

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

DRAMA AND THEATRE

H459

For first teaching in 2016

H459/31 Summer 2019 series

Version 1

Contents

Introduction3

Paper 31 series overview4

Section A overview.....6

 Question 19

 Question 211

 Question 312


 Question 414

 Question 515

 Question 617

Section B overview.....18

 Question 721




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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates. The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report. A full copy of the question paper can be downloaded from OCR.

Paper 31 series overview

'Analysing performance' (Component 31) is an examined component consisting of three extended response essay questions which are to be completed within two hours and fifteen minutes. The component is worth 20% of the qualification.

The following assessment objectives are covered by Component 31:

- AO3 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed.
- AO4 Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others.

There is an expectation that candidates can construct an argument using the questions given, structure an essay which addresses the argument in a coherent manner and analyse and evaluate performance detail.

Most candidates are able to structure their written work using paragraphs and there is evidence of candidates using introductions and conclusions in their work.

It is expected that spelling, use of subject terminology, punctuation, grammar and handwriting should not obscure the argument and evidence used within an essay.

In some instances examiners report that handwriting, spelling and punctuation did affect their ability to read and understand the work and the argument and details being presented. The standard of punctuation, grammar, spelling being seen is therefore an issue which centres need to address.

Many candidates need further support in writing correctly at GCE Level. Essays were seen where there were no paragraphs, where candidates began sentences with 'and' or 'because', where there were no paragraphs and no structure to the work.

A larger number of candidates did this year took advantage of the opportunity to present their work as a word-processed document and centres are reminded that special arrangements for candidates where this is deemed necessary can be made with the exams officer within the centre itself.

Key point call out

Centres should make sure that candidates are given the support and guidance required in order to use subject terminology with accuracy and to improve on standards of skills such as spelling, grammar, punctuation and presentation

There are two sections within Component 31: Section A and Section B both marked out of 30 totalling 60 marks for the component and making 20% of the total qualification.

Section A

The candidates have studied two texts on one theme (as outlined on page 17 of the specification) and will answer two essay questions. This year there were no examples of candidates answering on texts that were not on the specification or using the wrong questions for the texts and theme they had studied.

Candidates are expected to have studied the opening ten minutes of each text chosen and at least three additional scenes from across the text. Centres are reminded that this is the minimum requirement and that this might not always give the candidate sufficient knowledge and understanding to answer the questions within the exam. It is more beneficial for candidates to have a knowledge and understanding of the whole text.

There were no infringements of the rubric this year but centres are reminded that none of the set texts in this component can be performed for assessment in the 'Exploring and performing texts' or the 'Practitioners in practice' components and candidates are not permitted to have access to the text in the examination.

Section B

Candidates are required to have seen a live theatre performance. Details on the performances which can be analysed and evaluated for this component can be found on page 62 of the specification.

Candidates must watch this performance during the course of their A Level study.

At the start of their answer they must state the name of the performance, the venue, and the date (month and year) the performance was seen.

To do well across both Section A and Section B of the paper candidates need to:

- understand the question and answer the question given
- discuss the work in performance in detail.

Candidates who wrote clear structured essays which talked about what would actually happen or had happened on stage in performance did well.

However there were a number of examples of candidates who were clearly able to write effectively and had a very good detailed understanding of the work and produced very effective analytical essays which did not meet the criteria within the marking grid of this paper. This is because the analysis did not lead into sufficient performance detail and in some examples no performance detail at all.

Section A overview

The most popular texts as seen by examiners this year have remained consistent with last year, with candidates answering using King Lear, Frankenstein, Othello, Hamlet, Live Like Pigs and A Day In The Death Of Joe Egg. Less popular were Love Of A Nightingale and O What A Lovely War with very few if any candidates using Caligula this series.

Candidates need to engage, understand and enjoy the text they are studying. Candidates write creatively and perceptively about scripts which they have enjoyed reading and can see themselves directing the work on stage as a live performance. This is the role which the candidate needs to place themselves in when writing about the scripts. Ensuring that candidates engage with the scripts chosen and the theme is a priority.

It has already been discussed that candidates do well when they understand the question and when they construct an argument for that question – plan what they are going to do and have some structure to the work.

This does not require a lengthy introduction to the text, its history or the background of the playwright or performance of the work. This is not a requirement of within the criteria of the marking grid.

This information may impact on the performance of the work and therefore might be discussed in brief during the essay to help explain, justify or describe performance detail – this would make the information rewardable.

However a long introduction as given in Exemplar 1 is not rewardable. It is recommended that candidates explain their understanding and approach to the question and keep the opening to the essay to two or three sentences at the most. Time spent on the main part of the essay is the most important thing within these extended pieces of writing.

Exemplar 1 shows an introduction which includes knowledge of the play and its context but which does not address the question being answered and in fact seems to start to answer a question about political messages within the play rather than Question 4 which it was trying to focus on.

Key point call out

- Candidates should see themselves in the role of director and must be encouraged to make decisions in detail with regards to the text studied.
- Candidates should focus on answering the question rather than writing lengthy introductions or conclusions to their work.

Exemplar 1

The 'Caucasian Chalk Circle' was written in exile in the United States during the Second World War.

In 'The Caucasian Chalk Circle' the singer narrates who acts as a narrator with two ^{different} ~~contrasting~~ yet connecting stories which reflect back on a realistic prologue set in Soviet Georgia. Brecht subverted an Ancient Chinese story into a farable supporting that resources should go to those the best who make use out of them. The power of an unruly judge Azdak gives natural justice, Gvisha gets to keep a child she loves even though she isn't the biological mother. The 'Caucasian Chalk Circle' was written in 1944 by Brecht and set in post-World War Two Georgia. ~~It~~ The play was first performed by Berliner Ensemble in 1954. The 'Caucasian Chalk Circle' raises many themes throughout the play such as, communism, love, greed, power and status. The play was written with ~~intentions~~

Many political messages questioning what post world war would look like and if the post would ever get justice...

In Exemplar 1, while clearly the candidate has knowledge to share, there is no rewardable material in terms of the question.

Candidates do well when they focus on performance detail and not what happens in rehearsal however if rehearsal techniques have a direct impact on the performance detail then it might be relevant to discuss in brief rehearsal work. Centres should note that none of the questions posed require discussion of rehearsal techniques, the criteria within the marking grid does not refer to rehearsal in any way. Some candidates were still writing only about what they would do in rehearsals and made no attempt to feed this work into the final performance.

In Exemplar 1, the candidate has made significant reference to Brecht, as with rehearsal work; if this has an impact on what happens on stage then it is relevant but for most candidates it became an essay on the practitioner and not on how they would present the work on stage. Reference to a practitioner might be useful to explain, justify an idea for performance but there is no credit for exploration of the practitioner in this part of the qualification.

Candidates need to describe in detail how something would appear in performance. They need to clearly state the point they are making, describe what they would like to do and create a detailed picture in the mind of the examiner.

Examiners reported seeing a number of well written essays which were able to analyse the text in detail but which gave no reference to how it would be done in performance – and this is what is required by the criteria within the marking grid. Exemplar 2, while a valid point is being made in the extract which would be credited, the answer remains basic against the marking grid as there is no development of the point in terms of how it was done within the performance

Exemplar 2

The actor used stylistic non-naturalistic movement to show a complete change in character, this successfully showed entrapment through the difference in physicality showing how Jekyll is trapped in the stereotype of a typical Victorian gentleman. Dr Jekyll's deteriorating

Key point call out

- Candidates should only refer to rehearsal techniques if the technique supports the performance detail.
- Reference to practitioners is only relevant and rewardable if their ideas and work has a direct impact on the performance detail.

Question 1**Theme 1: Conflict**

Hamlet – William Shakespeare
Black Watch – Gregory Burke
Necessary Targets – Eve Ensler
The Long and the Short and the Tall – Willis Hall
Oh What a Lovely War – Joan Littlewood

Refer to **one** performance text in your answer to each question. Refer to a **different** performance text for each question.

- 1 As a director, how would you establish conflict between **two** characters in the opening scenes of the performance text you have studied?

Justify your ideas with examples from **the opening scenes** from the performance text you have chosen for this question. **[15]**

This is a straightforward question which asks the candidate to discuss two characters between which there is conflict. This should be from the opening scenes of each text.

As stated within the specification, the opening scenes are considered to be the first ten minutes of the text.

A number of candidates discussed only one character or tended to focus on one character rather than two. This resulted in answers which were unbalanced and suggested that the candidates' knowledge of the play was rather one dimensional and that in preparation for the exam only one character had been discussed in depth.

While marks are not taken away, clearly an unbalanced answer is going to be self-penalising as the question clearly expects a discussion to include two characters.

Equally some candidates discussed conflict with more than two characters. For example, some essays on Hamlet took him logically on a journey through the play and discussed his conflict with the ghost, Ophelia, Gertrude, Claudius and finally Laertes. Clearly this moves away from the opening scenes of the play.

The idea behind limiting the question to the opening scenes or three scenes of the play, is to encourage candidates to discuss specific moments in depth and not to tackle the whole play within the time limits of the exam. It appears that this is not understood by some candidates and centres should make sure that candidates are aware that a detailed discussion of specific moments within the play is what is required.

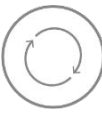
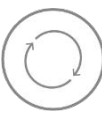
Candidates who stuck to the opening scenes tended to give a more specific detailed picture of what they wanted to see on stage during a performance of the piece. There is no requirement to discuss the whole text, although ideas must work within the context of the piece as a whole. The exam questions are designed to encourage discussion of focused moments on stage.

Candidates who scored highly on this question were able to describe and explain how the conflict would manifest itself on stage in the use of a range of specific performance techniques. In this question this could have been a discussion of both technical and acting skills.

However what candidates must do is to describe in depth and detail the skill to be used and how it is to be used. It is not sufficient to say that a red light will be used or voice will be used to show conflict. While they are both true statements, they are also basic in the knowledge which they show and might sit within Level 2 on the marking grid for A03.

A candidate must then discuss how the red light is used, its direction, intensity, the timing of its use, its source and equally in terms of voice, the pace, the tone, the volume, the dynamic, the intonation and the pitch. If candidates were able to do this with clarity and in relation the text and the question – in other words to show conflict then the answer would move towards a more confident answer which might sit within Level 4 of the marking grid.

To move towards a more highly developed interpretation, candidates would discuss perhaps how the vocal dynamics used would impact on the body language, facial expression, movement, position on stage and gestures. This would reflect more of the criteria within Level 5 of the marking grid.

	<p>AfL</p>	<p>When teaching candidates to interpret and plan questions under timed conditions it would be useful to make sure that they are sticking to the scenes specified by the question but even more importantly that they are considering the performance of the work in detail.</p>
	<p>AfL</p>	<p>When working with candidates in preparation for this work – candidates must be encouraged at all times to consider the picture they are painting for the examiner.</p> <p>A centre, when marking work, should ask themselves can they see clearly what the candidate is trying to achieve on stage and will it work effectively as theatrical performance.</p>

Key point call out

- Candidates should only explore the scenes required by the question.
- Candidates must discuss specific, focused moments within the texts in performance in detail.

Question 2

- 2 As an actor, how would you vary vocal pitch and emphasis to highlight moments of conflict experienced by the character you are playing?

Justify your ideas with examples from **at least three scenes** from the performance text you have chosen for this question. **[15]**

The requirement within this question is that candidates discuss at least three scenes. There are no limitations on what scenes or the length of the scenes but again the idea is to try to focus what is being said and to encourage a detailed approach.

The question focuses on voice and unfortunately there were some examples where having answered Question 1 and discussed voice within that essay, candidates chose to repeat what they had already explored in Question 1 for Question 2. This is viewed as repetition and where there was no development of that discussion, it is impossible to credit the candidate twice. Again this is self-penalising rather than anything else.

The focus here is on voice and candidates who were able to consider the nuances of vocal technique were able to answer effectively.

However, many answers discussed volume and pace but little else in terms of voice. Some then went on to discuss facial expression or movement which is not the focus of the question and therefore cannot be credited.

The question is very focused and specifically requires candidates to discuss vocal pitch and emphasis.

Where candidates did not understand that to achieve emphasis, a range of vocal techniques are required, such as the use of diction, volume, pace, tone and dynamics – answers tended to be simplistic with discussion of the use of volume and high or low pitch.

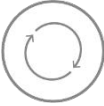
These answers were repetitive, reflected limited understanding of the vocal skills of an actor and remained within the basic range in Level 2 of the marking grid for A03.

Some candidates explored the use of articulation and were able to discuss the use of explosives, the use of accents and discussed specific moments even specific sentences describing how and why the actor might speak in certain ways within that sentence to reflect their feelings, motivations, emotions which related specifically to conflict within a specific moment within the play.

This more in-depth approach is obviously rewarded higher up the marking criteria with criteria such as confident and well-developed discussion which is reflective of Level 4 or 5 of the marking grid.

Key point call out

Throughout the two year delivery of the course, candidates should be taught how to interpret questions, plan efficiently and write under timed conditions.

	AfL	<p>To study for this qualification – there is no requirement to have completed GCSE Drama although clearly students who have done have more of an in-depth understanding of performance technique and theatrical skills.</p> <p>They are often more able to discuss and break down the skills they are using and explore all the elements of a skill such as vocal technique, body language, facial expression.</p> <p>Often candidates do not have the range of vocabulary or knowledge of the elements within a skill to discuss these skills in depth and there is a need to workshop and teach candidates how to break down the skills and how to explore them in greater depth. This needs to be part of the candidates' preparation for this component throughout the two year course.</p>
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Question 3

Theme 2: Family Dynamics

King Lear – William Shakespeare
A Day in the Death of Joe Egg – Peter Nichols
Caucasian Chalk Circle – Bertolt Brecht
House of Bernarda Alba – Federico García Lorca
Live Like Pigs – John Arden

Refer to **one** performance text in your answer to each question. Refer to a **different** performance text for each question.

- 3 Explore how the use of technical design elements within a design concept could establish key aspects of family dynamics in the opening scenes of the performance text you have studied.

Justify your ideas with examples from **the opening scenes** from the performance text you have chosen for this question. **[15]**

There are a number of elements to this question and this is a good example of how preparing candidates to interpret and deal with questions in preparation for the exam will be helpful to them.

Fundamentally the question is asking candidates to discuss their ideas for technical design for their chosen script. In studying the text, it is relevant therefore to have asked candidates to have committed themselves to a design concept – an approach that they would take as a director of the script in terms of design.

For example this might mean deciding whether to set *King Lear* in a castle of its original time period or whether to update it to a more modern environment. This would be an example of an overall design concept within which the candidate then discusses the design for the opening scenes in terms of how it reflects the family dynamics of the text. This design concept could be discussed in this way in a short introduction.

What is not asked for is a detailed discussion of the whole design for the play. The focus is on technical design within the opening scenes so this would be theatrical elements of lighting, sound, music, special effects and might also include technical elements within the set design or costume design if appropriate.

Candidates did well on this question if they were able to describe what they want on stage in performance, explain it clearly and justify in detail why they want this in terms of how it reflects the family dynamics.

There were some creative ideas surrounding the use of live portraits of King Lear's daughters which changed as the family dynamics were revealed within the performance and some reference to moving stages to reflect changes in status. All ideas are accepted if clear, justified and engage with the idea of family dynamics.

Most candidates seemed to understand in depth family dynamics within the text although some struggled with *Caucasian Chalk Circle* where it is more difficult to identify family dynamics within the opening scenes. Examiners accepted that the relationship between the farming communities in the opening of the script could be seen as family dynamics. Some candidates were able to discuss the relationship between Natella and her husband, the Duke and his brother, their son and of course Grusha in terms of technical aspects of lighting, costume and use of stage space.

Candidates often appear to struggle with putting the right text with the right question to allow themselves the chance to develop an effective argument. This is something that should be practised. This question lent itself well to candidates who chose to discuss *King Lear*, *A Day In The Death Of Joe Egg*, *Live Like Pigs* and to some extent *House of Bernarda Alba*. However less effective essays were produced when trying to address the question in terms of *Caucasian Chalk Circle*.

Some candidates did not focus on the technical aspects of the question or focus on the design elements and not the technical design elements.

It is clear to all examiners that there is need for candidates to work on their interpretation of the question throughout the course in order to be ready to produce essays which focus on the elements required.


Again opening scenes were often stretched by candidates that did not discuss the performance work in detail. Where candidates discussed the technical use of different design elements in more depth, in the amount of time given within the exam, they tended to focus on one or two scenes.

So for some this meant Bri's return home in *A Day in The Death Of Joe Egg* or the entrance of Bernarda in *The House of Bernarda Alba*.

As with all questions, candidates should be encouraged to discuss specific moments in depth and detail to produce work which is highly developed and engages with the higher levels of the marking grid.

Key point call out

- Candidates need to be taught how to interpret questions and how to identify what the question requires in terms of performance detail.
- When describing performance work, the candidate must work to create a detailed picture for the examiner of specific moments within the text.

	AfL	While preparing candidates to interpret questions it is also going to be helpful to guide candidates in choosing the right question for the best text.
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Question 4

- 4 Discuss how an actor might use physicality to show how the character he or she is playing engages in family relationships.

Justify your ideas with examples from **at least three scenes** from the performance text you have chosen for this question. **[15]**

This was a popular question across those candidates who had studied *A Day In The Death Of Joe Egg*, *The House of Bernarda Alba* and *King Lear* and some strong answers were produced which explored specific scenes in detail.

These candidates realised that physicality covers a range of performance techniques and skills including facial expression, body language, movement, gesture, posture and use of the stage space (the use of eyes and eye contact was also credited).

As discussed in relation to Question 2, candidates who are well prepared are able to discuss the full range of physical techniques and skills.

Some candidates discussed more than one character so for example candidates explored both Bri and Sheila and one even went on to discuss Grace and Joe. The requirement is only for one with the idea being that a character is to be discussed in depth and detail across at least three scenes.

Candidates appear to want to make things more difficult for themselves by taking on too much even when the question narrows down the argument for them. Again this is something which can be discussed when exploring how to interpret questions and this should be built into the course design within each centre.

The question is straightforward and on the whole candidates appeared to understand the question, chose appropriate texts and characters to explore while relating this to the family dynamic.

There was in general a good understanding of the family dynamics in all texts except for *Caucasian Chalk Circle* where the idea of a family is less obvious.

Key point call out

Candidates should be taught how to interpret questions and how to identify the key elements of a question.

Question 5

Theme 3: Heroes and Villains

Othello – William Shakespeare

Caligula – Albert Camus

Frankenstein – Nick Dear

The Love of the Nightingale – Timberlake Wertenbaker

Amadeus – Peter Shaffer

Refer to **one** performance text in your answer to each question. Refer to a **different** performance text for each question.

- 5 Identify in the performance text you have studied where the director could emphasise the villainous characteristics of **two** characters.

Justify your ideas with examples from **at least three scenes** from the performance text you have chosen for this question. [15]

This question is clear and should be uncomplicated asking for an understanding of the characters within the plays studied and an ability to discuss in detail how characters are conveyed within performance in the theatre.

The focus is clearly on the villainous quality of two characters.

Some candidates did not do well on this question simply because they only explored one character. This is not going to get a candidate more than halfway in the marking grid as they have actually only completed half of the question.

There were examples of work which did this and although they were well written answers and dealt with the villainy of one character, some in detail - immediately the answer given is self-penalising and was not credited as being above competent within the marking grid.

Other candidates did not focus sufficiently on the question being asked. Some candidates decided to discuss a slightly different question and turned the question into an argument as to whether characters should be seen as a villain or as a hero.

Some candidates appear to have a prepared introduction to the villain versus hero argument and used this without any reference to the question being asked. Some then went on to answer the real question and tried to twist their introduction to fit the real question with some level of success.

Centres are reminded that candidates who have prepared answers and commit them to memory do not do particularly well and centres are reminded that the same question will not come up again on the paper. Example questions and sample material are just that and are not there to provide candidates with a focus for future papers.

Candidates also struggled with finding two characters who were villains. This is one interpretation of the question however the character may not be a villain but may have some qualities which are villainous. For example Othello is not a villain but at the end of the play has committed villainous acts.

Candidates were able to argue effectively that Iago and Othello or even Iago and Roderigo were villains, some argued that Tereus and Philomele were and that Victor Frankenstein and his creature both displayed villainous qualities.

Less effective were the arguments regarding Salieri and Mozart in Amadeus where Mozart's villainy lay, on the whole, within the childish qualities shown by Mozart.

Again this is arguably down to choosing the right text to use for the right question which is something which needs practising throughout the course.

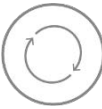

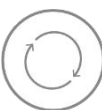
Some candidates write best about work/scenes which they appear to have explored in class. Examiners note that some essays include the same ideas which are influenced from either a production seen or from class work. This is appropriate and gives the candidates a starting point to discuss the work but many then struggle to explore more scenes for themselves.

It would seem that the more practical exploration of the work which the candidates can be involved in the more effectively they write about performance detail.

With questions such as Question 5 which ask about performance of a character, if a candidate writes that the character should use body language which shows they are a villain – then the answer will remain basic and might be placed within Level 2 on the marking grid.

If they describe that body language then the answer may be more competent. If the answer discusses a range of performance skills used to show the villainy within specific moments then the answer becomes more confident and well developed.

It is the detail and the thought behind the original point which moves the candidates work into the different levels of the marking criteria.

	<p>AfL</p>	<p>It seems that there is a need for candidates to complete more practice essays throughout the course in order to be ready to answer the questions in the exam. If this error had been made within an essay during the course then the candidate would be aware that a mark of above 7 would not be possible and that they are jeopardising their achievement within the qualification.</p>
	<p>AfL</p>	<p>While the course structure at a centre is down to the centre to decide on, it might be recommended that this component of the qualification is run as a long component throughout the course in order to make sure that candidates have enough practice interpreting questions and writing on the texts before sitting the exam.</p>
	<p>AfL</p>	<p>With this in mind it would appear that centring teaching around an essay question when working practically would be an appropriate strategy to use.</p> <p>Asking candidates to relate their practical work to the essay they are being asked to write in order to get them to produce essays which reflect more creative exploration which fits the question being asked.</p> <p>Teachers should follow up this practical work by setting the essay perhaps under timed conditions.</p>

Key point call out

- Candidates must answer the question being asked on the question paper which the candidate is sitting.
- When describing performance work, the candidate must work to create a detailed picture for the examiner of specific moments within the text.

Question 6

- 6 Discuss how an actor playing a character with heroic qualities could demonstrate the changing relationship with another character or characters in the performance text you have studied.

Justify your ideas with examples from **the opening scenes** from the performance text you have chosen for this question. **[15]**

Candidates who were able to identify the heroic characteristics of a role and discuss their interaction with another character did well within this question.

However some candidates found the question complex.

Some made it more complicated by discussing the heroic side to more than one character for example both Victor Frankenstein and the creature – and then talked about the relationship between the two.

There are several parts to the question – and candidates are asked to discuss not only the relationship but how that relationship changes.

Many essays seen discussed how the creature's relationship with Victor changes when they first meet. Some considered how the creature's relationship with humans changed throughout the play looking at how the creature was humble and heroic until being mistreated by those around him. Some candidates discussed how the heroic soldier of Othello changed and how this affected his relationships with Iago and Desdemona.

Examiners saw and accepted a range of valid arguments in terms of the question, the characters chosen to discuss and what would be perceived as heroic qualities.

The focus as always was on how the heroic qualities and the relationships would appear in performance and the level of detail given to this discussion rather than analysing the character and the relationships seen.

Therefore for candidates where the argument was not perhaps as clear or as focused on the question as it might have been but described, explained and justified exactly what would be seen on stage, may have produced a more competent essay.

Some essays covered more than the opening scenes and again as with other questions – this often hindered the focus and level of performance detail with which the essay was tackled.

Key point call out

When describing performance work, the candidate must work to create a detailed picture for the examiner of specific moments within the text. To do this candidates should only explore the scenes required by the question.

Section B overview

In Section B candidates are required to have seen a live theatre performance. (See overall summary for further details).

A range of performances were seen including *Wise Children*, *Things I Know To Be True*, *Miss Saigon*, *The Lovely Bones*, *War Horse*, *Woman In Black*, *Frankenstein* and *King Lear*.

Some candidates chose to write about a production of the text which they have studied for Section A. While there are no restrictions with regard to this in the specification or on the paper – it is not advisable as it might lead candidates into repetition.

Key point call out

It is recommended that candidates answer on a performance of a text which is not one of their chosen texts for Section A.

It is understandable that centres would take students to see a production of the text they are studying but it is not helpful in the development of candidates' knowledge and understanding of theatrical conventions and techniques if this is the only performance they have seen.

With this in mind, it is a requirement that candidates state when and where they saw the production they are talking about. Most candidates did do this within a short introduction – again candidates who gave a long introduction run the risk of wasting time and should be encouraged to state what they saw, when and where and to then refer to the question which in this case was asking the candidate to discuss the messages of the play.

A candidate must think in terms of creating the picture of the performance for the examiner in detail in order to reflect work which is excellent and consistently detailed with a highly developed level of understanding.

Key point call out

When describing performance work, the candidate must work to create a detailed picture for the examiner of specific moments within the text.

In the example below, you can see that the candidate has an understanding of the text and the scene but has not developed their work further and has given no details as to how the ideas will translate into performance work.

Exemplar 3

For example: When Brian addresses the line 'Shall I get my gloves on' then he is trying to have some alone time with Sheila. However, Sheila responds with an excuse to avoid to do so; 'Joe has to be fed; ballet exercised'. Using Lecocq's techniques allows the actor to explore how they can contrast the characters two different states; Brian being child like and jolly and Sheila feeling stressed because she has so much to prepare for Joe which ~~she~~^{Brian} isn't even considering. Using this technique will allow the character of Sheila to explore how she can use body language to highlight ~~how~~ how ~~she~~ she can't invest time into her marriage because all her time is interested into Joe.

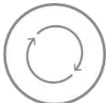
It is recommended that candidates need further guidance on how to interpret and understand questions within an exam context. Using past papers and sample questions which are available on the website, candidates need to learn how to access questions and how to develop a suitable argument.

It is clear that some centres are referring to last year's paper and examples on the website but what candidates must not do, and there were some examples of this, is use a past question which they have obviously worked on in class and rewrite that essay within the exam.

Examiners reported reading a few answers where the candidate had used a previous question and answered that question instead of the one on this paper - or they had tried to make the answer they already knew fit the question being posed this year.

There is also a need to work on planning under timed conditions so that time is not wasted within the exam. There were examples where some candidates wrote out page length plans rather than a simple plan which would guide the structure of the essay and its content. For some candidates, there is a need to work on the use of time within an exam situation. There were several examples of scripts where candidates had either not finished or even begun an answer and this is probably down to their misuse of time. Students should be taught how to interpret questions, plan efficiently and write under timed conditions.

Candidates need to be allowed time to develop the skills required to write an effective and clear essay in order for their ideas to come across clearly and effectively and this should be part of an ongoing teaching and learning process across the two year course.

	AfL	<p>Candidates must see a range of work in live performance to make sure that they have a full understanding of how theatrical conventions and techniques work on the stage and for a live audience to convey meaning.</p>
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Key point call out

Throughout the two year delivery of the course, candidates should be taught how to interpret questions, plan efficiently and write under timed conditions.

Question 7

- 7* Analyse how successfully the director communicated the message of the play in the live performance you have seen.

At the start of your answer state the name, venue and date (month and year) of the live performance you have seen. **[30]**

This question requires the candidate to describe, explain and justify the details of a live performance which they have seen.

Those candidates who were able to recall the detail of a performance within specific moments produced stronger work. These tended to be productions seen recently.

The question required the candidate to identify the messages within the play. The interpretation of what was to be seen as a message was kept open by examiner's and candidates saw the message as the themes, the atmosphere, the emotion, the location, the character, the relationships seen – all were accepted as the message within the play.

What was vital was that the candidate needed to identify the point behind what they were explaining and not just to describe what they saw but to identify the message which the audience was expected to take from what they were seeing. This is the fundamental idea within the criteria within the marking grid at all levels which expects candidates to analyse the creative and artistic choices made by a director to convey meaning to an audience.

Candidates who clearly stated what they felt was the message and then described what happened on stage to convey that message in detail so that the examiner could picture that specific moment in their mind did well. The extract of work given in Exemplar 4 creates that picture for the examiner. There is room for further development – there are more skills used in the performance and creation of that moment which could be described in detail by the candidate but it is a confident paragraph when considered against the criteria of the marking grid for A04.

Some candidates clearly understood the question and the meaning but were unable to give the performance detail of what they saw on stage in sufficient depth to move beyond basic.

Key point call out

- Candidates who are discussing a performance which they have seen recently recall the detail necessary to do well in this essay.
- Equally those candidates who have seen a range of work throughout their course will do better because they have more experience and understanding of theatrical conventions and techniques within live performance.


Exemplar 4

The costumes used also effectively created the message of entrapment within society through the accuracy. The costumes used were ~~accurate~~ accurate to the Victorian era and therefore transported the audience to the repressive, entrapped Victorian society. The girls were

In Exemplar 4, the point regarding the message is effective but there is no development of the point and no detail of the costume which could be explored in terms of design, material, texture, colour, quality and how the costume affects the performer.

It is clear that candidates must be encouraged to make notes when they see a production before the performance starts, during the interval and after the performance and then encouraged to discuss the show in depth once back at the centre. Setting an essay on the performance soon after the visit is also considered vital preparation for the exam.

Again preparation for Section B should be done throughout the course and not simply as part of preparation for an exam

	<p>AfL</p>	<p>Students must be encouraged to make notes during the live performance visit and after. In-depth discussions in class help candidates clarify performance detail and understanding.</p> <p>The completion of practice essays have a significant impact on candidates understanding of what they need to do. Essays must be marked against the marking criteria which candidates should have an understanding of.</p>
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Key point call out

Throughout the two year delivery of the course, candidates should be taught how to interpret questions, plan efficiently and write under timed conditions.

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