

GCSE (9–1)
Candidate Style Answers

DRAMA

J316
For first teaching in 2016

Section B – Live theatre evaluation exemplar 1 with commentary

Version 2



INTRODUCTION

This resource has been produced by senior members of the GCSE 9-1 Drama examining team to offer teachers an insight into how the assessment objectives are applied.

Please note that as these responses have not been through full moderation, this resource is provided for advice and guidance only and does not in any way constitute an indication of grade boundaries or endorsed answers.

The sample assessment material for these answers and commentary can be found on the GCSE 9-1 Drama web page: <http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse-drama-j316-from-2016/>

QUESTION 9 - LIVE THEATRE EVALUATION

EXEMPLAR 1

9 Evaluate the visual impact a live production had on you as an audience member.

You must include examples from the live performance you have seen in your answer. At the start of your answer state the name, venue and date (month and year) of the live performance you have seen. [30]

SAMPLE ANSWER

'Crouch, Touch, Pause, Engage', XXXX Theatre, Month Year

We went to see 'Crouch, Touch, Pause, Engage', a live production, and the visual techniques and staging were very unique and thought-provoking. The staging that was used was almost in the round, with the audience on three sides, and tiered-seating. The performers were very good at communicating to the audience and managed to stand at certain angles so that everybody could see and understand what was happening in the scene and there was a lot of direct audience address used with direct eye contact, so that, as an audience, we could feel engaged and as if we were part of the play too.

Multi-rolling was used all the way throughout the play, they showed that Gareth (the main character) was being played by someone else, by passing on a rugby ball to the new actor, so that we could tell that Gareth was the one whom was holding the rugby ball. It may have taken me a while to work out what they rugby ball signified (as it did for many others) however once I did everything became a lot clearer for me. A very powerful point in the production for me was used with the aid of lighting – which was very effective. The scene was the moment before two people were commit suicide and before thismoment, the lighting hadn't changed, however just as the characters supposedly died, the lights dramatically all went off, and when they did come back on, the characters were gone – leaving us as an audience feeling rather confused and apprehensive as for what was to come next. Not many props were used, however there were a few for comedy purposes and the outer-edge of the stage was lined with benches which were frequently used for different things, such as chairs, tables and beds – making it a minimalistic set. At some points, the actors would not have a part in a certain scene, so they would sit at the side of the stage and look dis-engaged, however I think that it would have looked better and been more effective, if they had gone off-stage during these parts as they were going out of character and it looked un-professional. I also think that whilst some of the performers were talking, the others lacked reaction and looked more as if they were thinking about what they were doing next. They needed to use facial expressions more in response to the other performers comments or actions. However, when the performers were talking, they used big hand gestures and facial expressions so that we could see their state of mind and have a clear indication of how they felt. As the performance used multi-rolling, the girls had to perform as boys – sometimes, and this was indicated with a slight change of costume (usually a rugby t-shirt) and a deepening of the voice with a more 'manly' gestures and stance. This was done well, as an audience member I always knew when they were performing as a male. Something that I think could have made the performance even more effective and interesting is if freeze frames and thought tracking was used, as the play is a very emotional and thought centered one, so if we could have seen and heard how the characters were thinking and feeling at certain points then we could have gotten a better understanding of them and felt more sympathetic towards their situation. Overall, they play was very different to anything I have ever seen, and I felt very involved as an audience member. The characters movement was defined and lighted was used very well at certain points.

COMMENTARY

The candidate has offered a very strong response to the question with some pertinent impacts discussed from both a positive and negative perspective. Within their evaluation, they refer in some depth to the impacts on them as an audience member, with several specific references to the production. The candidate reveals a detailed and confident understanding of the visual elements in the production. They show how these elements impacted on them as an audience member and clearly discuss the visual aspects of the production with some detailed reference to technical concepts. The examples they offer to justify the aspects they discuss are rooted in the performance. The candidate also highlights a personal and revealing commentary towards the use of semiotics. They demonstrate some distinction between the actor and the character and there is a perceptive interpretation of the deeper meaning of the production. At times, the candidate shows a clear insight into the impact this had on the audience which is exemplified by a developed knowledge and understanding of the production process. This is also demonstrated by the candidate's use of specialist drama and theatre terminology which they use with confidence throughout their response. In general, the candidate displays a skilful understanding of how the meaning of the production is communicated to the audience which they exemplify by demonstrating a clear, relevant and well-developed line of reasoning.

It is pleasing to see that the candidate has offered relevant evaluation, which they discuss from both a negative and positive perspective in relation to the impact on themselves and the audience. The potential examples given are specific, however some of their examples lack the detail and justification required to secure a top mark. To gain additional marks, the candidate needs to enhance their response by providing clearer and more detailed examples of key moments from the production, especially in relation to key technical aspects. This would help them to demonstrate a deeper knowledge and understanding of the production in its entirety and specifically enhance their understanding of the audience impact.

To achieve a top mark in the top band, candidates need to show a highly developed understanding of the visual impact of the production on them as an audience member. Although clear impacts are discussed, at times, they are not always specific or detailed in respect of key issues or moments from the production. For example, the candidate demonstrates an accomplished insight into the use of lighting, covering a multitude of potential impacts. However, their discussion of proxemics is not as detailed or as clear. The candidate also fails to discuss in detail the key aspects of the overall style of the performance, especially in relation to the use of staging. They do suggest how these elements have enhanced/detracted from the potential impact, with some reference to moments in the production. They do not justify this in the detail which these key elements require to achieve full marks. The use of specialist drama and theatre terminology is used with confidence by the candidate and they clearly have a developed knowledge and understanding of specialist language. However, their use of such is not highly developed and is sometimes not integrated throughout their response. For example, there is no acknowledgement or reference to the use of 'Epic Theatre' techniques/style or use of terms such as 'Breaking the Forth Wall', 'Proxemics/Semiotics'. The candidate has missed several opportunities to demonstrate key relevant specialist terminology throughout their response. This is exemplified by the candidate's overall understanding of how meaning is communicated to an audience in a live performance, which they consistently demonstrate in a sound, but not highly developed manner.



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