

DRAMA

Paper 9482/11
Open-Book Written Examination

There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.

DRAMA

Paper 9482/12 Open-Book Written Examination
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Key messages

It is important that candidates adopt the perspective that is demanded by the question. For example, if the question requires a performer's perspective, candidates should write in the first person as a performer. The same principle applies to questions intended to be from a designer's or director's perspective.

When writing about the context of the play, there is little credit available for identifying previous productions without making purposeful reference to specific ideas that they wish to emulate or adapt. References to a production that end with a comment such as 'but I would not do this in my production' are entirely irrelevant.

Candidates should never identify sections of text by quoting page numbers, line numbers or offering truncated phrases from the text linked with ellipses.

General comments

There were some very strong scripts, but also some where candidates revealed limited theatrical understanding or where they had not focused their attention on the precise terms of the question. Questions on this paper always demand theatrical imagination as well as strong knowledge of the chosen texts and this was not always evident in candidates' answers.

While candidates are expected to have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the plot and characters of their selected texts, the examination is intended to assess candidates' ability to apply their knowledge about how theatre practitioners achieve particular effects through the exercise of their specific discipline(s).

Candidates must ensure that they shape any prepared material to the precise requirements of the questions that they choose before starting on their answers. They should avoid including material in their answers that is peripheral or irrelevant to the demands of the question set as this is simply wasted work that attracts no credit. Credit is also not available for plot summaries or for character sketches.

It is important that candidates appreciate that their knowledge and understanding of each play's style, genre and performance context needs to be made explicit in their answers, as well as being implicit in the style of performance or production elements adopted in their interpretation. Such knowledge and understanding also needs to be edited and shaped to the focus of the question. A two-page standalone section on the history of Classical Greek theatre, for example, which has not been adapted to the focus of the question is also likely to be superfluous as well as preventing the candidate from engaging with the terms of the question in a meaningful way.

Most candidates appeared to find the questions accessible, and many wrote detailed and vivid responses to the precise demands of individual questions, bringing a character or section to life in a way that allowed the reader to visualise what the candidate intended to achieve on stage. The strongest answers revealed mastery of appropriate theatrical terminology which enhanced the clarity of the candidate's dramatic ideas. In less successful answers, candidates sometime showed a lack of security in their use of even the most basic theatrical terms and this impeded their ability to communicate their ideas effectively.

The most frequently seen errors of approach involved candidates whose answers were merely descriptive of the action, lacking any sense of a theatrical interpretation. Some candidates made minimal explicit reference to the style, genre or context of their selected text. Others offered more than a page of pre-prepared historical information about, for example, the Restoration or classical Greek theatre, which was not shaped to the demands of the question being attempted.

Candidates should be reminded that in **Section B**, it is important to give very clear indications of which sections are being discussed, especially when they are writing about a text in translation (*Medea*, for example, or *The Seagull*) as different editions/translations can vary significantly.

Most candidate timed their answers well and produced two developed pieces of writing. There were also some underdeveloped responses.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

The Tempest

- (a) Answers on this text often did not focus on the demands of the chosen question and did not offer an interpretation of Ferdinand as required by the question.
- (b) No responses to this question were seen.

Question 2

The Country Wife

- (a) There were too few responses to this question to make meaningful general comments. Satire appeared not to be understood as a dramatic form.
- (b) Few answers to this question were seen. There appeared to be a general misunderstanding of the rumours surrounding Horner's status, in relation to his virility. Sir Jaspar's gullibility was often stated but limited comic potential was seen in the performance suggestions. In terms of displaying knowledge and understanding of the style, genre and context of the play, many candidates referred to Sir Jasper as being a typical restoration drama stereotype.

Question 3

Death of a Salesman

- (a) Some very inventive and quite detailed responses were seen where candidates had a clear understanding of the play's period setting. This understanding was reflected in the proposed designs for the two women. Where candidates met the demands of the question and identified their intended effects for the audience, answers benefitted from a precise focus. Less successful candidates offered designs but omitted to clarify their intended effects. Stronger answers revealed a secure understanding of the contrasting social circumstances of Linda and the Woman. Candidates offered appropriately homely designs for Linda, the housewife, and they suggested more dressy and fashionable designs for the Woman who works as a secretary in a department store. These candidates tended to understand that the Woman was a contemporary of Willy's and not a younger woman as is made clear in the text. Some candidates did not understand the Woman's age, nor did they appreciate how she and Willy had met.

Candidates who offered sketches of the different designs for the Woman and for Linda often revealed careful research into the social, cultural and historical context of the play and succeeded in achieving their preferred effects which were clearly identified as contrasting the two women in Willy's life/memory, while still remaining faithful to period details. However, some candidates were not well equipped to answer on costume design and appeared to lack a basic knowledge of costume design fundamentals, such a style, silhouette, cut, condition. Many candidates referred mainly to colour choices with occasional identification of fabric type.

Candidates also showed a lack of understanding of the period setting and selected totally inappropriate fashions from the twenty-first century. Others made choices about jewellery that would be hard for an audience to detect unless they were in the front row of an intimate studio

performance. In summary, some candidates appeared only to have begun to consider the two costumes once faced with the examination paper.

- (b) Some candidates did not relate their answers to the given extract, and they discussed Willy's interactions with the two women and his behaviour towards them from different parts of the play. Only the references to the prescribed section could be credited. Stronger candidates focused precisely on Willy's interactions with Linda and the Woman, looking at his delivery of individual lines, considering the spatial relationships on stage that indicated varying degrees of intimacy and including details about Willy's facial expressions and body language.

Most candidates recognised the contrasting behaviour of Willy when at home with Linda, who holds him to account for his sales and reminds him of his financial obligations, as compared to his flirtatious and more controlling manner when he is entertaining his mistress in a hotel room.

With Linda, candidates noted that Willy was forced to act in a defensive way, making excuses to his wife for his lower than anticipated earnings on his business trip. In stronger answers there was a recognition that Willy adopted a self-deprecating attitude with his wife in order to elicit some sympathy and support from Linda, who duly rewards him with encouragement. When Willy appears affectionate with Linda, astute candidates saw this as compensatory behaviour created by his guilt over his affair, which latterly reveals itself in quite a bullying tone when he sees Linda mending stockings, reminding him of his extravagant gift to the Woman whom he wants to impress.

While Willy was in the company of the Woman, stronger candidates noted that he became overtly more amorous, even playful, in his mannerisms. They noted his tendency to be quite crude in his jokes, even physical in his interaction with her, totally unlike his behaviour with his wife. Some noted how flattered Willy appeared to be by the Woman's attentions and they read into his gift of stockings that he was intent on continuing the relationship. Weaker answers were in commentary style, occasionally interspersed with chunks of copied text. This sort of approach did not form effective direction.

In terms of displaying knowledge and understanding of the style, genre and context of the play, many candidates referred to the economic situation of the Loman family and some made reference to the American Dream.

Section B

Question 6

Medea

- (a) Candidates who had prepared to answer on set design often produced a clear sketch of the set that they had envisaged. Not all focused enough attention on identifying the specific atmosphere that they wished to create in their chosen sections. Occasionally, candidates included a section which does not occur in the play as written by Euripides, but which featured in a recent adaptation of the play by the National Theatre. In this production, and also in the answers of some candidates, there was dumb show action presented in the first half of the play, as if taking place in a room in Creon's palace. Where candidates chose to replicate what they had seen, perhaps in a streamed version of this production, they were unable to refer to the text to support the unfolding action as there is no such scene or action in Euripides' play. In spite of this, a number of candidates wrote about the provision of an upper level to the main stage to suggest a venue for the celebration of Jason's marriage to Creon's daughter, Glauce. Ideas were credited if they were linked to the question about creating an appropriate atmosphere, but frequently candidates did not address this.

More successful candidates stayed true to Euripides' text and they selected genuine moments of action from the play. The opening scene was sometimes chosen, with candidates making constructive suggestions for the use of setting and costume to show Medea's state of despair and the atmosphere of misery and mourning. The final scene, where Medea makes her grand and triumphant exit in her chariot, was also realised quite vividly through the use of set design, costume and lighting. Some candidates offered the historical and theatrical context of ancient Greek theatre that outweighed any of the material required by the question.

- (b) Most of the answers to this question were quite well-focused on the task and they started by identifying the audience responses that they wanted to elicit through their performance of Jason. Most candidates nominated responses of contempt for Jason's betrayal of Medea, and others referred to mistrust. More extreme responses included disgust, even hatred. Some candidates took pity on Jason's plight, and they aimed for condemnation of him in the early parts of the play, turning to pity at the end, when all his hopes are dashed and his beloved boys lie murdered before him.

Some candidates referred to Jason's stated concern for Medea's well-being, despite having betrayed her. Some admired him, and wanted the audience to do the same, for his ability to remain calm even as Medea rages against him. Other candidates wanted the audience to pity Jason for his gullibility in believing Medea's gesture of good will towards Glauce, and others still wanted them to criticise him for being so condescending with Medea and for underestimating her character.

Stronger candidates were able to suggest appropriate vocal, physical and facial expression for Jason, in their chosen sections, which included detailed attention to Jason's interactions with Medea and relied on plentiful textual support to create a vivid picture of Jason in action, precisely calculated to elicit their nominated audience responses.

In terms of displaying knowledge and understanding of the style, genre and context of the play, many candidates incorporated accurate reference to classical Greek staging conventions into their answers. Others also demonstrated a secure understanding of the mythical background of Medea's story.

Question 9

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time

- (a) Candidates appeared to have given little thought to the direction of the ensemble here. In addition, candidates often did not answer the focus of the question, 'What specific effects would you wish to achieve through your direction of ... sections ... involving ensemble acting'. Few nominated their intended effects. Occasionally, it could be inferred that candidates intended to achieve a sense of place, Christopher's perception of discomfort in a crowd, a sense of comedy or, as in the astronaut sequence, a sense of elation or harmony.

Most candidates who selected this question chose to write about the section where Christopher travels to the station and on to London to find his mother. In these answers, it was sometimes difficult to know where one section ended and another section began and the directorial ideas were often ill-defined. The ensemble walked behind Christopher, or they walked beside him, but these ideas were difficult to envisage when no staging configuration had been mentioned and no sketches were included to indicate the presence of or movement of the ensemble.

The most successfully envisaged sequence referred to in the answers was the section where Christopher is elevated by members of the ensemble in the astronaut sequence, and there were some inventive ideas suggested and a clear effect of elation or serenity or peace was intended.

- (b) There were too few responses to this question to make meaningful general comment.

In terms of displaying knowledge and understanding of the style, genre and context of the play, there were a few references to the style or genre, occasional mention of the role of Frantic Assembly in the construction/creation of the original production, but overall, a fairly limited reference to the historical or social context of the play.

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Most candidates appeared to find the questions accessible, and many wrote detailed and vivid responses to the precise demands of individual questions, bringing a character or section to life in a way that allowed the reader to visualise what the candidate intended to achieve on stage. Stronger answers revealed mastery of appropriate theatrical terminology which enhanced the clarity of the candidate's dramatic ideas. In less successful answers, candidates sometime betrayed a lack of security in their use of even the most basic theatrical terms and this impeded their ability to communicate their ideas effectively.

The most frequently seen errors of approach involved candidates whose answers were merely descriptive of the action, lacking any sense of a theatrical interpretation. Some candidates made minimal explicit reference to the style, genre or context of their selected text. Others offered more than a page of pre-prepared historical information about, for example, the Elizabethan or classical Greek theatre, which was not shaped to the demands of the question being attempted.

Candidates should be reminded that in **Section B**, it is important to give very clear indications of which sections are being discussed, especially when they are writing about a text in translation (*Medea*, for example, or *The Seagull*) as different editions/translations can vary significantly.

Most candidate timed their answers well and produced two developed pieces of writing. There were also some underdeveloped responses.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

The Tempest

- (a) Some successful answers were seen where candidates focused on the key words of the question which indicated that the costumes must be intended to signify the magical qualities of the characters and that they were to be discussed in relation to their use in performance. However, a number of candidates disregarded both of these key aspects. The majority did not consider use at all. Some candidates envisaged Prospero brandishing his magic wand during the extract but without identifying the precise moment in the performance when this would be done.

Several candidates ignored the magical element altogether for Prospero, who they costumed in ragged and/or dishevelled clothing, as suited to an elderly man marooned on an island with few provisions. This somewhat literal approach to Prospero, the magician, took no account of Prospero's supernatural powers.

Some candidates were keen to display their knowledge of authentic Jacobean costume and they itemised an authentic wardrobe full of outfits for both men and women which may have been entirely appropriate to the period but had no trace of magic about them. Much of this material was redundant. References to sumptuary laws were not really applicable here, either, as Prospero as a Duke (albeit a usurped one) would have had no limit on his choice of colour of fabric and Ariel, as a sprite, is presumably also exempt from laws aimed at mere mortals.

There were also answers from candidates who were prepared to answer on costume but who devoted their answers to outlining their ideas for transposing the action of the play to another century or culture, using costume to convey the new setting, but omitting reference to magic.

Some answers were more precisely focused on magic, if not on use. Prospero's magic robes were described, and candidates suggested suitable colours and fabrics, such as deep blue velvet adorned with gold or silver symbols of moons and stars. Prospero also wore a wizard's hat in some answers, and Ariel was suggested to be dressed in silver or turquoise with gemstones attached or glued onto his face and/or torso. Some candidates gave him wings and suggested methods for flying on stage. A few candidates confused props with set and wrote about Ariel perched in a tree.

Stronger candidates were specific about the details of each costume that they discussed. They had inventive or workable ideas for the use of colour and choice of fabrics. They described or sketched the costumes so that the cut and style of the garments was apparent. They labelled their sketches to indicate colour and other design details.

In terms of displaying knowledge and understanding of the style, genre and context of the play, some successful answers made purposeful reference to conventions of the Shakespearian stage while others referred to Jacobean interest in spirits and the supernatural. Some referred to *The Tempest* as Shakespeare's farewell to the stage and drew analogies between Prospero and Shakespeare as authors of drama, with Ariel serving as his muse.

- (b) There were too few responses to this option to make meaningful comment.

Question 3

Death of a Salesman

- (a) Some candidates did not follow the instruction and wrote about Biff's complicated feelings towards his father in various moments of the play other than in the prescribed section, and some of these answers did not mention the prescribed extract at all. This was self-penalising, as only material that dealt with the given extract could be credited. Stronger candidates chose moments that covered the arc of the unfolding action, and they selected moments where Biff demonstrated competing feelings towards his father, such as, for example, pity, resentment, frustration, anger, empathy which added up to complicated feelings on Biff's part. Candidates simply did not have the time to include all of Biff's interactions with his father and to attempt to do so usually resulted in an incomplete, or very superficial, treatment of the extract and of Biff's feelings.

Some candidates adopted an overly narrative approach to the extract which ignored the performer's perspective, while a few adopted a directorial stance. Both approaches resulted in under-achievement. Stronger candidates recognised the extract as a pivotal or climactic moment in the play: one which helped to mitigate Biff's bitterness about his father's betrayal of the family, and which resulted in Willy's epiphany that, despite everything, Biff loves him. The strongest answers were from candidates who knew the play thoroughly and whose performance ideas for Biff were the result of careful preparation, either practical or theoretical, as they linked concrete ideas for Biff's vocal, physical and facial expression to specific lines of text, which were quoted to help bring the extract to life for the reader.

- (b) Stronger candidates began by identifying the various tensions between family members that could be identified in the extract. For example, they cited the tension on stage as the family wait, in vain, for Willy to shake Biff's hand; they looked at the tension generated by Willy's accusation that Biff is being spiteful; they considered the tension created by Willy's dreadful curse of his favourite son and its diffusion/escalation when Biff confronts Willy with the rubber tube. Most identified a release of tension when Willy recognises Biff's love for him.

Once some of the tension points had been identified, stronger answers considered practical issues such as the use of stage space so that characters could lock eyes or disengage from moments of tension as pressure built. A number of candidates had a very clear idea of the configuration of the space, the furnishings and the placing of the stairs and they skilfully directed the actors to maximise the potential of the three-dimensional stage space to intensify moments of tension. Less successful answers were in commentary style. Some were seen where chunks of text were copied out and joined together with a sentence or two explaining what was tense in the quotation. This sort of approach did not form effective direction.

In terms of displaying knowledge and understanding of the style, genre and context of the play, many candidates referred to the economic situation of the Loman family and some made reference to the American dream.

Question 4

The Lion and the Jewel

- (a) There were a few answers to this question, and they were, on the whole, extremely well-written, highly theatrical and detailed. Candidates had plenty of practical performance ideas for conveying Sidi's haughty manner with Sadiku as she bombards her with a series of rhetorical questions, referring to Sidi's vocal qualities as well as her sinuous display of her body. They captured Sidi's pride in the title 'The Jewel of Ilujinle' and her obsessive and sensual pleasure in the magazine photographs. They found novel ways to show her vanity as she pouts and parades herself and reels off the litany of praise heaped upon her various attributes, displaying them one, by one. Some candidates focused on the vanity which enables Sidi to make unkind comparisons between her youth and Baroka's age and to refuse Baroka's supper invitation.

In terms of displaying knowledge and understanding of the style, genre and context of the play, some candidates referred to the macho society that Sidi inhabits. They considered the objectification of women within that society and the dramatic tension that exists within the play between traditional and progressive ideals.

- (b) No answers were seen to this question.

Section B

Question 6

Medea

- (a) Most answers to this question were quite well focused on the task and recognised that the Chorus expressed a variety of attitudes towards Medea's unfolding tragedy. Candidates referred to the Chorus' attitude of sympathy towards Medea and their protective attitude following Jason's betrayal. Some referred to the Chorus' attitude of fear for Medea as they urge her not to murder her children as well as the Chorus' attitude to Medea's tragedy seeing it as a product of the gods' intervention. Of course, the question did not simply require the identification of the Chorus' attitudes, it required details about how these attitudes were to be conveyed through the interactions of the Chorus with Medea.

Stronger answers included suggestions for how the Chorus worked as a group. These candidates suggested some mirroring of movements, for example, and they paid close attention to how the Chorus' lines were divided between them or spoken together or in canon. Some usefully referred to ways in which the Chorus represented a homogeneous group of women, while others included different ages of women in the group and looked for slight differences in attitude.

Some answers did not focus closely enough on the Chorus, and it appears that these candidates were more prepared to write about staging aspects or about Medea's character. Irrelevant material did not attract credit.

- (b) Candidates who had prepared to answer on set design often produced a clear sketch of the set that they had envisaged. Very few outlined a design vision for their production of the play, as required by the question. Nor did candidates consistently meet the demands of the question to explain how their designs would enhance the audience experience in two sections.

Where candidates did nominate two sections, they invariably included a section which does not occur in the play as written by Euripides, but which featured in a recent adaptation of the play by the National Theatre. In this production, and also in the answers of some candidates, a room in Creon's palace was included in the set. Candidates influenced by this production wrote about the provision of an upper level to the main stage to suggest a venue for the celebration of Jason's marriage to Creon's daughter, Glauce. Ideas were credited if they were linked to the question about enhancing audience experience, but frequently candidates failed to address this demand.

Some candidates, whether answering question **a** or **b**, offered the historical and theatrical context of ancient Greek theatre that outweighed any of the material required by the question.

Question 8

The Seagull

- (a) Too few candidates answered the question to make any general comments about responses. In those answers seen, candidates did not focus adequately on the task of creating an appropriate atmosphere.
- (b) Some candidates did not focus enough on Madame Arkadina's changeable moods and attitudes. Instead, they focused on Arkadina's character and, although they often made points that were relevant, there were many missed opportunities. Those who did find the correct focus often referred to Arkadina's light-heartedness and skittishness with Trigorin as well as her jealousy of the younger Nina. Some mentioned Arkadina's occasional displays of sentimentality towards Sorin and, more rarely, towards Konstantin. Some candidates included her stinginess both with her family and towards her servants.

Some candidates did not notice that the question required a focus on different characters and they wrote throughout about her relationship with Trigorin or with Konstantin. Limited reference to the style, genre and context of the play was seen in candidates' answers.

Question 9

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time

- (a) All candidates who selected this option chose to write about the three nominated female characters. Candidates seemed unsure of what Mrs Shears might wear and they appeared to have given little thought to how the ensemble might adapt their costumes in the ensemble scenes, to represent different members of the general public that Christopher encountered on his trip to Reading. Only when writing about the Punk Girl did candidates appear to have some clear ideas about suitable costume and accessories.
- (b) Although there were not many answers seen, candidates tended to write well about the dual role of Siobhan. Most candidates wrote about Siobhan's first appearance when she opens Christopher's book and begins to read from it. There were some suggestions for a comical touch when Siobhan interjects directly to Christopher when he misrepresents in his book, what she has said to him in the past. In stronger answers, candidates noted the shift from Siobhan reading Christopher's book aloud to Siobhan voicing Christopher's thoughts during the action. Most candidates recognised the duality of the character when Siobhan appears, as herself, as Christopher's teacher, throughout the play.

Most candidates recognised that they did not just have to identify distinct sections where Siobhan played one or the other role, but that they had to offer clear performance suggestions for how, as a performer, they would indicate that duality to the audience through clear performance suggestions.

In terms of displaying knowledge and understanding of the style, genre and context of the play, there were a few references to the style or genre of the play, occasional mention of the role of Frantic Assembly in the construction/creation of the original production but fairly limited reference to the historical or social context of the play.

DRAMA

Paper 9482/02 Practical Drama
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Key messages

- It is essential that candidates have a clear vision of what they hope to communicate to an audience in their performances, whether scripted or devised.
- In devised work, there is a need for candidates to craft a consistent message and a coherent structure in which to express it.
- Candidates need to understand the full potential of the performance space available to them and be able to demonstrate it in performance.

Administration

Videos were generally of good quality but occasionally centres had filmed the work using more than one camera, which added an inappropriate televisual quality to the recording.

One of the biggest challenges was piecing together who was who in performances where candidates had not introduced themselves on the recording and/or were given limited descriptions on the ICMS forms.

Devised Piece (30 marks)

There was a very good and varied range of devised work, some of it demonstrating real dramatic flair and using a rich variety of performance skills and techniques. In particular, there were many examples of well-crafted physical work that made full use of the performance space and demonstrated a good understanding of how to create effective stage pictures.

By contrast, weaker work was generally poorly structured and often repetitive, revisiting the same points with predictable use of monologues and relying on simplistic dialogue. There was also a tendency in this work to depend on the use of blackouts to create structure rather than thinking creatively how to move from one section to another. In stronger pieces, there was sometimes a mature use of lighting and set design to create a sense of depth and perspective. In turn, this enabled greater fluidity in moving from one section of the piece to another.

Spoken self-evaluation

There were many strong evaluations where candidates spoke fluently about their artistic intentions and their role in moving the creative process forward. These combined a clear overview of the piece as a whole with the part they played individually in creating the piece. Weaker candidates discussed the content and/or plot rather than the process of devising.

The majority of candidates spoke to camera with little obvious use of reading either cue cards or a script from a computer monitor. Delivery was varied with many stronger candidates rushing to get as much content as possible into the time allowed, which was not helpful in engaging the listener. A few candidates read their work, word by word, which was not appropriate to the syllabus.

Scripted piece (30 marks)

Most extracts were selected perceptively with good regard to the skills and abilities of the members of the group, and also showed a perceptive understanding of the play as a whole.

The strongest work conveyed a powerful sense of ensemble and had the potential to sustain audience engagement for the full duration of the piece. These pieces showed an ability to present a selection of well-rounded characters, each with a clear performance delineation. Weaker work was typified by undifferentiated pacing and delivery and character realisation that did little justice to the nuances implicit in the performance text.

Repertoire seen in November 2022

David Lindsay-Abaire	<i>Rabbit Hole</i>
Samuel Beckett	<i>Waiting for Godot</i>
Stephen Belber	<i>Tape</i>
Anthony Burgess	<i>A Clockwork Orange</i>
John Godber	<i>Shakers</i>
Henrik Ibsen	<i>A Doll's House</i>
Tony Kushner	<i>Angels in America</i>
Marsha Norman	<i>Night Mother</i>
John Pielmeier	<i>Agnes of God</i>
Harold Pinter	<i>The Caretaker</i>
Sophocles	<i>Antigone</i>
Tom Stoppard	<i>Arcadia</i>
Oscar Wilde	<i>Lady Windermere's Fan</i>
Tennessee Williams	<i>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i>

DRAMA

Paper 9482/03 Theatre-making and Performing
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Key messages

- The exploration of practitioners/traditions/styles should support clearly original devising in group performances.
- Making clear and appropriate links in individual performance is essential for a successful presentation.

General comments

Assessment comments on the ICMS forms were generally detailed and helpful in identifying where credit had been awarded. Candidates were clearly identifiable in video recordings of performances. Video should be a single camera recording without edits. The quality of recordings were generally good but some were recorded in very low lighting. Whilst lighting for atmosphere is clearly acceptable as a staging element, and lighting may be offered as a design option, in an assessed performance candidates must be clearly viewable on the recording. Centres are advised to complete a test recording before making the final examination recording.

In some cases in the individual presentations, additional non-assessed candidates appeared as part of the performance. This is not permitted. Where there is a solo candidate entry, a non-assessed performer is acceptable in the Group Devised performance to make up the minimum number of two. The maximum group number should not be exceeded.

All necessary administrative documents were completed in the submissions seen. The Group Devised Cover Sheet is essential to provide a case study statement giving information about the investigation of practitioner, tradition or style and the work that was investigated for the Group Devised performances. It is not expected that the case study statement should offer a narrative of the devised performance piece, which should be apparent from viewing the work.

There were no design option candidate submissions.

Devised Performance and Evaluation (40 marks)

Devising

The syllabus states *Each group of candidates chooses **one** practitioner, tradition or style from the list and carries out an investigation. And candidates must investigate **one** professionally performed production, either current or historic, that represents the work of their chosen practitioner or bears the hallmarks of their chosen tradition or style.* A short list of examples is given on page 16 of the syllabus. From this it should be clear that where it is a practitioner that is selected from the list, one of their works will be investigated. There is no need to investigate additional dramatists considered to have some relevance to the first. This would lose clarity of focus on the listed practitioner. In more than one instance, an additional dramatist's work was taken as a stimulus to the devising. Through their investigation candidates should have learned to recognise themes and content that are recognisably relatable to a work of a tradition, style or practitioner. Those themes and content do not necessarily have to have featured in the work investigated. Where it is a tradition or style that is selected, care should be taken to ensure this work investigated is in line with the chosen tradition or style.

Group Devised Performances were of appropriate length. Some candidates took the practitioner or a related dramatist as a stimulus rather than as a starting point for close application of the distinctive traits of the

practitioner as evidenced by the work taken for investigation. In these cases, candidates tended to show general understanding with some application of the distinctive traits of the chosen practitioner.

Written evaluations

Marking of the written evaluations for the Group Devising tended to be generous. Evaluations presented were usually at least competent in explaining the process of devising the piece and identifying their artistic intentions. Candidates should show understanding of how their work relates to the practitioner, tradition or style they intend to apply in their own work. How this relates to the work investigated and how the work has been the source of inspiration should be included. The writing should identify their personal contributions to the devising.

Individual performance (20 marks)

There was clearly some genuine commitment shown by candidates to their chosen themes and to the texts they had chosen to present.

Individual presentations were generally of an appropriate length. All texts should be introduced as they are about to be performed. This was not always clearly apparent. Candidates should offer their own modes of address to create differentiation between link and text performance in the progression of their programme of pieces, but it must be clear by voice and manner when the candidate is presenting a text and when they are making a link. In addition, the division points between candidate links and performed texts should be clearly distinguishable to an audience.

The focus of the presentation should be on the texts. While introducing the texts and making the links, this should be brief and candidates should not be drawn into a personal statement on the subject of the theme.

There is no category of spoken or written texts relatable to a chosen theme that is not permitted for presentation. They should be spoken in English translation if the original is in another language. Candidates should be reminded that they must not use extracts of any works set for Component 1 for Component 3 performance.

Examples of selected texts for November 2022

Theatre Traditions and Styles	
<i>Absurd Drama</i>	<i>No Exit (Sartre)</i>
Practitioners	
<i>Artaud</i>	<i>Jet of Blood</i>
<i>Bertolt Brecht</i>	<i>Mother Courage And Her Children</i>

DRAMA

Paper 9482/04 Theatre in Context

Key messages

The choice of an appropriate research question or statement is crucial in that it guides the direction of the essay. A well-focussed, specific research question or statement is key to accessing the full range of marks available.

A literary analysis of practitioners' work cannot score highly. The focus should be on theatre-making which implies practical, applied techniques and methodology with illustrative examples.

The format specified is that of an academic research essay which should adhere strictly to the word limit, should be thoroughly referenced with citations in accord with a recognised style guide and include a full bibliography (including web sites accessed by date).

Extended biographical accounts of practitioners' lives are unlikely to be marked positively.

Centres must take care to upload only what is needed for this component, ensuring that the work is fully legible, well scanned and includes a bibliography. Teacher feedback to candidates should be removed before submission.

General comments

Work encompassed a wide range of theatre practice. The work was varied, often interesting and engaging and some responses showed genuine enthusiasm for the chosen topic.

Some candidates did not make sensible choices in respect of their research question or statement as they were either too complex or too vague. As a consequence, some of these candidates did not produce a succinct argument while others presented a wholly literature-based study. Candidates are advised not to select set texts contained elsewhere in the specification to avoid duplication.

The strongest work was characterised by the following:

- a well-chosen question/title
- thorough research and exploration
- highly relevant, well-referenced/cited sources
- clear examples of wider reading/viewing as noted in a comprehensive bibliography
- a clear, concise conclusion.

The importance of teacher/centre guidance in making the right choices with regard to the title or research question or statement cannot be overemphasised. Ensuring that the essay is written under the correct parameters is crucial to reaching the higher mark bands.

Some candidates undertook highly relevant primary research including interviews with practitioners in the field of study. While this is highly commendable it was not always fully referenced and this undermined the overall integrity of the work. A few responses made excellent use of theatre which had been recorded live using the range of online platforms now available but again this wasn't always fully referenced which affected the marks awarded. A number of candidates used images to clearly support their research and given the nature of theatre and drama this should be encouraged.

The most successful essays had a carefully crafted question that allowed sufficient scope to meet the demands of the task. Weaker work often included extensive narration and/or biographical information that did not specifically relate to the focus of the question. Stronger work repeatedly tried to explicitly address the

question whilst demonstrating knowledge and understanding of practical aspects of theatre-making with a good level of analysis and evaluation. Overall, the component provided an opportunity for candidates to produce very robust work and to demonstrate in-depth knowledge and understanding.

Some candidates replicated the work of practitioners with fellow students in their own centres. This was a potentially rich area for primary research and often produces fascinating results.

Some introductions were well written, concise and drew the reader in well. In addition, some conclusions drew the essay together very effectively and demonstrated strong analysis and evaluation.

There was some work that fell outside the requirements of the task. Examples of this included:

- Not taking full advantage of the word allowance. Essays were often shorter which perhaps prevented enough detail and opportunity to analyse and evaluate. The word count is specified as 2500 – 3000 on page 41 of the syllabus with advice not to exceed 3,000 words. Some candidates wrote beyond this word limit.
- Not referring to guidance provided in the syllabus on page 41 where it explains what the essay must explore and which one or more aspects should be its focus.
- Several essays did not include a bibliography but some did include in-text references. The task requires a bibliography. Conversely, sometimes a bibliography was included but in-text references were not. On page 42 of the syllabus it states 'candidates must present their findings in accordance with the conventions of academic writing, including thorough referencing of sources and a full bibliography'.
- Some responses incorporated unhelpful, unsubstantiated sweeping statements along the lines of – 'it is clear practitioner X changed the world of theatre as we know it today'.

Comments on specific criteria

Criteria A.

Many candidates secured good marks here with many showing assured knowledge and understanding. However, candidates should remember the second bullet point in the list, i.e., 'range of appropriate and relevant supporting evidence' as this was lacking in a significant number of cases. All quotations and any paraphrasing should be referenced carefully both in-text and in the bibliography. In a number of cases evidence could have been used better to support claims made.

Criteria B.

This was the second strongest criteria with several essays showing a good level of practical knowledge and understanding. Some more careful selection of effective illustrative material would have helped. For example, essays dealing with design aspects could have included useful visuals to better illustrate points made.

Criteria C

A range of marks were awarded here. Sometimes candidates showed a consistent effort to analyse, whereas in the case of others the analysis was inconsistent and therefore slipped into band 2. Occasionally there was some confusion of ideas and centres could perhaps use the drafting process to assist candidates in checking these.

Criteria D

As with **Criteria C**, there tended to be a mix of attainment here with some well sustained and well-developed evaluation but also some work with superficial and intermittent evaluative comment. It is much easier for candidates to make valid evaluative judgements if they have in the first place created a research question or statement that clearly prompts an evaluative response (e.g. 'To what extent has Ancient Greek theatre influenced...?').