

AS LEVEL

Exemplar Candidate Work

DRAMA AND THEATRE

H059

For first teaching in 2016

Exemplar 5:

AS Level portfolio for a performance
of *Metamorphosis*

Version 1



Introduction

This work has been produced by Drama students as part of their school curriculum time, studying practitioners and performing from a text. It offers teachers an insight into how the process can be recorded by students in their research report and portfolio for Process to performance (Component 01/02/03/04).

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 research report or portfolio.



EXEMPLAR CANDIDATE WORK 5

SAMPLE ANSWER

Metamorphosis

Berkoff believed that all elements of theatre should be considered equally important for example movement, visuals, music, text etc. are of equal value. This is what he called total theatre. To explore one of these aspects we did a piece of off text work focusing on our morning routine. For my action I mimed using the shower. To change from naturalistic mime, Berkoff's movements use good gestures, irregular movements and involve a lot of attention to detail. The first action would be opening the shower door and getting in. to make this seem exaggerated, when I opened the door I made the noise it would make when it opens to make it seem realistic. The next action was turning on the shower, followed by the noise of running water. After this I opened the hair wash bottle with a popping sound effect which adds extra detail to the mime and makes it realistic. After looking back on my Mime I noticed that a few bits detail that was missing. The next I turned on the shower I shivered because when you turn a shower on it is usually cold at first. This adds a small extra detail, as is crucial to the success of Berkoffian mime.

For this area of study we adapted a scene of the play to make it modern. We adapted the scene where the family and the Chief Clerk discover Gregor's transformation for the first time. We wanted to make Gregor something other than a beetle so we decided to make him a drug addict as this is a modern interpretation on a serious social aspect. The similarities of being a beetle and being a drug addict are that the family are ashamed of what Gregor has become and they try to hide what he really is. Also there is an element of Gregor scaring his family so they don't try and help him in his situation both as a beetle and a drug addict. One of the main reasons we wanted to show Gregor as a drug addict is that even with a serious real life problem his family still don't want to help him and have anything to do with him.

For this area of study we focused on page 98 where Mr and Mrs Samsa do a "Ballet of the Stools" and we had create and interpret something of what that meant to us. My partner and I wanted to show the aggression between Mr and Mrs Samsa which has built up since the very beginning of the play and how they let their feelings out over this scenario. We also wanted to give Mrs Samsa a chance to fight back as we felt that she is tired of being bossed about by Mr Samsa as he is not letting her do her own thing. We interpreted the ballet of the stools as a mixture of a dance and a fight which let the characters react to each other's movements which were displaying how they were feeling. Throughout the argument each character has equal power but nearer the end Mr Samsa becomes more powerful than Mrs Samsa. I decided to show this by raising my voice even more than I had done at the beginning of the scene. I did this to show that Mr Samsa will go the extreme to remain in charge and keep order to his family.

In this lesson we explored how we can show the character Gregor at three different stages throughout the play. At the beginning of the play he seems to be very tired as he is the only member of his family that goes out to work because the rest are lazy. To show this I made myself slumped over and had an exhausted facial expression. At this point of the play, Gregor's level of tension is at Californian because he is exhausted from work. By seeing him like this it shows the pressure that his family is putting on him. At the second stage Gregor has just turned into a dung beetle so he isn't used to the changes. At this stage I made the character quite low to the ground and quite tense. I did not make him fully tense as at this point of the play because he still human on the inside. At the third stage of the play Gregor is fully transformed into a dung beetle and his feelings towards his family have changed also. By knowing this I made his whole body tense and I used the scaffolding to hang off of. At this point of the play Gregor's level of tension is at the maximum it can be because of the pain and mental state he is in!

For language we looked at Gregor's monologue on page 117 and the different ways we could deliver it. In the actual script Gregor has a lot of pauses throughout and also uses many short sentences which tell the audience that he is in pain both physically and emotionally. I decided to rewrite/reword his monologue to emphasise the anger he is feeling at that point in the play and to also make him seem less educated and rough. I noticed that in the monologue Gregor uses a lot of large vocabulary in his sentences which makes him seem more intelligent and more human than he actually is. To alter this I replaced words such as "announce", "frightening" and "detest" with Tell, Scaring and Hate. To emphasise the anger he is feeling I chose to have Gregor swear in his monologue because I feel that Gregor has built up his aggression from the beginning of the play and has just exploded with rage which is why he bursts out of his room and frightens the lodgers away when he has finished his monologue.

To cover this area of study we were able to create a piece of the play that we wanted to cover. We decided to show key parts of the play through the perspective of Mr Samsa. I was playing the role of Mr Samsa and I made my voice quite deep and my volume was loud because I wanted to portray him as the villain of the play. By making my voice loud and deep, it has an effect on the other characters which keeps them in Mr Samsa's power. Also in in this performance we used choral speech. We used this to emphasise the pressure that is being put on Gregor at the beginning of the play. When the choral speech was used it got louder and louder which

then makes Gregor snap and feel forced to work for the family and not stand up for himself. Another type of speech we used was Cannon speech which was where the characters said a list of specific words one at a time in a certain order which was then repeated and sped up gradually. This was used to show the pressure Gregor was feeling at his job and along with the pressure at home is the cause of him turning into a dung beetle.

For this area of study we focused on the Christmas flash back on page 102. This involved non-verbal communication because we recorded ourselves saying the text and then acted the scene out only through movement. For this scene I was playing Mr Samsa and at this point in the play he is not as angry and controlling as he is later on, so I decided for him to be quite calm and relaxed. I showed this by making my facial expression happy and by sitting in his chair as if he was comfy and enjoying himself. Because he isn't working for the family it makes Mr Samsa seem lazy so this is why I decided for him to be sat in his chair for the majority of the performance. When Mr Samsa hears the news that Gregor is sending Greta to the conservatorium, I interpreted that Mr Samsa is shocked and that he doesn't like surprises. So when he finds out, I got up from the chair and walked over to Mrs Samsa while having constant eye contact with Gregor. I did this to make Gregor feel scared of Mr Samsa and to remind him that Mr Samsa is in charge of the household.

To explore aspects of the play we created an exposition to the play. We decided to use a mixture of visual and aural aspects in the exposition which involved lights, shadow work and music. The white light is projected onto a piece of fabric which then allows us to create shadows. This grabs the audience's attention with the abstract images. We decided to make Gregor a shadow because we could make all sorts of weird shapes to make him seem grotesque and unsettling. We also looked at the change of colour for the lighting, e.g. from a calm blue to a red that shows danger, to reflect the nightmare which then becomes Gregor's reality. The music also plays a big part in the exposition; the music creates the mysterious atmosphere and tells the audience that what is going to happen in the play is going to be supernatural/ abnormal. After we had performed our exposition the audience said that our shadow work really set the mysterious unsettling atmosphere which worked well with the music we used.



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