

**GCSE (9–1)**

*Exemplar Candidate Work*

# DRAMA

J316

For first teaching in 2016

## Devising – Exemplar 8 with commentary

Version 1



# Introduction

This work has been produced by Drama students as part of their school curriculum time, studying how to devise drama using a stimulus. It offers teachers an insight into how the devising process can be recorded by students in their portfolio for Devising Drama (component 01/02).

As these responses have not been through moderation, an indication of the level of each response has not been included. A version of this resource which provides an indication of the level of the response will be made available in addition to this version in due course.

Please note that this resource is provided for advice and guidance only and does not in any way constitute an indication of an endorsed approach to creating a portfolio.

The sample assessment material used as the starting point for this work can be found on the GCSE (9–1) Drama web page and accessed via the following link: <http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/242631-unit-j316-01-02-devising-drama-sample-assessment-material.pdf>

# EXEMPLAR CANDIDATE WORK 8

## Stimulus 4 - painting -

### Characters:

- \* Rose - Abby
- \* Jessie - Emily
- \* Frankie - Mike
- \* Caroline - Lucy T.
- \* Mrs. Jones - Lucy J.
- \* Maia - Lucy J.

### Extra Information:

- \* Style = naturalistic/abstract
- \* Structure = traditional - beginning, middle and end
- \* Conventions: thought in the head, Still image/freeze frame, Split Screen, Choral Speech, Non-naturalistic speech.

### Scenes:

- Scene 1 - Art gallery
- Scene 2 - Limbo
- Scene 3 - Parallel universe
- Scene 4 - Parallel Selves
- Scene 5 - Fixing
- Scene 6 - Going home
- Scene 7 - Memorial

### Our Idea:

Our idea starts as 4 students and a teacher on an educational visit to an art gallery. During this exhibition, they touch the painting 'Starry Night' and suddenly they're thrown into a dark, timeless place. Here they meet a slightly unhinged woman who explains they are on the outskirts of a parallel universe. We got this idea from our stimulus, the way the painting seemed backwards and twisted gave us the idea of the parallel universe.

### Research on Stimulus

The Stimulus that our group chose for the exam is Stimulus 4; the painting 'Starry Night' by Vincent Van Gogh. This painting is one of the most well known art pieces in today's artistic culture (as taken from the website 'vangoghgallery.com'). The original was painted in 1889 and the painting was of his view from his window of the Asylum he admitted himself to, but a more idealised version. It was at this Asylum that he painted this now famous picture (taken from 'artble.com').

This information about the history of the painting will help our group to further our idea original idea because now we can understand the picture better and what inspired it. It wasn't just an ordinary night sky he got inspiration from, it was actually a lot more meaningful. I think we could include these different meanings in our drama piece, especially with the character that I play who is slightly unhinged due to being trapped in Limbo for so long. Now we know how much that relates to the artist, I think we could begin to develop it more.



Character : Maia

History : She came from a poor family, her mother tried to provide for her as much as possible but it was hard without Maia's father; who left when she was born. When Maia was 16 years old, she got a job at the Art Gallery where she touched the painting 'Starry Night' and became trapped in Limbo.

Job : She worked at the Art Gallery until she disappeared one night at the end of her shift.

Attitudes : Maia has a very negative view of the world after what happened to her, which affects the way she handles certain things.

Status : Everyone believes her to be dead.

Class : Before everything happened, she was working class. Both her and her mother worked many hours to afford food and rent.

Beliefs : Maia and her mother were members of their local church and were very religious, but after what happened she believes there is no-one to help her.

Personality : She used to be a selfless person, caring for other people above herself. But after so long without human interaction, she has become bitter and paranoid.

Role on the wall

I was very close with my mother, it was just me and her after my dad left. We didn't speak to any distant relatives.

I used to work in an art gallery. I loved working there, until I got trapped.



My name is Maia.

I'm supposed to be 27 but because I'm in Limbo, I'm still 17.

I don't have a job.

I had a low status.

I used to be caring, funny and loving, now I don't know who I am.

### Magic If...

If I were really my character I would feel completely alone because I can't talk to anyone about how I'm coping on my own. Sometimes I'll talk to myself about how trapped I am in this lonely abyss. Usually I pace in the darkness, or walk as far as I can to see if there is an escape. Of course, there isn't. There is only one way out and I am too scared to try it. To venture into the parallel universe with the possibility of never getting out is too risky. And I really, really hate risks. Even before this... this 'accident' I would never even dream of doing anything risky or dangerous. Other kids would climb trees and roll down hills while I stayed home and listened to my parents fight. Maybe that's why this happened to me. Maybe there is something wrong with me. It would explain why dad left, without ever saying goodbye. Why me?



### Character Hot Seating:

1) Q- What would you change about your life?

A- There are a lot of things I would change, I would of never got that job at the art gallery for starters. It wasn't that I didn't like it, in fact I really enjoyed it there. The people were kind, the money was good and it really helped my mum pay for things. But then I touched that stupid painting and everything changed. Now I'm completely alone and I don't even know how my mum is coping with my unexplained disappearance. Then again maybe I would change the fact my dad left. At least my mum would of had financial help, and wouldn't of needed two jobs just to put food on the table.

2) Q- Do you have any religious beliefs?

A- I used to, before everything happened. But now I only believe that bad things happen and theres nothing you can do. No-one is going to help you, not God or Jesus or the bible. No-one. Your on your own, in the end.

3) Q- What was your life like before you got the job?

A- Despite our money issues, life was good. My mum and I were very close. I think it was because it was just me and her for so long.



## Rehearsal Plan

After the first part of the written work has been completed and the initial idea is formed, it's time to start rehearsing the play. To manage our time as efficiently as possible, we have devised a rehearsal plan. The plan is as followed:

- \* Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> - In this lesson we will build the structure of the drama and finalise the scenes, making sure they follow the chosen structure.
- \* Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> - We will work on audience and performance space, choosing which staging we will have and drawing out the design.
- \* Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> - Deciding on a genre, a performance style and which conventions we are going to use. Also recording our progress so far.
- \* Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> - Semiotics; costumes, props, lighting, sounds and scenery.

We may rehearse more in our own time, depending on our progress.

### Structure of the drama:

We have chosen the structure varying chronological order which is the structure that changes around the normal timeline of events, usually with flashbacks. For example, if a scene is of something that has happened previous to the events that were taking place during the play. We chose to use this structure because we thought that the use of flashbacks throughout our play explain our more complex storyline to the audience better.

Scene 1 ~ the play starts with a short scene. There is a split screen and the character Caroline ~~on~~ is on one side and Frankie and Rose are on the other. Caroline's light is on and she is getting ready. When she leaves, the other light turns on and Rose and Frankie are getting ready also. Jessie enters and they leave.

Scene 2 ~ they go to the Art Gallery. This is where they touch the painting 'Starry Night' and fall into limbo.

Scene 3 ~ they wake up in a dark room. Here, there is a girl named Maia who tells them about where they are. There is a flashback (this is where the structure starts to vary in chronological order) of Maia falling into the parallel universe outskirts.

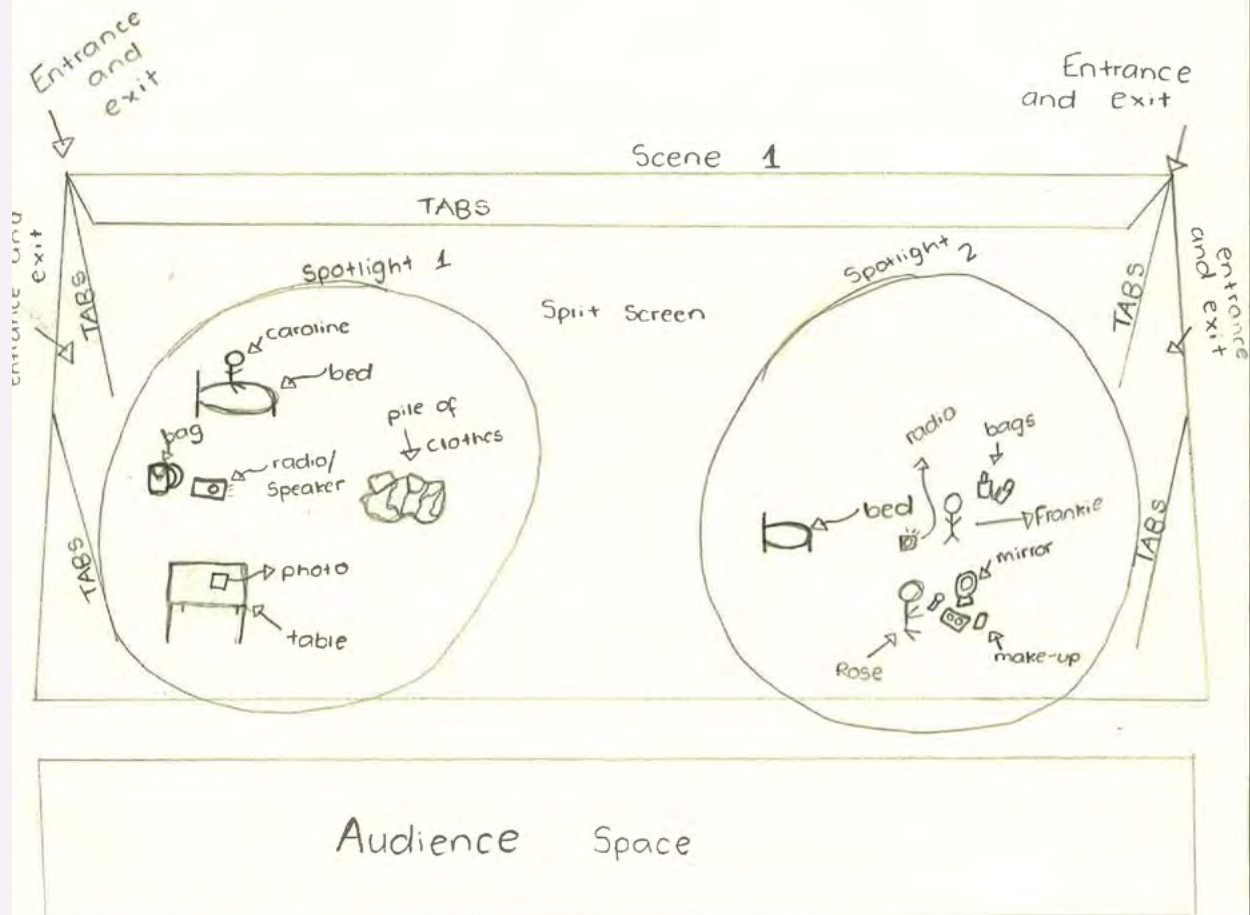
Scene 4 - They decide to travel across the parallel universe to get to the painting and get back home. But as they travel further, they start to act completely different, their parallel selves starting to show.

The remaining scenes have not yet been created and so we couldn't write a summary of them. To improve our drama piece, we need to complete the entire performance and add more flashbacks to make the chosen structure more obvious.



## Audience And Performance Space

### Proscenium Stage-



We chose proscenium staging because we thought it would be the best one in terms of the audience being able to see clearly everything <sup>that</sup> is going on during the play.

### Genre, performance Style and Convention

We chose the genre miracle, mystery and morality as our main genre but also a bit of Theatre of the Absurd. We decided to use these because we thought adding a theme of fantasy to our play would make it more interesting for our audience watching. Our whole performance is based around the idea of parallel universes and things that don't exist in real life. The way Theatre of the Absurd is brought into the play is the unrealistic, Strange Scenes that we have, especially towards the end. This could be risky to add in as it may make it difficult for the audience to follow what is happening. However, I think we have made the Scenes clear enough so that won't happen.

The performance Style we have chosen is non-naturalistic. This is the Style that is not dependent on life like, ordinary representations. It contains unrealistic happenings that wouldn't happen in normal situations. We chose to do this Style because we felt it would fit in best with our overall idea.

In our play, we have included a wide range of conventions such as: Split Screens, thought in the head, freeze frames, flashbacks / reenactments, multi role, choral speech, Soliloquies and forum theatre. We used conventions like freeze frames to highlight important moments in the play. At the end, we use the convention forum theatre which links well with the overall theme because it allows the audience to get more involved. It creates a powerful effect for the ending.

### Social and Historical Context-

Our play is set in a town, just on the outskirts of London. The main plot in the performance happens in a popular Art gallery, where the students visit on a school trip. The art gallery had been open for many years, always displaying only the finest of paintings and sculptures. One of their most favoured pieces of artwork was 'Starry Night' by Vincent Van Gogh which they had owned since they had first opened. But despite grand attractions such as these, there is a lot of crime and violence in the area, especially for the character Caroline, who lives in a bad neighbourhood.

The time period in which our play is set is the present day. Because of all the discrimination currently taking place in today's society, the characters in the play all struggle to fit in. They all have very different personalities that they all sometimes wish they could change to fit in better and as a result are more effected by the way they do change in the parallel universe. This is especially true for the character Caroline, who hates the way she is so isolated and cold towards other people. When she finds herself behaving completely different in the parallel universe, she finds it hard to resist.



## Semiotics

### Costumes

In our play we have used costumes in a way that shows the audience what that character is like almost instantly. Almost all of our main characters are stereotyped versions of different teenagers in today's society and so we had to show this in what they are wearing. The character Frankie wears a pink polo shirt with tight rolled up jeans. Because he is a very 'camp' character, we decided to use the colour pink as it is the colour usually associated with that term. The character Rose is a stereotype of a popular, girly teenager so her costume is leggings, a stripy crop top, excessive make-up and a lot of accessories. This is the complete opposite to the character Jessie, who wears a loose t-shirt, jeans and a baseball cap. From this costume we can see that Jessie is more of a rough, tomboy person. For the character Caroline, we have her wearing a completely black outfit to represent her dark past and how that's affected her attitude towards everyone. Lastly, we have Maia who, like Caroline, is wearing a black costume however this is to represent how untrustworthy she is.

### Lighting

Throughout the performance, we used lighting to

create meaning and follow the theme of the play. For example, when Maia betrayed her companions in a scene towards the end, the lights turned red to symbolise her betrayal. This was effective because it told the audience that Maia was actually a bad character and didn't help them for their benefit, but her own. Another scene we used lighting to metaphorically convey a meaning was scene 1. In this scene, we had a split screen with two separate spotlights. Caroline was on one side alone, whereas Rose, Frankie and Jessie were together. This shows that Caroline is more divided and isolated from everyone else.

### Props

Many props were used in our play, one of my personal favourites was the old, battered doll we used in Jessie's flashback. In this scene a younger version of Jessie is playing with said doll just before she is told that her mother has died. The broken doll is like a metaphor for Jessie's family, who are about to be broken apart by this loss. Another effective prop used was the photograph owned by Caroline. In the first scene, Caroline picks it up and is visibly upset by it. Because the photograph is never shown to the audience, it leaves them wondering what it was of and as

a result, grips their attention.

### Scenery

Although our Scenery was limited, we still managed to show the audience a lot about the characters by their surroundings. For example in Scene 1, the setting was two different places, Caroline's bedroom and Rose's bedroom. Caroline's room is quite dull, patternless sheets on her bed, limited personal belongings etc. This tells the audience a lot about her personality, especially compared to the vibrant Rose's colourful room. Pink bedsheets, multi-coloured clothes on the floor, make-up everywhere and a mirror. These two settings in comparison to each other are extremely different.

### Sounds

Like Scenery, we didn't include a huge amount of sound in our performance. The small amount we did include however was very clear and obvious in its meaning. When we have Rose and Frankie listening to music, they are listening to an upbeat, positive sounding song, much like their personalities. Caroline however is listening to a rock, hardcore song which relates to her closed off, hard personality.



## Evaluation

### Process

We started off devising the first scene from our basis idea that we got from our stimulus. However, as we began to build up the play further, we decided to add in a short scene before the original first scene to give the audience more background on the characters. Another change we made throughout the course of the rehearsals is we added more flashbacks after the characters went to the parallel universe. I think this change was effective because it meant the audience could have an insight of each character's history. One of the best changes our group made was the forum theatre we included towards the end of the performance. This was also an effective change because it meant the audience were more interactive and involved.

### Creating meaning

I think the overall message of the play was delivered to the audience clearly and effectively. The lesson we were trying to teach the audience was not to trust anyone you don't know. We used certain semiotics to convey this meaning, for example Maia's costume was a black hoodie and black leggings which we thought represented how untrustworthy she really was. Also, when she betrayed the other characters we were planning on turning the stage lights

red to symbolise her evil side.

### Strengths

Our three main strengths of our performance were Sound, Structure and costumes. The Sound we used in the first few scenes was used effectively, for example in scene one we used the song 'Paranoid' by Black Sabbath which Caroline was listening to. In this scene we also had Rose and Frankie listening to 'What makes you beautiful' by One Direction. We had the characters listening to these songs because it tells the audience a lot about their personalities. 'Paranoid' is a rock song and so you can tell Caroline is quite a rough person compared to Rose and Frankie who are listening to a more popular and upbeat song. The structure of the play was a strength as well because we included a lot of flashbacks so the non-chronological order was conveyed well. It could have been quite confusing for the audience with all of the flashbacks however I think we managed to clearly show what was happening. Our last main strength was the costumes we used. In the performance, each person in our group multi-acted throughout so there were a lot of quick costume changes. Even though we couldn't make huge changes to our costumes, we managed to make minor differences each time. For example, when our group member Mike played a father in one of the flashbacks, he put on a dressing gown over his original costume. It was simple, but effective.

### Areas of Improvement

Despite our performance going quite well, we still have many areas that could of been improved. An example of this is our scene changes could of been a lot quicker. I think the reason why we took too long with the scene changes was because our group didn't allow ourselves enough time to rehearse with props, scenery etc. It was a similar issue with the lights in our performance. We had planned to do a lot more with lighting than we did however we didn't manage our time well enough to rehearse with most semiotics. This is definatly something I would improve in the future. Another thing I think we could of improved was audience and performance space. The staging we chose was proscenium but I think we should of experimented more with audience spacing. If we had chosen a different staging such as thrust, the audience could of sat on both sides of the stage as well as infront instead of just the front. It would of been interesting to see the outcome of a riskier layout.

Overall, I have learnt a lot by doing this project and improved on many drama based skills. Devising a short play based on a stimulus has proved to help develop skills such as creating a drama piece using planned improvisations to build scenes, how to decide on appropriate lighting depending on the theme and making important changes throughout rehearsals to make the performance better.

## Marks

Portfolio - Section 1	AO1	2 out of 10 marks
Portfolio - Section 2	AO1	4 out of 10 marks
Portfolio - Whole Portfolio	AO4	9 out of 20 marks
Total marks	15	



# Commentary

## Section 1 – Research and developing ideas

The candidate made some link to the stimulus. There were some initial ideas.

There was some research but it was not detailed and there was no evidence to indicate how the research was going to be used to inform the drama being created.

There was some useful character detail but not enough on the function of the other characters.

## Section 2 – Creating and developing drama

The candidate used role on the wall as one technique for developing character – this has limited effect.

Reference was made to the 'magic if' which contained some brief character detail.

There was a rehearsal plan which was brief.

Scenes were given with some limited detail.

Roles within the play were identified.

Some detail was given about the role to be played by the candidate.

The candidate identified genre and performance style.

The candidate listed conventions with no explanation.

Reference was made to performance space.

Semiotics were addressed but there was not enough analysis of why and what for:

Costume – some details given.

Lighting – some brief details given.

Sound/props – general comments made no specific information given – no detail as to purpose.

Hot-seating responses given.

Reference to structure.

## Whole portfolio – Analysis and evaluation

There was some evidence of competent evaluation and analysis throughout the portfolio and in the final section on the performance.

The portfolio did not contain enough detailed evaluation and analysis of changes made during the devising process. It is important to identify firstly the dramatic intention of the piece and then as the piece is created to reference that and how decisions made will impact on the audience.



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