a modern audience member to understand the true extent of the madness infertility can cause. I saw a woman destroyed by her own obsession and I was able to empathise with her to the point where I too felt similarly destroyed after the draining climax, illustrating just how much of a powerful force live theatre is in communicating to an audience in 2022.



The introduction to this sophisticated response has an energy and confidence about it.

After a brief introduction to the play seen, the candidate is straight into evaluation when they say 'the play painfully depicted..'

The question is used or paraphrased throughout this response, which keeps the statement at the heart of it.

The evaluation itself communicates with the examiner when they say 'I was left desolate', personal comments like this are evaluating, they are giving a judgement on what they have experienced and how they felt.

Comments on Page 3 – This is a perfect example of how to analyse and evaluate a key moment from the performance. The test is, if you were not there and did not see it, does this response allow you to imagine exactly what it must have been like?

There is no doubt here what is happening: The Director is named, the issue is clear (infertility). The scene is the festival scene, which is described in a concise manner. The effect is maddening, the climax was draining. The decision to have actors multi-role is analysed. The overall impact (chaos) is evaluated and related to the statement.

Total: 17 Marks



Give a brief context to the play you have seen but move on quickly to answer the question.

Page 3:

Choose your key moment, describe it briefly, then analyse and evaluate it.

What did it mean and did it work ?

Connect it back to the statement.

revealing his true self. The rain not only exposes him and brings to light his true completely open self, but it highlights the vulnerable situation Mark is in. Andrew Howell chose for someone piano music to be played in the background of the scene to highlight the mood and the sad reaction Mark got from his parents. The music highlights how this is not a positive, happy, successful, joyous scene but a scene where Mark is made to feel ashamed of who he really is. We can also visualise this through his gestures and posture as he stood on top of the shed, slumped over, holding himself and this highlights in what should be a proud moment, he is uncomfortable trying to hide himself as he feels so ashamed. The setting of the garden is also extremely significant as the garden should be a safe space for all the family, a place of love and happy memories, yet he feels so vulnerable and ashamed. I believe this scene highlights the statement "live theatre is one of the most powerful ways of communicating to an audience in 2022" as so true.



Things I Know To be true was a popular choice in Section A.

This extract starts in the middle of a section, analysing why and how a particular moment communicated so well.

Simplistically, it's about rain and music but the candidate is able to say what they mean beyond this, and the impact this creates.

These technical details give way to the actor and what his body language communicated, what the location signified and, finally, it is brought back round to the statement.

Total: 18 Marks



Do not just describe a moment without developing it. Use the mantra: this is what I saw or heard – but go on to say, this is what it meant or communicated.

'Did it work or not?' becomes an evaluative observation.

Question 2

The statement 'Live theatre has not kept up with advances in technology' was argued for and against, in equal measure. Many candidates presented both sides of the argument within their response, rather than an either/or.

The choice of production seen did not really matter. Some candidates chose the route of saying that the technology was inferior but this did not matter because the acting was brilliant. Others felt that advances in technology absolutely 'made' the production, what it was. However, productions that had sophisticated technology could be a help and popular choices were *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time*, *Frankenstein*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Small Island* and *The Ocean at the End of the Street*.

Some candidates used detailed technological language when analysing elements such as lighting or multi-media moments. Others cited moments when the technology was a distraction to the performance, as well as other responses that presented a more diplomatic middle road to the advances (or not) in technology.

Successful responses avoided superficial comments about young people and technology. They were rooted in the live event, the impact of technology, and how it works symbiotically with the performers on stage.

These responses indicated that centres had prepared carefully for a question in this area. They had guided candidates on how to achieve balance in their responses, so that technology could be promoted in response to the question or considered against the work of the performer.

Be very clear about the key moments that candidates select.

Use past papers to make sure that these moments allow them to respond to a range of questions and statements.

Put fine details in the 500 words. It is easy to remember the big things, but it is the details that may support a top-level response.

Alternatively, throughout the later half of the production, there was one key moment that used hardly any technology that I thought was the most significant of them all. When ~~Gilbert~~ ~~(Thee name Martin)~~ Bernard (Martin Hutson) meets Gilbert simplistic 60% intensity was lighting is on and a digital ticking clock. Bernard exposes his racism through, 'I'm sorry but I ~~can't~~ cannot simply understand a word you are saying!'. Not only did this simple phrase cause the audience to gasp but one person in the audience even swore. There was no need

for advanced technology in this scene as the ~~is~~ incredible ~~of~~ acting of Martin completely captivated the audience. His scowring facial expression really showed how racism is still prominent in society especially after the Black Lives Matter movement. This singular moment proves that live theatre does not need flying cars, and extravagant lighting to educate and create an atmosphere for the audience as live productions ~~should~~ ~~now~~, especially a historical piece like *Small Island*, should imitate naturalism so show the parallels between the messages of ~~the~~ the play and the society we live in.



Small Island was a popular choice for candidates who had seen live theatre.

This extract comes towards the end of a sophisticated response. It is a good example that provides a counter-argument to the statement. It pulls together acting, lighting and sound, with a brief quote from the performance.

The analysis and evaluation of the audience reaction is clear, as well as the impact it had on the candidate. It draws together relevant and balanced elements perceptively, of the production overall.

Total:20 Marks



Include details in your answer.

of ethereal mystery. In the finale, bright white exposing parcans were used to present Medea as angelic, giving purity to her impure actions of killing her two boys in revenge for Jason's abandonment of her. Goldfrapp, alongside the inclusion of the female live ^{choral} vocals of the ~~the~~ traditional Greek Chorus of Corinthian Women,

non-diegetically overscored this moment with a reverbed orchestral composition with the vocalised phrase "light will swallow all" reverbed in oscillato with accompanying ~~harmony~~ harmony. All together, I found the combination of lighting + sound very powerful in this production of Medea, a credit to the work of head designer Tom Scutt (et al), with set being a rigid reminder of the timeless theme of class divide. These two moments clearly show that live theatre has kept up with advances in technology.



This performance of *Medea* was seen via an online recording yet the candidate engages so enthusiastically with it, one could have thought that they were actually there.

The moment of the finale is a clear account of who and what was on stage and the overall impact this had. Analysis is more implicit but evaluation is explicit and the underlining of the word 'has' makes the reaction to the statement abundantly clear.

Total: 19 Marks



Select a key moment: analyse and evaluate it in fine detail.

Use technical knowledge to support your answer.

Question 3

Almost all candidates answered successfully as a performer, writing in the first person. On occasion, they would drift into the third person, when they would then be responding as a Director.

The first choice for candidates to make was to decide which one character they were going to perform as. It was very interesting that from the same text eg *Equus*, there was no clear trend, with as many candidates appearing to choose Dysart, as Alan. The same was true across all six texts. Candidates had to specify how they would use voice and non-verbal communication (NVC) to show their relationship with one other character, and this was done exceptionally well by almost all candidates.

The AI had provided such a tight focus that it looked as if most centres had prepared responses for all 300 lines, covering every possible permutation of performance skills. This did result in many strong responses but also many that were incredibly similar, to the point of memorising set essays. Examiners reported that some responses were so alike in details and phrasing that they did question how much creativity came from the candidates, as opposed to a centre response.

Strong candidates connected their analysis of what they would do, and why, to specific moments from the extract.

Possibly because the AI gave such a specific focus on one of the two unseen aspects, many responses did not reference or connect to the performance text as a whole, which prevented some very detailed work from gaining higher marks.

Candidates who were able to make connections to the rest of the text gave themselves so much more to write about and develop. These moments were very well-considered and highly supportive to the response overall. Frequently, candidates used a statement such as: 'this would contrast with my interaction with... earlier in the play in which I...'. Candidates who used quotations and/or specific moments from the extract were able to achieve marks more readily.

A few candidates responded as a director (Section C), with some still offering ideas for rehearsal techniques. Some responses even used practitioners within their response when there is no need to do this in Section B, and on balance, it was not helpful.

It was extremely pleasing to see a much wider use of all six texts.

Look carefully at any words in bold print: they are emphasised to assist.

In this extract it is clear to see that the candidate has focussed on voice and NVC, both emboldened in the question.

further into this extract, when Henry wakes up, ~~my~~ my first line is "Hungover.", followed by "Are you Hungover?" This shows that Henry's immediate priority is to look after and take care of Martha. In order to display this vocally, I would elongate the 'oh' sound in 'hungover', and inflect at the end of the word as if I am asking a question, though the slurred nature in which I would perform this inflection would make it ambiguous as to whether "hungover." is a statement, or a question. This would then be further shown in "Are you Hungover?" emphasising the word 'you', and leaving a short pause between "you" and 'my' 'hungover', showing that Henry is asking about Martha and is desperate to know how she feels. Non-verbally, this would be achieved by ~~begin~~ subtly pointing and nodding my head in Martha's direction, signalling that it is her I am asking about. Having my hands lightly over my face suggest I ~~am~~ am hungover and am touching my head for comfort.



In this extract, the candidate has chosen to play Henry from *That Face*.

The candidate gives superb detail about:

- exactly how individual words should be said
- where there should be a pause
- how vocal tone should be used.

It moves on to NVC, again with very specific details. The candidate owns this role and is also able to say why they have chosen to do things in a certain way.

Total: 17 Marks



Be aware of words in **Bold**.

try and subtly see his expression. I will elongate the sound 'f' in freedom and I will say the line quietly and with an intrigued tone as I am trying to ~~go~~ see his reaction. This will show the Young Woman's desire to be free from the machine and therefore Mr Jones as he represents this. This will link back to episode 5 'prohibited' when Joe tells the Young Woman he achieved his freedom by killing two men in Mexico. I will raise my eyebrows up slightly ~~and when~~ on the line.



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In this extract, the candidate chooses to play Young Woman from *Machinal*.

In this extract, they give very specific details about precisely how they would say something.

They then go on to link this to an earlier scene in the performance text.

Total: 18 Marks



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Examiner Tip

You must make connections from the extract to the performance text as a whole.

Find moments of similarity or contrast to help you do this.

Candidates do not need to explain the obvious in their response: the examiner knows the whole performance text and the extract.

- 3 As a **performer** playing **one** character, outline how you would use **voice** and **non-verbal communication** to show the audience your relationship with **one other** character in this extract.

Your answer should make reference to the performance text as a whole.

(18)

In this extract, I would portray the character of Martin Dysart. On the line 'I'm sorry about our row yesterday,' I would use non-verbal communication by maintaining stillness throughout my body, holding eye contact with the actor portraying Alan to ensure that he knows what is being said is coming from a place of heartfelt honesty, and Dysart is genuinely apologising for arguing with Alan in scene 17. I don't feel it would be necessary

This would develop further on the line 'Good boy' on line 66. I would use non-verbal communication by softening my eyes and holding a slight smile, creating a facial expression of subtle pride. I would use voice by complementing my soft eyes with an unusually soft tone for Dysart, and speaking at a quiet, almost inaudible volume. I would position myself centre stage, stood to the left^{of} and slightly behind the chair Alan's sat on as he's in a state of hypnosis. Altogether, ~~this~~ the audience should infer that Dysart's adopted a ~~stiff~~ parental role, praising for the boy for his compliance - which was previously missing. The quiet volume once again implies that Dysart is well out of his comfort zone, which is because he doesn't have children ~~in~~ the ~~audience~~. This moment reinforces his line 'We didn't go in for them.' in scene ~~17~~¹⁸.



In this extract, the candidate has chosen to play Dysart from *Equus*.

This is a very strong start: the candidate goes straight to the extract.

In the first 10 lines they already:

- state who they are performing as
- state how and why they would use stillness and eye contact
- refer to an earlier scene before the extract

Clip 2:

This is such a clear example of a sophisticated response.

The detail of what the candidate would do vocally and physically shows comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the play, and how they would perform a role to maximise meaning and understanding.

Total: 18 Marks



Start to answer the question as soon as possible.

Question 4

Candidate responses appear to be improving at this question and are more familiar with designers as theatre makers.

Design knowledge and terminology is much improved and whilst lighting was the most popular element chosen, costume and set were also popular, with sound less so. When sound was chosen, there were some very interesting ideas.

The question asked the candidate as a designer for **one** theatrical element: a very small number of candidates overlooked this and wrote about numerous elements. Examiners awarded marks for the one element that was most prominent in the response overall.

Again, the AI had provided such a tight focus that it looked as if most centres had prepared responses for all 300 lines, covering every possible permutation of design elements. This did result in many strong responses, but also many that were incredibly similar – to the point of memorising set essays. Examiners reported that some responses were so alike in details and phrasing that they did question how much creativity came from the candidates, as opposed to a centre response.

Strong candidates connected their analysis of what they would do, and why, to specific moments from the extract.

Possibly because the AI gave such a specific focus on one of the two unseen aspects, many responses did not reference or connect to the performance text as a whole, which prevented some really detailed work from gaining higher marks.

Candidates who were able to make connections to the rest of the text gave themselves so much more to write about and develop.

Some candidates chose to use quotations from the extract to structure their response, and this often served them well.

Overall, high-achieving design responses showed a greater depth of understanding of lighting and sound processes, with some good responses also exploring set and costume. These successes were evidenced by pertinent examples from the whole play. The context of genre and style informing the designer decisions and impact, was at the heart of these successful responses.

Be clear about your role as a Designer.

Understand how it can be used throughout the whole performance text and, if possible, try it out practically.

4 As a **designer**, outline how **one** theatrical element could be developed to convey or support meaning in this extract.

Your answer should make reference to the performance text as a whole.

(18)

~~As a~~ I have chosen sound design as a theatrical element that could be developed to support meaning in this extract. There is no direct sound cues in this extract, however there are realistic and atmospheric sounds that ~~would~~ be effective. ~~in~~ Additionally, these are sound cues that would be important in representing characters beliefs and morals as well as conveying the socio-political and social class of the characters. I would be using sound to highlight the ~~and~~ convey the meaning.

The scene opens up with stage directions "The following morning", I would use a ~~background~~ hummingbirds soundtrack at the start of the extract to highlight the fact that it's morning. It would also be effective in representing the urban Pittsburgh environment because hummingbirds are native to Pittsburgh, especially in the 1900s. This ~~in~~ conveys to the audience the ~~of~~ Maxson family are from the urban Pittsburgh neighbourhood.

Additionally, ~~in~~ one the stage directions when it says "Troy and Bone coming down the alley." I would use a soundtrack instrumental from 'Black Night' by



In this extract, the candidate chooses to design the sound for *Fences*.

This is such a clear start, that acknowledges the focus of the question – to convey or support meaning. Sound is a less obvious design skill, not always given in stage directions and yet this candidate has thought through exact choices of both sound effects and music.

The second paragraph capitalises on the stage direction that it is morning. The fact that they have chosen a specific type of birdsong because accurately it reflects the birds from that location, is indicative of detailed research.

The naming of a particular sound track 'Black Night' by Arthur Alexander further supports the attention to detail.

Total:17 Marks

Do not be afraid to see yourself as an expert in your chosen role.

You are writing to impress the examiner with your in-depth subject knowledge of the performance text, and your chosen skill.

- 4 As a **designer**, outline how **one** theatrical element could be developed to convey or support meaning in this extract.

Your answer should make reference to the performance text as a whole.

(18)

As a costume designer, I would aim to design costumes that coincide with the intentions of playwright Peter Shaffer and original performance director John Dexter. Shaffer and Dexter agreed on the use of primarily realistic designs, and Shaffer himself commented on how efforts such as using "a pantomime ~~horse~~ horse... should be avoided". Within the text, Shaffer created 2 'worlds': the Apollonian and the Dionysian, which in turn represent the 2 protagonists Dysart and Alan, therefore I would strive to communicate the individual worlds through their costumes. Despite my designs being primarily realistic, they have representational elements which highlight the individual characteristics of the characters. Despite my production concept being set in the ^{early} 1990's, Dysart's costume refers heavily ~~to~~ to the 1980's as it can be argued that the 1990's were an individualist culture was a decade of individualism, and Dysa

The character of Dysart would wear a classic

draped suit, reminiscent of the 1980's and alluding to the idea that he's a bit stuck in his ways and isn't ready to conform to the ever-changing cycle of fashion, specifically the fashion that the new decade has brought. The suit would be dark grey, referring to his place of work and what would be most suitable there - a psychiatric hospital. The suit would be made out of a type of wool called worsted, which is a water-resistant material and resists wrinkling, ensuring that the ^{high-quality} condition of the costume is maintained. ~~Underneath the~~ The deeply pleated trousers match the double-breasted jacket, and underneath reveal wide-width suspenders of a matching colour. The suspenders attach at the back of the trousers using fabric buttons, an explicit nod to his social class as these were the most expensive option at the end of the 1980's. Dysart would wear a cotton shirt and sensible black tie, representing his job status. His blazer would be removed when Alan is under hypnosis or re-enacts his memories, as if Dysart is living out the dream of giving in to his Dionysian impulses through Alan.



In this extract, the candidate chooses the role of costume designer for *Equus*.

This opening page gives a clear rationale of how costume can support meaning. It is well-researched and the candidate knows exactly what they want to achieve as a designer.

The second page is all about Dysart's costume. There is a perceptive knowledge and understanding of how costume can support and enhance meaning. A technical vocabulary is also used, when the candidate talks about types of fabric (worsted) and delightful details such as the fabric buttons indicating social class.

As ever, it is small details such as this, that start to elevate a response to the higher levels.

Total: 18 Marks

Candidates should be clear and confident about what they are wanting to achieve as a Designer.

As long as their creative choices make sense and they can justify them, they are in control of these design decisions.

- 4 As a **designer**, outline how **one** theatrical element could be developed to convey or support meaning in this extract.

Your answer should make reference to the performance text as a whole.

(18)

I will be describing lighting.
I will use a pre-set of seven fresnels all set in the lee gel colour straw to set a neutral wash. For this scene I will have a eye projection of a still willow tree in black and dark grey to convey this idea of time standing still. I will use forest green in 75% intensity with a leaf gobo from stage down stage left and right to convey the tree that Jenna is sat under. I will also use the same leaf gobo centre stage in light amber 25% intensity to convey sunlight through the trees as it's the afternoon in spring.

My preset fresnels will alternate in straw and sage green to make it feel three dimensional to the audience which will help support the naturalistic style. These fresnels will change in scene 9 to convey

the graveyard in full bloom I will have one fresnel in straw, one in rose purple, one in sky blue, one in ~~lavender~~ and the rest in sage green to represent the bluebells and crocuses ~~spoken~~ about in scene 7. The light amber gobo will increase to 75% intensity to convey ~~the~~ ^{sun} sunny ~~summer's~~ spring day in scene 9. which shows the development of the seasons but also the relationships between the family as they get closer.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

In this extract, the candidate chooses to design the lighting for *Colder Than Here*.

This is a very clear account of how, and why, lighting will be used.

There is a confidence in the language used: this candidate is clear about what they want to achieve.

The reference to scene 9 starts to refer to the rest of the play.

Total: 15 Marks

Question 5

This question asked the candidate as a Director to focus on one key character from the extract.

The question makes a variety of demands, most of which are known before the examination. As a result of this, candidates will have an idea about some of the things they are going to write about, eg they will:

- have researched the OPC
- have formulated a concept
- know how their choice of practitioner can be used successfully
- understand the role of a Director
- know their choice of performance text well, in design and performance terms.

The two unknowns are the focus of the question and the extract. There is a considerable amount of skill involved in pulling all these threads together with the support of a director's script, which they have with them in the examination.

For this series, the AI had provided such a tight focus and hugely reduced one of the two unknowns, that it looked as if most centres had prepared responses for all 300 lines covering every possible permutation of a Director's remit. This did result in many strong responses but also many that were incredibly similar, to the point of memorising set essays. Examiners reported that some responses were so alike in details and phrasing that they did question how much creativity came from the candidates, as opposed to a centre response. There has been a rise in centre concepts throughout the life of the specification but this year they were even more marked, given the release of the AI.

Possibly because the AI gave such a specific focus on one of the two unseen aspects, many responses did not reference or connect to the performance text as a whole, which prevented some very detailed work from gaining higher marks.

There are nine available performance texts for centres to choose from, so it is still surprising to see the popularity of *Woyzeck* and *Lysistrata*, which were carried over from the legacy specification. *Antigone* and *Hedda Gabler* seem to be the next most popular, with the five remaining texts less so.

For a variety of reasons this year, there seemed to be an increase in the number of weird and wonderful concepts, which, in many cases, caused problems. As stated in the opening paragraph to this question, there is already much to do in Section C, so the added complication of a confusing concept rarely helped candidates achieve higher marks. Irrespective of whether it is the candidate's own concept or they are using a centre-driven concept, it needs to be safe, workable, theatrical and an honest representation of the original text. There seems to be a deviation from the specification that says...

Interpreting a performance text may or may not include changes to performance style, historical period or setting. However, whilst changes and edits to the structure of the text are allowed, it is not an opportunity to cut the language or alter the meaning of the original text.

It is also important that students have an appreciation of the original aims and intentions of the playwright...

When centres followed the specification, it led to much more focussed, detailed responses that allowed the candidate simply to answer the question and flourish. It was also apparent that some candidates had tried some of the ideas out themselves while workshoping the play, and this gave a real sense of confident execution. There were many responses that covered all these bases, whilst revealing an exciting, creative and logical concept that worked hand-in-hand with the performance text they had studied.

It can be useful for candidates to give examples of the practitioner's methodologies from previous productions they have seen, but they should ensure that they are relevant to what they want to expand on.

As Prospero 'embraces Alonso' I would use Kneehigh's methodology of clowning to again highlight Prospero's power and fearful presence. Clowning was a technique used by Kneehigh ^{for example the production 'Dead Dog in a Suitcase'} whereby actors fell over on stage, and used their physicality to convey meaning. I would direct Prospero to place his hand on Alonso's shoulder as he 'embraces' him, and for Prospero to fall onto the floor and ~~to~~ crawl away wimpering, utilising Kneehigh's clowning. While he lies on the floor Prospero should stand over him, laughing. Prospero's ~~genu~~ Alonso's genuine fear contrasted with Prospero's

laughter should create ~~comic~~ comedic effect, but at the same time make the audience question their morality as Alonso is so deeply afraid. This therefore would demonstrate Prospero's ability to manipulate the atmosphere in the audience as well as for the Royals. Kneehigh intended to 'explore the knife edge between laughter and horror' and I want to do this at this moment to show the audience how powerful Prospero is.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This candidate chooses to focus on Prospero from *The Tempest*, using Kneehigh's methodologies to support their Director's concept.

This extract gives a very good balance between how Kneehigh might do something and how the candidate has interpreted that. It works well.

Total: 22 Marks

~~two~~ Swastika badge. I would use the
mimicry ~~technique~~ costume element
of Brecht in order to create the 'V-effect'
~~and distance~~ and allow the audience
to think of Creon's actions objectively
rather than by distancing them. As
well as this, it would ~~also~~ would
be practically efficient as it would
allow the split role of Creon's character
to be quick and easy. The use of
split-role would further distance
the audience and not allow them to
become emotionally attached to ~~the~~ Creon
character. I would use ~~the same~~ like
to the original performance conditions
by using a mask (also a Brechtian
technique) which would resemble the
~~masks that~~ the emotive masks & that

were used in Greek plays. This would be done to ~~st~~ portray Creon as the antagonist before he even speaks, as the audience would know that the "angry/evil" masks would ~~be given~~ have been given to the anarchists of the play in order for everyone ~~to~~ ^{so matter how far they sat, to see it.} ~~before Creon finds out the tragic news about his~~ ^{in the first scene, when Creon says} ~~100~~ "I am ^{totally collapses} nothing.", I would make Creon take off his mask and replace it with a sad mask, to ~~let the~~ ~~spot~~ ^{let the audience know that} Creon is going to be a tragic villain, not allowing for the audience to be emotionally attached with that moment in order to create the 'V effect' and ~~not allow them~~ make them think more ~~of~~ objectively ⁴.



This candidate chooses to focus on Creon from *Antigone*, using Brecht's methodologies to support their Director's concept.

In this extract they combine Brecht's 'V' effect successfully, to distance Creon from the audience. They develop this further with the use of masks, which is related back to the OPC.

The idea to use the masks demonstrates a director's decision that shows knowledge of the:

- character
- play's themes
- the practitioner
- OPC

Total: 20 Marks



A helpful phrase to keep using throughout your response to a Section C question is.. 'I would direct..'

This ensures that you remain focussed in your role as the Director.

If Stanislavski is used as the practitioner, the focus does not concern how the play would be rehearsed, but how it would be directed, to achieve a performance outcome. The emphasis is on the *performance*.

director, I would choose to focus on the character Judge Brack as he ~~seems~~ represents the patriarchy and themes of gender equality throughout the play. This was imperative for Ibsen as his mother-in-law was the leader of the feminist movement and thus ~~this emphasis on gender~~ I will ensure that there is an emphasise on gender roles through the ^{highlighted} character of Brack to create ~~the~~ impact on the audience. ~~So~~ I would perform my production in the theatre royal in London as it is one of the few Victorian style theatre's left in the UK, therefore helping transport the audience into both the setting and the original performance conditions back in 1891.

As a director, I ~~would make paramount the use of the methodology~~ I would make the methodology objectives and obstacles paramount to the actor playing Brack as a way of highlighting his role in the play as a whole. ~~the~~

Brack's objective in this scene is to break the news to Tesman about the troubles regarding his professorship, his obstacle is Tesman's inability to listen and acknowledge what he is saying, knowing this, ~~the actor~~ I would

encourage the actor playing Brack to ^{influence} ~~inform~~ his performance to show his gradual frustration. This can be seen in the line, "No, it's a problem" where ~~a~~ lowering in volume and a more serious tone and inflection will highlight the apprehension he has towards breaking this news, this makes the audience view him as compassionate which is then juxtaposed with his attitude toward the end of the play when he ~~is~~ blackmails Hedda. This is Brack's Super objective - to seduce Hedda - and therefore, I, as a director would ensure that the actor is aware of this throughout the whole play. This will create a ~~real~~ naturalistic portrayal of Brack that was so important to Stanislavski whilst also given an authentic and somewhat compassionate first impression of Brack to the audience, as this is his first appearance in the play.



This candidate chooses to focus on Judge Brack from *Hedda Gabler*, using Stanislavski's methodologies to support their Director's concept.

It is very easy for candidates using Stanislavski to become embroiled in rehearsal techniques, rather than deciding on what would actually happen in performance.

This clip does refer to Brack's super objective but it is also focussed on specific detail from the given extract and what the performer would do.

There are also implicit references to the wider text.

Total:19 Marks

Question 6

This question asked the candidate as a Director to apply the methodologies of their chosen theatre practitioner to support the use of design elements, and, on the whole, was answered very well.

Exactly the same caveats as mentioned for Q05 apply here too, re centre taught responses and unworkable concepts. Whereas candidates had changed titular roles in Q05 to well-known celebrities, in design terms they cited their productions in warehouses, hospitals, prisons and similar. Artaud and Punchdrunk resulted in audiences being gagged, blindfolded, spattered with blood and generally given a somewhat gruesome experience. It seemed that there were no checks on these concepts and a small number were dangerous and disrespectful.

There were some very innovative and creative design choices for this question that allowed candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of theatre design, and, in particular, set and lighting choices were often inspirational.

In scene 6 I will have a projection of a street on the stage as it is a Brechtian technique. It will be a composite set for this scene with a projection to show the scene change. There will be a harsh white light on Woyzeck to show that he is an experiment and that the doctor doesn't view him with any respect. When the doctor says 'pissing like a dog' a shadow of a dog will appear with a purple light and a gauge. This links to the comparison to animals throughout the play as the Drum major is referred to as a lion in the next scene. A lion, compared to a dog, shows the representation that the higher class people like the drum major are seen with respect and as powerful and strong whereas people of a lower class are viewed as a dog meaning they are not competition. When the doctor says 'Woyzeck, you're philosophizing again' an image of mening trees will appear, but they will have medical tools such as knives as branches. These represent his hallucinations that are seen throughout the play, first seen in the first scene. These seem to appear whenever someone dismisses his illness, possibly suggesting that the more he is ignored, the more his mental health deteriorates. There will be a transition in which the doctor walks away into the darkness but the spotlight follows Woyzeck as he cons



This candidate is directing *Woyzeck* using Brecht as the practitioner to support the use of design elements in their production concept.

This response is very much focussed on lighting, which is acceptable. The question states 'the use of design elements', rather than a specific number. It would be sensible at least to mention other elements, but detailed knowledge of one aspect can work very well, as long as it connects with other demands of the question.

This was an holistic response to the question, that kept referencing a range of aspects.

Total:14 Marks



If a question specifies a number of aspects ie **one** character, **two** design elements, you must follow this instruction exactly.

It is so important that the concept supports the original aims and intentions of the performance text.

Candidates do not need to be wildly original: they do need to have a workable, well-considered concept.

Chosen question number: **Question 5** **Question 6**

I will be applying the methodologies of Bertold Brecht to my modern 21st century adaptation of Lysistrata, when writing the play. In 411 BC, Aristophanes was fed up with the Peloponnesian War between Sparta and Athens, and he wrote the play to show the futility of war and violence. I will set my adaptation based on the 2008 Kenyan sex strike which was called a 'latter day Lysistrata' by by way. The sex strike was held by the women's development organisation and later joined by other women's groups, representing the coming together of Athens, Sparta, Boetia etc. This was done to stop the deteriorating relationship between Kenya prime minister and president Mwai Kibaki who decided to share leadership due to post-electoral violence. I will be using the methodologies of Brecht as techniques such as the

V-effect will allow me to distance my audience so they can realise the message of the play rather than simply enjoy the story. As Brecht himself said 'art is not a mirror held up to an reality but rather a hammer with which to shape it. Therefore I will be applying the methodologies of Bertold Brecht to my Kangan adaptation of Lysistrata to support the use of design elements.

I will stage my production at the Oliver Theatre of the National Theatre as the amphitheatre shape takes homage back to the OPC as it the original was performed as an amphitheatre. Additionally the stage revolve and lifts will allow me to use design to successfully communicate themes with the audience. CS, I will For the my set, I will mirror the Kangan parliament building to reinforce my interpretation. However I will make my set symbolic (Brechtian) and I will make it ~~non-realistic~~ minimalist (Brechtian). I will recreate the archway to the parliament CS, however



This candidate is directing *Lysistrata* using Brecht as the practitioner to support the use of design elements in their production concept.

They choose the Kenyan sex strike from 2009 as their concept, which is well-documented and logically supports the anti-war themes of the original text.

This response has a confidence about it, which demonstrates that the candidate:

- knows the detail of the concept
- understand the OPC
- knows how Brecht will work with it
- knows the space in which they are performing, where the drum revolve etc can all work together harmoniously

This strong start sets the response up and the candidate goes on to give details about all these various elements.

Total: 22 Marks



Make sure your concept is workable.

There is no set way to structure a response but candidates might wish to practice different ways.

They could:

- use the extract itself for structure
- go methodically through a range of design elements
- select major themes from the play as a whole, and connect these with the extract

Chosen question number: **Question 5** **Question 6**

My production of *Waiting for Godot*, ^{inspired} ~~was~~ ^{inspire} by the methodologies of Beckett, will be staged on a thrust stage at the Gulbenkian, University of Kent. The use of thrust stage would offer the same intimacy as in the original production in the Theatre de Babylone in 1953, staged by Roger Blin. Here, the Proscenium arch theatre, small audience and tiny stage, although was not intentional in the original production, fit perfectly into the spirit of the play. Drawing from the themes of meaninglessness and the search for answers, ~~which were~~ ^{which were} highly relevant for the post World War II audience, but ~~are still~~ ^{are still} ~~highly~~ ^{very} much relevant today. I will use the surreal design expressed in set and costume, inspired by the paintings of Rene Magritte, ~~the~~ ^a contemporary of Samuel Beckett. ~~I will~~ I was inspired by Beckett's use ~~of~~ ~~of~~ ~~innovative~~ ~~set~~ ~~for~~ ~~innovative~~ use of props and set, but mostly by his use of stylized costumes to help emphasize the characters. I will ~~use~~ ^{include} bowler hats



This candidate is directing *Waiting for Godot*, using Berkoff as the practitioner to support the use of design elements in their production concept.

This provides a clear start to the response, with a definite stage space in mind.

The candidate has already connected the stage space to the OPC and this introduction could be used against any question. The skill is in ensuring that it quickly begins to focus on the demands of the question. This is not evident on this first page but it is a clear start from which to build.

This candidate goes through a range of design elements systematically, to structure their response by writing at length about set, costume, props, visual elements, sound and lighting.

Total: 20 Marks

Paper summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice.

- Section A is not solely about analysis, it also needs evaluation
- Remember to reference the performance text as a whole, for Section B
- Use a practitioner that is supportive to the aims of the chosen Section C text
- Ensure that the Section C concept is rooted in, and respectful of, the original performance text
- Remember to reference the performance text as a whole, for Section C

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