

DRAMA

Paper 0411/11
Drama

Key messages

Several candidates lost marks because their answers did not meet the question requirement. It would be helpful if centres could remind and encourage candidates to take time to read the question carefully.

Some candidates continued answering questions into the space allotted to the following question making it impossible to view the complete answer within the online marking system. Answers to **Questions 1 and 2** were where this happened most frequently. This entailed examiners having to switch back and forth between parts of the paper to ensure that all pieces of an answer were seen and marked. It would be helpful if centres could explain to candidates that if they need to exceed the allotted writing space for **any** question they should request an extension booklet and clearly indicate which question is being continued. This applies to all material which will not fit into the specified writing sections of the examination paper.

General comments

A large number of candidates did not take note of the number of marks available per question, which is given in brackets, and they wrote at length on **Question 1**, **Question 2** and **Question 3** where there was a maximum of two or three marks available, while writing significantly less for **Questions 4 – 11**, which were worth considerably more marks.

Candidates should focus their discussion primarily on the practical application of drama skills. Many marks are lost where candidates give narrative description or character analysis.

For longer answers, as required from **Question 6** onward, centres are requested to highlight the need for focused and precise writing. Many answers that are long and detailed include irrelevant or repeated material.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

The vast majority of candidates were able to suggest a costume for VIOLET.

Question 2

Most candidates were able to identify three different pieces of performance advice to the actor playing the role of RONNIE.

Question 3

The majority of candidates showed good awareness of the possibilities for playing the role of GRACE.

Question 4

Most answers showed some understanding of how the actors playing JOHN WATHERSTONE and ARTHUR WINSLOW could emphasise the imbalance of power between them in the passage although in a number of cases this occupied a limited range e.g. mostly vocal, or mostly postural. The most successful answers considered all the opportunities open to the actors including vocal, physical, proxemic relationships and use of set and props.

Question 5

A number of candidates interpreted the requirement for 'one design decision' as meaning one design feature or element. For example, a focus on Arthur's chair to the exclusion of other factors or the identification of a chandelier to indicate opulence. Though potentially appropriate in a narrow sense, they did not demonstrate adequately an understanding of the purpose of theatrical design as a decision making process and were unable to score higher than Band 2 of the mark scheme.

Question 6

A number of candidates were able to offer some understanding of how to direct the passage, with some specific examples but the tendency was to focus solely on acting skills. Where this was the case, opportunities to access the full range of marks was curtailed by the use of vague suggestions such as 'I would use facial/physical expressions'. Such non-specific directions cannot be credited.

Section B

Question 7

The majority of answers were able to state which aspects of the character of HADIA they would emphasise and, in many cases, this was well supported by close reference to the text. However, a number of answers did not discuss the application of practical process. Responses which did not include any indication of how these characteristics could be conveyed could not be awarded marks above Band 3 of the mark scheme.

Question 8

Most candidates showed an awareness of the stage directions at the opening of the passage which indicate that two locations are required: the writer's house and a changeable space where all other locations are situated. Several answers provided a sound and very comprehensive appreciation of the possibilities. Where candidates did not refer to both locations they could not achieve marks higher than Band 3.

Question 9

Most candidates demonstrated a good grasp of where and how they would create points of dramatic tension in the extract. Opportunities, generally, were clearly recognised and candidates were for the most part able to make workable suggestions as to how these could be realised. However, there seems to be an assumption that as far as lighting is concerned, colour equals emotion. For example, many candidates continue to believe that in a naturalistic setting, it is appropriate to flood the set with red light to indicate danger or anger for example. Such an approach would not score above Band 4. The same is true of follow spots, the use of which is incongruous within the action of a naturalistic play.

Section C

Question 10

With the focus of this question placed on the devising process, a high proportion of responses saw the challenges in terms of group dynamics. Many responses cited personal and group issues such as lateness, absence, lack of time etc. Other responses focused on the 'scriptwriting' process as opposed to the devising process whilst others saw the greatest challenge as being one of expanding the script to fill the designated playing time frame. Answers of this nature are unlikely to score higher than Band 4.

Question 11

The majority showed themselves well aware of the dynamic between performer and audience and many were able to illustrate this beyond a descriptive narrative of the action. Those candidates who quoted consistently from the dialogue to illustrate a specific point scored highly. However many candidates continue to lack confidence in their ability to evaluate, where success was often measured in terms of audience responses 'overheard' or 'observed' during performance. 'The audience gasped' for example, may be construed as a possible indicator of audience response but it is an unreliable measure of success as far as the performance intention is concerned. The same may be said of the 'after show' approbation of friends or relatives.

DRAMA

<p>Paper 0411/12 Written Paper 12</p>

Key messages

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Some candidates continued answering questions into the space allotted to the following question making it impossible to view the complete answer within the online marking system. Answers to **Questions 1 and 2** were where this happened most frequently. This entailed examiners having to switch back and forth between parts of the paper to ensure that all pieces of an answer were seen and marked. It would be helpful if centres could explain to candidates that if they need to exceed the allotted writing space for **any** question they should request an extension booklet and clearly indicate which question is being continued. This applies to all material which will not fit into the specified writing sections of the examination paper.

General comments

A large number of candidates did not take note of the number of marks available per question, which is given in brackets, and they wrote at length on **Question 1, Question 2 and Question 3** where there was a maximum of two or three marks available, while writing significantly less for **Questions 4 – 11**, which were worth considerably more marks.

Candidates should focus their discussion primarily on the practical application of drama skills. Many marks are lost where candidates give narrative description or character analysis.

For longer answers, as required from **Question 6** onward, centres are requested to highlight the need for focused and precise writing. Many answers that are long and detailed include irrelevant or repeated material.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

The vast majority of candidates were able to suggest a costume for DR. FROBISHER and say why it would be appropriate.

Question 2

Most candidates were able to identify three different pieces of performance advice to the actor playing the role of ANDREW CROCKER-HARRIS.

Question 3

The majority showed good awareness of the possibilities for playing the role of FRANK HUNTER to show his relationship with MILLIE CROCKER-HARRIS.

Question 4

Most answers showed some understanding of how the actors playing ANDREW CROCKER-HARRIS and TAPLOW could emphasise the imbalance of power between them in the passage although in a number of cases this occupied a limited range, e.g. mostly vocal, or mostly postural. The most successful answers considered all the opportunities open to the actors including vocal, physical, proxemic relationships and use of set and props.

Question 5

A number of candidates interpreted the requirement for 'one design decision' as meaning one design feature or element; a focus on the screen obscuring the entrance to the CROCKER-HARRISES' sitting-room, for example. In one or two exceptional cases this provided a very detailed, well thought-out response. In most instances, however, the choice of a single design feature did not demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of theatrical design as a decision making process and was unable to score higher than Band 2 of the mark scheme.

Question 6

A number of candidates were able to offer some understanding of how to direct the passage, with some specific examples but many tended to focus solely on acting skills. Where this was the case, opportunities to access the full range of marks was curtailed by vague suggestions such as 'I would use facial/physical expressions'. Such non-specific directions cannot be credited.

Section B

Question 7

The majority of answers were able to state which aspects of the character of NABEEL they would emphasise and, in many cases, this was well supported by close reference to the text. However, a number of answers neglected to discuss the application of practical process. Responses which did not include any indication of how these characteristics could be conveyed could not be awarded marks above Band 3 of the mark scheme.

Question 8

Most candidates showed an awareness both of set design challenges and that their suggestions needed to be flexible enough to allow for the events in the plot. Several answers provided a sound and very comprehensive appreciation of the possibilities. More detailed answers demonstrated an ability to develop the cultural references in the text in design terms.

Question 9

Most candidates demonstrated a good grasp of where and how they would create points of dramatic tension in the extract. Opportunities, generally, were clearly recognised and candidates were for the most part able to make workable suggestions of how these could be realised. However, there is an assumption that as far as lighting is concerned, colour equals emotion. For example, many candidates continue to believe that in a naturalistic setting, it is appropriate to flood the set with red light to indicate danger or anger for example. Such responses cannot score above Band 4. The same is true of follow spots, the use of which is incongruous within the action of a naturalistic play.

Section C

Question 10

Although the focus of this question was on the devising process, a high proportion of responses saw the challenges in terms of group dynamics. Many responses cited personal and group issues such as lateness, absence, lack of time, etc. Other responses focused on the 'scriptwriting' process as opposed to the devising process whilst others saw the greatest challenge as being one of expanding the script to fill the designated playing time frame. Answers of this nature are unlikely to score higher than Band 4.

Question 11

The focus of this question is on the performance process and it is important that candidates keep this in mind. The majority showed themselves to have some understanding of how to use design elements within their performance with the majority choosing to concentrate on set and lighting and some also considering aspects of costume.

Those that quoted from the dialogue or highlighted a particular moment in the action to illustrate a specific point scored more highly. However, many candidates continue to lack confidence in their ability to evaluate, where success was often measured in terms of audience feedback and not on internal reflection.

DRAMA

Paper 0411/13
Written Paper 13

Key messages

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For longer answers, as required from **Question 6** onward, centres are requested to highlight the need for focused and precise writing. Many answers that are long and detailed include irrelevant or repeated material.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

The vast majority of candidates were able to suggest a costume for COUNT SKRICZEVINSKY and say why it would be appropriate.

Question 2

Most candidates were able to identify three pieces of performance advice to the actor playing the role of DORIS.

Question 3

The majority showed good awareness of the possibilities for playing the role of MRS OAKES to show how she relates to PETER KYLE.

Question 4

Most answers showed some understanding of how the actors playing PETER and PATRICIA could emphasise the awkwardness of their encounter in the passage although in a few cases this occupied a limited range, e.g. mostly vocal, or mostly physical. The most successful answers considered all the opportunities open to the actors including vocal, physical, proxemic relationships and use of set and props.

Question 5

The majority of candidates opted to focus on set and lighting and many demonstrated a good understanding of period and, in particular, a strong awareness of the wartime context. Some showed an especially strong conceptual interpretation of the setting together with reference to how elements of set would or could be used by the actors.

Question 6

A number of candidates were able to offer some understanding of how to direct the passage to convey the differences between DUSTY and PERCY in their views of involvement in the war. Though several responses demonstrated good directorial awareness, many tended to focus solely on acting skills. Where this was the case, opportunities to access the full range of marks was further curtailed by the use of vague suggestions such as 'I would use facial/physical expressions'. Such non-specific directions cannot be credited.

Section B

Question 7

The majority of answers were able to state which aspects of the character of DOAKER CHARLES they would emphasise and in many cases this was well supported by close reference to the text. A few answers gave a highly detailed account of both the character and how they would perform it. Some answers however, did not discuss the application of practical process in any detail, relying instead on character and contextual analysis. Responses which did not include any indication of how characteristics could be conveyed could not be awarded marks above Band 3 of the mark scheme.

Question 8

Most candidates showed an awareness of the opportunities for design elements and how they could be used in a production of this extract. Several answers provided a sound and very comprehensive appreciation of the possibilities whereas some opted to concentrate on set or lighting and/or sound, which narrowed opportunities to access the full range of marks. More detailed answers demonstrated an ability to develop the cultural references in the text in design terms which, being sophisticated in nature, opened up the upper band of the mark scheme.

Question 9

Most candidates demonstrated a good grasp of where and how they would direct the extract to create points of dramatic tension. Opportunities were for the most part clearly recognised and candidates were able to make workable suggestions of how these could be realised.

Section C

Question 10

Most candidates were able to give a clear account of areas which required most attention in rehearsal although some responses cited fundamental personal and group challenges such as line learning for example. Less clear was the discussion of improvement strategies with some candidates reliant on general comments such as 'we kept working on this and in the end it came out alright and was successful'. To access the higher mark bands, a more revealing discussion of the process is called for.

Question 11

The focus of this question was on the mood established within the performance process. The majority of candidates showed themselves to have some understanding of how to use both acting skills and design elements to create mood or atmosphere with the majority choosing to concentrate on set and lighting and some also considering aspects of sound or costume.

Those that quoted from the dialogue or highlighted a particular moment in the action to illustrate a specific point scored more highly. However, many candidates continue to lack confidence in their ability to evaluate, where success was often measured in terms of audience feedback and not on internal reflection.

DRAMA

Paper 0411/02
Coursework

General comments

Administration

This was a much smaller entry than in June 2023, with similar points to be made regarding both the administration of the examination and the nature of the practical work.

The quality of the submitted recordings was good and moderators reported no issues regarding the quality of picture or sound. There were a few instances where sound quality was less clear, generally where Centres had relied on an inbuilt microphone on the camera rather than an external microphone that could be placed closer to the performance area.

Some recordings zoomed in and out on individual candidates or scenes, which created a filmic quality to the recording that tended to enhance certain dramatic moments. Centres are reminded that the recording should be of a single image, with no zooming in and out.

Individual performances

There was a good selection of repertoire, almost all of it taken from well-established plays. Most candidates were well prepared and had taken time to learn lines, build character, and develop a clear performance intention. Some candidates demonstrated an excellent stage presence, with clearly conceived use of space and a good sense of focus. Weaker performances tended to be either lost in the size of the space, or rooted to a particular point in it, often through the use of chairs and tables.

Group Scripted Performances

There was some interesting and varied work, most of which demonstrated a good sense of ensemble and collegiality. There were some excellent physical performances, where the group had worked extremely strongly to form their interpretation of the performance extract. This was often seen through the sense of generosity in the performance of individuals in order to ensure that the piece communicated as a whole. Weaker groups tended to look more like a collection of individuals who were united in their intention to perform an extract from a play but lacked the necessary sense of cohesion to bring it off.

Group Devised Performances

There were some very creative pieces of work where the group had created an original piece of drama from a stimulus, and in so doing had opened up fresh insights into the stimulus. The strongest pieces demonstrated real assurance in creating a workable structure that enabled the group to communicate their message. They also had well-rounded characters and believable scenarios. The weaker pieces were often marred by an undifferentiated structure, and under-developed characters. As in previous exam sessions, the quality of the acting was generally influenced by the quality of the devised piece itself.

Indicative repertoire list

Playwright	Title
A Albee, Edward Anouilh, Jean Ayckbourn, Alan Ayckbourn, Alan	<i>Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?</i> <i>Antigone</i> <i>Invisible Friends</i>
B Berkof/Kafka Bovell, Andrew	<i>The Trial</i> <i>Things I know to be True</i>
C Chekhov, Anton	<i>Three Sisters</i>
E Euripides	<i>Medea</i>
G Godber, John Godber, John	<i>Shakers</i> <i>Teachers</i>
K Kelly, Denis	<i>DNA</i>
M Macdonald, Sharman Miller, Arthur Miller, Arthur	<i>After Juliet</i> <i>The Crucible</i> <i>Death of a Salesman</i>
P Pinter, Harold Placey, Evan	<i>The Dumb Waiter</i> <i>Girls Like That</i>
R Ravenhill, Mark	<i>Pool (No Water)</i>
S Schaffer, Peter Shakespeare Shakespeare Shaw, George Bernard Soyinka, Wole Sophocles Stephenson, Shelagh	<i>Amadeus</i> <i>Julius Ceasar</i> <i>King Lear</i> <i>Man and Superman</i> <i>The Lion and The Jewel</i> <i>Antigone</i> <i>Five Kinds of Silence</i>
W Wilde, Oscar Williams, Tennessee	<i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i> <i>The Glass Menagerie</i>