Qualification Accredited

OCR
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

A LEVEL
Candidate Style Answers

DRAMA AND THEATRE

H459/31
For first teaching in 2016

Q7 Level 4 - sample answer with commentary: The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time

Version 1

www.ocr.org.uk/drama

INTRODUCTION

This resource has been produced by the A Level Drama and Theatre assessor team to offer teachers an insight into how the assessment objectives are applied. Please note that 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 this answer and commentary can be found on the A Level Drama and Theatre web page here: http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/242806-unit-h459-31-analysing-characters-for-performance-sample-assessment-material.pdf

© OCR 2017

SECTION B QUESTION 7

Analyse a live performance you have seen, outlining the director's interpretation and how effective you think it was. 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

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time
Gielgud Theatre, London June 2016

Staging and lighting were used to bring the inner-workings of 15 year old Christopher, who has Asperger's, to mind. The set was set out to look like a three-sided grid that was lined with graph paper and when Christopher explains something, he would often draw on this grid. The logic of the grid provided a perspective of how logically the teenager Mathematician, Christopher, looks at the world and how he tries to seek logic in a world that doesn't always seem reasonable.

The set helped to convey this detail about his characterisation and it is important that the audience understand this aspect of Christopher's character from an early point. The director's interpretation for the set design helped the audience to understand a key message about the character of Christopher - that he urgently needs to see everything as logical and orderly and that he is autistic.

The director had chosen to use a symbolic design rather than use a realistic style and this was effective. The stage floor contained trapdoors that contained key props, such as Christopher's train set, but these trapdoors became symbolic of the storage boxes within Christopher's ordered mind.

There were only a few props used in the production and the cast used boxes to create new locations, such as using the boxes to create train seats and even a toilet. The minimal use of props was effective in helping the audience remain focused upon Christopher, we did not become distracted and we could focus upon his emotions and his way of looking at the world.

When Christopher's mind seemed to explode, or he became unable to deal with the world, his anguish was superbly reflected in the mise en scène. There would be a sudden burst of lights, sounds, and projections of prime numbers to convey the thought processes within Christopher's mind to convey this to the audience. Not only would this shock the audience, but it would help us to empathise with how disorientating it could be for an autistic person who is trying to make sense of the world around them. Through the director's bold and original ideas in stage design, she effectively managed to capture a disorder that is so hard to understand and even harder to explain especially so for people with autism.

The walls of the set design were made to look like grids or graph paper and this was an effective interpretation because it helped to show how Christopher's mind works. He is at his most comfortable when talking about topics related to Maths or Science, or even aspects that do not need emotions to understand such as the stars or space. The lighting up of the graph paper walls at points sometimes created an effect of watching a star constellation and helped the audience to understand the way that Christopher's mind works and how he favours subjects such as Maths or Science because they don't rely upon emotions or interactions, or because they have answers and follow logic. Such displays offered the audience a glimpse into Christopher's mind and we got to see what made him happy. During such moments, the actor playing Christopher would become much more animated and run around the stage space as he spoke of them.

© OCR 2017

The director had also chosen to use digital projections to help convey different areas or ideas. For example, they used a projection of the tube tracks when Christopher is using the underground and has to climb onto the tracks when he loses his pet rat. This was a clever use of floor space.

The projections were also used to convey detailed maths formulas or sums and they were both functional in conveying locations, but also inventive in the way they managed to capture the workings of Christopher's brains. They also helped to make an otherwise empty set interesting and exciting and hold our attention.

The director had clearly tried to use an ensemble acting approach in this production and it worked well. Because the play contains several characters, we saw a small cast of actors swapping roles and working together. It required quick and versatile acting and their quick and often stylised movements was very effective in helping to show Christopher views and remembers events in a chaotic and hazy manner.

Level 4

Commentary

A succinct and accomplished analysis of the production exploring a range of theatrical elements including set, props, staging, use of projections and acting. There is a confident knowledge and understanding of the style of the production, the aim of its theatricality and the central character. There is evaluation and justification of the theatrical elements seen in a well-written focused exploration.

Improvements

Improvements would centre around a wider range of critical analysis and evaluation of all artistic decisions.

© OCR 2017

The small print

We'd like to know your view on the resources we produce. By clicking on the 'Like' or 'Dislike' button you can help us to ensure that our resources work for you. When the email template pops up please add additional comments if you wish and then just click 'Send'. Thank you.

Whether you already offer OCR qualifications, are new to OCR, or are considering switching from your current provider/awarding organisation, you can request more information by completing the Expression of Interest form which can be found here: www.ocr.org.uk/expression-of-interest

OCR Resources: *the small print*
OCR's resources are provided to support the delivery of OCR qualifications, but in no way constitute an endorsed teaching method that is required by OCR. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the content, OCR cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions within these resources. We update our resources on a regular basis, so please check the OCR website to ensure you have the most up to date version.

This resource may be freely copied and distributed, as long as the OCR logo and this small print remain intact and OCR is acknowledged as the originator of this work.

OCR acknowledges the use of the following content:
Square down and Square up: alexwhite/Shutterstock.com

Please get in touch if you want to discuss the accessibility of resources we offer to support delivery of our qualifications: resources.feedback@ocr.org.uk

Looking for a resource?

There is now a quick and easy search tool to help find **free** resources for your qualification:

www.ocr.org.uk/i-want-to/find-resources/

www.ocr.org.uk/alevelreform

OCR Customer Contact Centre

General qualifications

Telephone 01223 553998
Facsimile 01223 552627
Email general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

OCR is part of Cambridge Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge. *For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored.*

© **OCR 2017** Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England. Registered office 1 Hills Road, Cambridge CB1 2EU. Registered company number 3484466. OCR is an exempt charity.

Cambridge Assessment

LLOYD'S REGISTER · LRQA
ISO 9001
UKAS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS
001