

DRAMA

Paper 0411/11
Written Examination

Key messages

- Candidates are required to answer all questions in **Section A**, one question in **Section B** and one in **Section C**.
- Candidates should read all the questions very carefully to ensure that they fully understand what is being asked, particularly where there is more than one element to the question.
- Questions in **Section B** are on the set text and questions in **Section C** are based on the devised piece.
- Candidates need to consider carefully which question to answer in **Sections B** and **C**, based on their own understanding and technical knowledge.
- Candidates are urged to use the number of marks available as a guide to how much detail is needed in the answer. Many candidates waste valuable time by providing extended answers to questions that are worth only 2 or 3 marks. Candidates may use bullet points where appropriate to respond to questions in **Section A**.
- Centres should provide opportunities for candidates to engage practically with the stimuli in the pre-release material to enable candidates to access the full range of marks for questions in the Written Examination.
- Narrative approaches to answering questions must be avoided.
- Candidates should be familiar with the dramatic and technical terms in current use. An extensive (but not exhaustive) glossary is provided in the syllabus to assist in the identification of key terms.

General comments

The revised specification wherein candidates need only focus on one of the stimuli has obviously had a positive effect and many candidates showed improved understanding of the process whereby drama is created. Candidates showed a great appreciation of the extract from *The Odd Couple* and many communicated a good grasp of the characteristics of farce. There is evidence of a growing awareness of how the elements of drama can be applied effectively to enhance performance and the understanding and use of appropriate technical language is encouraging.

An improvement was clearly evident in responses to the questions in **Section A**. A few candidates answered with bullet point comments; these not only save valuable time but also allow for succinct and focused responses. Some candidates wrote far too much, particularly in answer to questions worth 2 or 3 marks. Equally, some responses on the devised work included a detailed synopsis of the piece before attempting to answer the question. Whilst brief, explicit references to the content of the piece are helpful to Examiners, candidates should avoid long and detailed narratives.

With so many marks available in **Sections B** and **C**, it is important that candidates choose a question which allows them to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Each year it appears that a number of candidates fail to choose the question for which they are best prepared.

The approach to devised material seems to have improved now that the focus is on a single piece of work. Most candidates had engaged practically with the stimuli in the pre-release material and the results proved to be more imaginative than in previous sessions, presumably because candidates had more time to devote to a single project.

Evaluative comment, generally required in responses relating to the devised piece, was rather simplistic and superficial in some cases. Candidates need to consider carefully the reactions of their audience any feedback that may have been given either during the rehearsal or performance process. Where performances had the intended impact on their audience, candidates should be able to communicate clearly the difference between what was expected and the actual outcome. This is particularly the case where, as in **Question 8** candidates are asked to discuss possible improvements to an aspect of their performance.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Questions 1–6 *The Odd Couple*

Question 1

Virtually every candidate managed to score both marks. The key facial expression being sought was one of pain or anguish. There were a few candidates offering alternatives to this and, where these suggestions were adequately justified, full marks were awarded.

Question 2

The focus of this question was vocal pitch and where an actor might vary it, with an appropriate justification for this. A very significant number of candidates either misread or did not understand the question, focussing instead on either vocal tone or volume. In such cases, candidates did not address the question and could not score any marks. Pitch, tone and volume are different elements of voice technique and their application to any given moment in a text does not necessarily produce the same effect. Centres are urged to ensure that candidates are familiar with the full range of vocal qualities and that they can distinguish between them.

Question 3

Examiners were looking for answers that demonstrated how appropriate physicality through body language can communicate meaning on stage. The majority of candidates answered this question effectively but in a significant number of cases, candidates focused their answers on facial expression alone. Centres would be advised to ensure that candidates understand body language to encompass a range of physical expressions: postural, gestural and facial.

Many candidates offered a long and detailed response with a variety of suggestions for physicality including facial expression with a range of detailed comments to support their answers. The question was worth three marks and therefore one valid suggestion for each of the three marks was all that was required.

Question 4

This question was almost universally answered well, with candidates scoring the full four marks. Virtually every candidate could identify the key misunderstandings and even those that elected to highlight a less obvious misunderstanding made valid suggestions about how this could be conveyed to an audience and hence provided validity to the selection.

Question 5

Many candidates were able to suggest a valid piece of advice to actors playing OSCAR and FELIX, together with a valid reason why it would be effective. Some answers did not score maximum marks, either because the same piece of advice was offered to both actors or because the reason given for different pieces of advice was too similar. A number of answers went into great and unnecessary detail. A single sentence for each of the four parts to this question was sufficient to score full marks.

Question 6

Only a minority of candidates provided enough detail to meet the 4 and 5 mark bands in this question on furniture and props changes. Candidates produced widely varying approaches, but a significant number chose to focus on the characters rather than furniture and props. It would appear the reason for this was that candidates were attempting (rightly so) to concentrate on what they would want to 'convey'. Nonetheless, in so doing, they often forgot to consider the significance of the set and props changes themselves. This may have been because candidates were anxious to avoid simply reiterating the set directions that appear in the text but there is no doubt that a large body of answers got bogged down in the relationships and the back story. Though this is a valid precept for communicating intention, it needed to be backed up by specific reference to set and props changes to score the marks available.

Questions 7–8 *Devised work*

Question 7

The focus of this question was the way certain aspects of the chosen stimulus presented opportunities to create drama and how the group developed this aspect using dramatic techniques. Many candidates concerned themselves with issues of plot or storyline. Consequently they immediately presented themselves with much too broad a topic for discussion. For example, candidates who might identify the most significant aspect as 'How the heroine of our story met a range of different characters that influenced her and changed her personality' would find themselves trying to cover too many aspects in order to justify the premise. Conversely, those who made a simple choice such as 'The passing of time' could concentrate on those dramatic devices which the group employed to demonstrate time passing to an audience and would enable them to concentrate on one or two well-developed ideas, to give a detailed evaluation of how successful they were. Because of this tendency to be too broad and generalised, the majority of responses could not generate more than three marks.

Question 8

Most candidates were able to access at least one mark in this question simply by stating one instance where impact was made or a general comment on how effective the piece was. References to costume, lights and sound were given credit where appropriate. As in **Question 6**, sometimes references to the effectiveness were superficial in that a comment was provided but not substantiated.

Generally this question had a good response with many candidates able to offer suggestions as to how the intended (or unintended) impact worked out in performance.

Section B

Questions 9–11 *The Odd Couple*

Question 9

There were many examples of candidates responding with keen insight and imagination which demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the PIGEON SISTERS. There were several sophisticated responses which evidenced a mature and thorough appreciation of characterisation and the potential for the actors playing the roles to maximise their impact in performance. Issues of similarity and difference were clearly identified and the dramatic function of the duo was discussed with well-developed levels of understanding.

The characters were obviously popular, because a very high proportion of candidates opted to address this question. There were a few less effective answers which tended to focus on the more obvious features of the characters and often such responses tended to include more detail of costume and make-up, which, while not irrelevant, should be seen as an adjunct to the personalities being represented through the overall character design and representation.

Question 10

This was a question about the role of the director and allowed candidates who have an interest in this area to demonstrate their knowledge and expertise.

A relatively small number of candidates chose to answer it and in some cases they appeared to be unprepared for this type of question. Most did not recognise the need to outline the directorial concept in response to the dramatic style of the play and the creative opportunities offered by it. Some candidates produced unfocused and somewhat rambling responses which, despite identifying moments in the text which could be interpreted, found themselves becoming enmeshed with character detail and plot development, without isolating significant moments which could be played in specific ways to highlight the premise of the question.

Question 11

This question on costume design for *The Odd Couple* proved quite popular and was, for the most part, answered effectively. A significant minority of candidates tended to ignore the requirement for there to be a discussion in detail of one costume and presented an overview covering the costumes of all the characters in the extract. Most responses did attempt to consider the overall mood of the drama and the more successful answers showed an awareness of how the changes in the characters' circumstances and mood might affect their appearance. The most obvious contrasts between Scene 1 and Scene 2 were discussed in some detail. Ideas were generally appropriate, although there were some items of costume which were not appropriate for the period in which the play is set.

Section C

Questions 12–14 *Devised work*

Question 12

This was quite a popular question. A large number of candidates covered the topic effectively and most were able to present a considerable range of dramatic devices and explain how they were used to good effect in drawing the audience into the action. Many candidates were aware of practitioners and styles and they were able to incorporate these as influences in their discussion of the dramatic process. Artaudian and Brechtian method featured strongly in a number of responses.

Examiners reported that less successful answers often referred to classroom devising or development techniques as 'Conscience Alley', 'Hallway of Shame' etc. Whereas, the question requires a discussion of dramatic 'devices' used in performance i.e. narration, tableau, freeze frame, flash back etc. Those candidates who were able to discuss such devices performed more successfully in answering this question.

Question 13

This was also a popular question. It required candidates not only to describe their use of the performance space, but also to say how effective their decisions had been. Candidates could explore practical staging and performance features in the context of the space available to them.

All candidates were able to clearly refer to basic stage directions and staging positions. A surprisingly high proportion omitted to discuss the choice and effectiveness of entrances and exits, although a few did comment on the efficiency of some spatial decisions in the context of creating audience relationships and understanding. Less successful answers simply provided a narrative of the devised piece without addressing the question of space. Typical of such responses were ones which referred to using 'the whole stage'.

More successful candidates were able to complement their answer with a reference to the use of levels or the effect of lighting in highlighting areas of the performance space, but many did not expand on this to explain how their choices impacted on their purpose. Indeed, very few responses were able to offer any insight into the spatial relationships between stage, actor and set, or analyse what contribution this had made to the performance. Where there was some evaluative comment, it was typified by simplistic statements of whether it worked or not. To improve, candidates need to clearly communicate that their outcome was a result of careful planning of how the performance space could be best used towards the attainment of a specific dramatic intention. There should also be comments regarding how and why decisions had been made.

Question 14

Responses indicate that there remains some uncertainty about the notion that dramatic dialogue may possess a style. Few candidates answering this question did so with any degree of confidence and the responses were, for the most part, extremely limited. A few responses referred to the dialogue as having a 'direct' style whereas some were less specific in describing the dialogue style as 'actual'. A very few responses recognised that the dialogue would often reflect the style or genre of the performance but understanding was limited.

Candidates would be advised to identify clearly their dramatic intention and to decide what style or genre they are working in. Once these key factors are established, it should be possible to discuss dialogue in terms of features most likely to achieve the given aims. Hence, a piece that was performed as a farce may

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employ rapid-fire dialogue with quick one-liners and clever wordplay to accentuate the wit and humour of the piece.

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- Candidates should use the number of marks available as a guide to how much detail is needed in the answer. Many candidates waste valuable time by providing extended answers to questions that are worth only 2 or 3 marks. Candidates may use bullet points where appropriate to respond to questions in **Section A**.
- Centres should provide opportunities for candidates to engage practically with the stimuli in the pre-release material to enable candidates to access the full range of marks for questions in the Written Examination.
- Narrative approaches to answering questions must be avoided.
- Candidates should be familiar with the dramatic and technical terms in current use. An extensive (but not exhaustive) glossary is provided in the syllabus to assist in the identification of key terms.

General Comments

Candidates showed a great appreciation of the extract from **Rumours** and many communicated a good grasp of the characteristics of farce. There is evidence of a growing awareness of how the elements of drama can be applied effectively to enhance performance. The understanding and use of appropriate technical language was noted by Examiners.

The standard of work on the devised piece appears to have benefitted from changes to the syllabus. The approach to devising still varies considerably, but this year there appeared to be far more Centres where the devised work was innovative and creative, with far more experimentation with different styles. Brechtian approaches and physical theatre techniques were quite popular. Devised pieces of this kind tended to give candidates the chance to access the higher levels within the mark scheme. Nevertheless, it is still the case that mundane and unimaginative approaches to devising tend to lead to weak responses to questions based on the stimuli.

Most candidates write their answers in considerable detail, sometimes paying too little attention to the allocation of marks; there are still those who write more for a question carrying 4 or 5 marks than for an essay question worth 25 marks. There is also a tendency to supply far more than the number of points specified in the question. There appears to be a commendable tendency for Centres to encourage candidates to answer essay questions by writing to a plan; with an introduction establishing the main points to be addressed, a section using references to the text or piece to develop these points, a section on application or evaluation, and a conclusion.

With so many marks available in **Sections B** and **C**, it is important that candidates choose a question which allows them to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Each year it appears that a number of candidates fail to choose the question for which they are best prepared.

Evaluative comments, normally required in responses relating to the devised work, continue to be simplistic and superficial. Candidates need to consider feedback given to them during the rehearsal/devising process as well as the performance itself. Furthermore, they should be able to discuss what dramatic techniques were used to bring about the intended reaction and indeed the relative success of this.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Questions 1–6 Rumours

Question 1

Most candidates were able to offer an appropriate facial expression supported by a reason. Some candidates noticed the clear reference to pain in the given lines and used this in their answer. Other candidates showed good awareness of the events leading up to the given lines and showed good understanding of how the crash might make CLAIRE feel. Where candidates lost marks, this was due either to their choice of facial expression not being specific to the relevant events in the extract or by not responding to the question in full: offering a suggestion but not a reason, or a reason without being specific in their choice of facial expression or not offering any suggestion at all.

Many candidates offered a long and detailed response with a variety of suggestions for the facial expression and a range of comments to support their answers. The question was worth two marks and therefore one valid suggestion and one reason was all that was required to score both marks.

Question 2

Candidates showed a good understanding of breath control and how this might be used to affect drama. Responses to this question showed that, generally, candidates understood the context of this particular extract and many noticed the stage direction '*quickly without stopping*'. The given lines for this question contain an 88-word speech and ERNEST is clearly in pain, having burned his fingers. Many candidates used LEN's comment ('*I can't believe he's in pain and said all of that without missing a word*') as means to explain their answer. Breath control would require a good deal of consideration by the actor, including decisions as to where to breathe and how to control the voice. Any reference to this, which showed understanding of the context of the extract, was given credit.

Many candidates offered a long and detailed response with a variety of suggestions for how the actor might use breath control and a range of comments to support their answers. The question was worth two marks and therefore one valid suggestion and one reason was all that was required to score both marks.

Question 3

Most candidates were able to show a thorough understanding of body language recognising that this is non-verbal communication and were able to give three suggestions. In many cases, candidates offered more than three suggestions and/or provided comprehensive descriptions of the reasoning behind their choices, which was not required. Some offered vocal suggestions as to how particular lines might have been spoken; no marks were available for this. A few candidates simply offered a number of suggested movements that were vague and would not create dramatic impact: no credit was given for this.

The best responses were those that were succinct in the form of three bullet points which clearly identified the candidates' intentions.

Question 4

Generally, this question had a good response with many candidates recognising the potential for farce and showed great understanding of events within the given lines. Quite a lot of candidates, however, got confused about which characters were involved.

Many candidates offered a good response with the most popular misunderstandings identified being the confusion caused by a number of phone calls involving Dr Dudley, which offered a range of opportunities. The best responses were those that were succinct in the form of four bullet points, which clearly explained two misunderstandings and two suggestions as to how drama might be created to communicate these events.

Some candidates simply gave line references as a substitute for giving a description of what the misunderstanding was, thus there could be no certainty that the misunderstanding had been correctly

identified although some credit could be given if the second part of the question relating to how the misunderstanding could be conveyed to the audience had been answered appropriately.

Question 5

Many candidates appeared to find this question challenging and wrote long, detailed responses which either did not reflect the nature of the drama or were not explicit as to the demands of the question. Candidates generally understood that GLENN and CASSIE have a tempestuous relationship and many candidates recognised the bickering that was going on. Candidates often found it difficult to focus on specific dramatic techniques that might be applied and why the advice might 'make their delivery effective'.

The best responses were those that clearly identified a specific, relevant dramatic technique for each actor supported by a suggestion/reason as to why such dramatic technique fits the context of the extract and adds drama to the piece.

Question 6

Many candidates continue to confuse the term 'prop' with 'set' or 'costume'. When asked about props, candidates are best advised to concentrate on hand props. Where items of set or costume were used physically by the actor to add to the drama, credit was given.

Candidates recognised props that were named within the extract, but some candidates offered alternative suggestions as to what they might use if they were to perform the piece; appropriate suggestions were given credit. There is still a tendency to suggest symbolic uses ahead of practical uses.

Many candidates were able to identify a selection of props and communicate a simplistic way as to how they might be used to convey a message or purpose. However, in many cases, candidates were unable to explore the dramatic intention and therefore could not access the full range of marks available.

Questions 7–8 *Devised work*

Question 7

Examiners noted that many candidates are able to draw on knowledge of dramatic structure within their response. There were a few that simply identified sections in terms of exposition, rising action etc. or simply mentioned linear or non-linear structures, flashbacks and transitions, but many were actually able to link their understanding of structure to their devised piece. Many candidates were able to discuss how the ideas in the piece were organised and how they were linked and related to each other. Some candidates simply focused on the plot of the piece and were therefore unable to access the full range of marks. In order to access the full range of marks that were available, candidates communicated a thorough understanding of how their piece was structured and were able to discuss how each section related to another with a detailed evaluation of strengths and weaknesses.

Question 8

Many candidates responded with a character study rather than appreciating what it is that makes a role dramatically effective. A few candidates did not address the word 'role' in the question and discussed instead an effective scene. To access the full range of marks available, candidates were also expected to offer an evaluation and this proved to be challenging.

Section B

Questions 9–11 *Rumours*

Question 9

This was quite a popular question, which was generally tackled well. The question was aimed at those who have a particular interest in acting, and asked candidates not only to demonstrate their knowledge of COOKIE's character, but also to show their understanding of how the part might be played in performance.

Most responses contained a range of valid comments about the character of COOKIE, with some demonstrating a detailed and sophisticated understanding, closely linked to the extract. Many were able to support their observations on COOKIE's character and actions with well-chosen and specific references to

the text. Unfortunately, some candidates' responses stopped at that point, thus failing to access marks in the upper band as this requires application.

Candidates need to give advice on the techniques required to play the role. Candidates who attempted to do this sometimes restricted themselves to rather general advice. However, there were many who gave specific suggestions, which were firmly based on both text and character and demonstrated a detailed and practical understanding of how to play the role. In this question, it was more common to find candidates taking COOKIE's character traits one by one and linking their ideas for playing the role to appropriate sections of the text. However, some simply worked through the text and based their comments on each of COOKIE's appearances in turn. The first approach often produced better answers, but only where salient characteristics had been selected.

Question 10

This was a question primarily about the role of the director in ensuring the production brings out the humour in the play. It allowed candidates who have an interest in this area to demonstrate their knowledge and expertise.

This was also a popular choice, which tended to be well done. Most candidates showed some understanding of the director's role, although one or two concentrated on that to the exclusion of any detailed consideration of the extract. Although many were able to identify the style of the piece, only a relatively small number had any real understanding of the key features of farce as demonstrated in the extract. As the general understanding of the elements of farce was actually quite restricted, the tendency here was to isolate comic incidents from the script and explore them in terms of application. As a result, some of the responses tended to be somewhat repetitive.

Question 11

This was a question primarily about the role of costume designer. It allowed candidates who have an interest in this area to demonstrate their knowledge and expertise.

There were some very good responses, but some candidates struggled to get a balance between an overall design concept and a more detailed approach to one of the costumes. Some candidates either ended up proposing appropriate costumes for all of the characters or, following a brief overview, concentrating on their chosen character. There were many who made general statements about wealth, status and the occasion, but relatively few were really able to combine a practical approach to costume design, with the references to the extract required in the upper band of the mark scheme. However, even the weaker responses were often able to make valid suggestions based on an appreciation of the context of the piece or character or both.

Section C

Questions 12–14 *Devised work*

Question 12

This proved a popular question and, generally, it was well done. Candidates featured a wide range of approaches to devising drama, principally plot and character, but also including, style, structure and performance techniques, as well as technical aspects such as lighting, sound, set, costumes and props. Many were quite strong on process, although sometimes the links to the chosen piece were implicit rather than specific and many of the evaluations were fairly superficial in nature. However, candidates who made a real effort to answer both parts of the question gained access the higher marks available.

Question 13

This was attempted by a large number of candidates and provoked a wide range of responses. Most seemed quite clear about their dramatic intention and tied their responses very closely to their stated aims. However, this question was more likely to elicit a narrative response from weaker candidates, particularly where the devised pieces were less imaginative in dramatic style and techniques.

Almost all pieces seemed to have been completed and performed to an audience and many were highly inventive. Most candidates expressed their intentions in terms of impact on their audience and those who evaluated their work effectively also referred to audience reaction.

Question 14

Most candidates interpreted the question in terms of time and place. A few weaker responses simply described the place where their story was set, but the vast majority saw it in theatrical terms. The best responses made specific reference to a range of details from their devised pieces. Some concentrated on stage sets, but others were able to explain how they used such diverse elements as dialogue, action, costume, sound, lighting, projected images, narration, banners and placards to assist in establishing location.

DRAMA

Paper 0411/13
Written Examination

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- Questions in **Section B** are on the set text and questions in **Section C** are based on the devised piece.
- Candidates need to consider carefully which question to answer in **Sections B** and **C**, based on their own understanding and technical knowledge.
- Candidates are urged to use the number of marks available as a guide to how much detail is needed in the answer. Many candidates continue to waste valuable time by providing extended answers to questions that are worth only 2 or 3 marks. Candidates may use bullet points where appropriate to respond to questions in **Section A**.
- Centres should provide opportunities for candidates to engage practically with the stimuli provided in the pre-release material to enable candidates to access the full range of marks for questions in the Written Examination.
- Narrative approaches to answering questions must be avoided.
- Candidates should be familiar with the dramatic and technical terms in current use. An extensive (but not exhaustive) glossary is provided in the syllabus to assist in the identification of key terms.

General Comments

Appropriate use of performing arts vocabulary is essential if candidates are to score highly, although it is not enough to reference these without giving precise explanation. For example, candidates sometimes refer to 'body language', 'tone of voice' etc. as a means of showing how a character/role might be (or was) played but with no further description of what the actor might do in order to achieve the desired effect. Candidates should refer to particular points of action in the text or devised piece rather than making generalised comment.

The way candidates approached the discussion of technical issues such as costume, set design, lighting and sound gave many competent responses indicating how design choices contributed with other elements to create dramatic meaning – for example, tying GABRIELLE's costume design with ideas for colours used in the set and in the lighting. Candidates need to demonstrate their knowledge through close reference to the text or devised piece rather than make general comment.

The responses to the questions about the devised work displayed a wide range of ability. While many candidates demonstrated the ability to link theory to practice and to evaluate the success of the process and its outcomes, there were many who gave narrative accounts of the content of the drama with little critical reflection.

There were still many candidates who did not achieve high marks because they had not read the question sufficiently well – particular examples being **Question 7** and **Question 11**. In other cases there were indications of a lack of understanding of dramatic concepts, as in **Question 10**, for example.

In some cases the quality of candidates' handwriting gave cause for concern and Centres are requested to encourage their candidates to write legibly, since credit cannot be awarded for ideas that are incomprehensible.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Questions 1–6 *The Dinner Party*

Question 1

Most candidates were able to suggest a suitable facial expression for ALBERT at this point in the drama and suggest why this would be appropriate. The better responses gave specific descriptions of the facial expression, e.g. 'vigorously squeezes the eyes shut'. Vaguer descriptions were less likely to be credited, especially if inappropriate for the moment e.g. 'Albert pulls a funny face'. Answers that focused on gesture could not be credited.

Most candidates were able to provide a reason why their choice of facial expression would work, with many of these linking the expression to his character although not necessarily picking up on the comic intention, given the absurdity of the injury.

Some candidates offered a long and detailed response with a variety of suggestions for the facial expression and a range of comments to support their answers. The question was worth two marks and therefore one valid suggestion and one reason was all that was required to score both marks.

Question 2

This question was well answered, on the whole, with the best responses clearly understanding the significance of YVONNE's entrance and how the advice on acting technique would enhance the moment.

Most candidates were to achieve at least one mark by giving appropriate advice, although some gave invalid advice, such as suggesting that the actor breathe calmly or evenly. Answers that suggested that the entire speech be done in one breath showed little understanding of the actualities of the performance but could receive some credit if the advice was apposite.

Some candidates provided detailed answers with several pieces of advice and/or points of reference; this went beyond the requirements of the question and could not be further credited.

Question 3

Most candidates were able to provide good responses to this question. The best responses discussed proxemics, physicality, and how the use of space could be varied in order to create dramatic impact. Each of the three examples was set out with clear description and justification of the choices made. Other responses made more basic comments relating to blocking or the positions of three actors in the performance space, and tended to lack any suggestion of how this could have impact dramatically.

Question 4

The majority of candidates were able to identify a misunderstanding and then give appropriate advice. The better responses indicated that candidates had been given the opportunity to become familiar with the text which allowed the full possibilities of the extract to be explored.

Some candidates simply gave line references as a substitute for giving a description of what the misunderstanding was, thus there could be no certainty that the misunderstanding had been correctly identified. In these cases, some credit was afforded in the mark scheme if the second part of the question (relating to how the misunderstanding could be conveyed to the audience) had been answered appropriately.

Question 5

The best responses recognised that the question was about line delivery and gave details relating to performance elements such as breathing, tempo, intonation and vocal pitch as means to make the small talk entertaining to the audience as well as helping to define the differences in the characters. Other responses, whilst still giving some description of how lines might be spoken, also focused on elements of non-verbal communication such as facial expression, gesture, body language and proxemics, again with the purpose of exploring the nature of the relationship between the two characters. In those instances where no reference was made to line delivery and the advice given was invalid, few or no marks could be awarded.

Question 6

There was a clear separation of ability in the responses of the candidates to this question with the best demonstrating creative thought whilst still keeping in line with Simon's suggestions in the opening stage directions (one candidate placed an ice sculpture in the centre of the stage that melted as the piece progressed to represent the disintegration of the couples' relationships).

Other candidates who scored highly were those who appreciated that set design has to relate to the text of the play itself, as well as the defined style and atmosphere, and therefore those who considered how the set could best be designed to highlight the dramatic interplay of the characters tended to score well.

Those responses that stayed within the boundaries of Simon's establishing directions and simply re-described the restaurant in their own words could only receive limited reward.

Questions 7-8 *Devised Work*

Question 7

This question required an evaluative response in order to achieve higher marks. Candidates were invited to say why the plot they had derived from the stimulus was effective. The best responses showed confidence in the description of the final devised piece with capable explanation of how the dramatic plot was created from the stimulus; how devices were used and developed through the devising process as well as giving pertinent reasons why choices were (or were not) effective.

Other responses did not provide significant evaluative comment relating to the effectiveness of the dramatic plot and therefore could not achieve higher marks. Some candidates gave long-winded narrative accounts of plot which, on their own, were insufficient to gather many marks as such responses did not provide an answer to the question.

Question 8

This question commanded a wide range of responses. Most candidates were able to discuss their use of the performance space with some interesting observations on proxemics, dramatic effect and, in some cases, excellent use of technical stage vocabulary.

There was the opportunity in this question for candidates to discuss the creative use of the performance space, though many gave overly detailed description of the dramatic events taking place thereby not allowing time for an analytical approach. Candidates were invited to comment on how successfully the space was used and thus those candidates who did not address that issue were restricted to lower marks.

Section B

Questions 9-11 *The Dinner Party*

Question 9

This was the most popular of the questions in **Section B**, and responses were equally as extensively varied. In a few instances, the question was very well answered with an extremely sophisticated appreciation and examination of the purpose and significance of the role of GABRIELLE with full understanding of the range of critical characteristics and with close and detailed reference to the text. Such candidates were then able to give some excellent, well-referenced advice on how to act the part that covered all elements of performance from posture and stance to register and timbre with clear description and purpose.

Other candidates took this as an exercise in character study and, whilst in many cases these were appropriate and well written, higher mark bands could not be reached as the most significant element of the question – how to realise the character on stage – was missing.

Question 10

This was the least popular of the questions in **Section B**. The answers of many suggested they had not understood stylistically what a 'one-liner' was, i.e. a witty remark, nor how Simon had made purposeful use of them to achieve the comic intentions. There were some insightful and well-constructed responses nonetheless: considering the function of the director working with the cast in order to realise the comic potential and focussing on details such as pace and emphasis of dialogue, or even, how to ride laughter from the audience without losing tempo.

Other candidates took 'one-liner' to refer to single lines of dialogue and thus referenced many single lines that did not necessarily contain witticism. Some credit could be given here, especially where there was an understanding that single lines of dialogue can be used to increase the tempo of the drama.

Question 11

This was the second most popular question in this section and, in some instances, was answered very well. A common problem lay in candidates not first expressing the overall design concept, before focussing on a particular costume. Consequently there were two types of responses from these candidates: those that understood that they had to write about YVONNE or GABRIELLE, with the latter being the more popular, versus those who discussed the costume design for all 6 characters. In these cases, candidates could only receive credit for whichever character - YVONNE or GABRIELLE - was covered in more detail.

A few answers placed design ideas in completely the wrong period, without justification, thus indicating that the important cultural and contextual elements surrounding the play had not been fully understood.

Higher band marks were achieved when the overall costume design focused not only on period, style and status but on the relationships of the 3 pairs of characters with direct or subtle means of linking them together before a more detailed discussion on an individual costume.

Section C

Question 12-14 *Devised Work*

Question 12

This was a very popular question and one that enabled most to achieve at least reasonable marks by comparing the characters they had created in a discursive way.

Some responses, though detailed in their analysis of the differences between the two characters, neglected to consider the dramatic contrast these differences created or evaluate the effect therein. In order to reach the upper bands, candidates needed to show how the comparisons and contrasts were made and consider this in relation to audience response.

Question 13

This was an equally popular question with candidates discussing the use of lighting and sound with varying degrees of success. Most candidates understood that the question asked for possibilities, which allowed for some creative ideas to emerge. Lighting was by far the more popular of the micro features with sound quite often relegated to a simple paragraph towards the end of the response.

Several answers focused on symbolic examples of light to be used as emotional expression: e.g. '... she was bathed in red, as this is the colour for anger'. Regardless of whether such suppositions are correct or not, use of emotional colour can be restrictive. The better responses focused on the use of lighting for its function as a conveyor of atmosphere, location and time of day. This type of response often linked it specifically with other design elements. There was appreciation too of how lighting and sound have a particularly important role when there is a minimalist set.

Question 14

This was the least popular of the questions in this section. In order to achieve higher bands, candidates needed to demonstrate a mature understanding of pace. In some cases, candidates conveyed a sophisticated appreciation of the need for contrasts to control dramatic momentum and explained how this was achieved in the devising process. Such responses included detailed evaluation of the impact of

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decisions on the practical performance and in some instances, although not necessarily, with reference to audience response.

Other responses tended to opt for a largely narrative description of their piece with the occasional comment on pace. There were a few responses that indicated a misunderstanding of dramatic pace and concentrated on stage movement almost entirely.

DRAMA

Paper 0411/02
Coursework

General Comments

Moderators reported that the overall standard of work was broadly similar to that seen in previous sessions, but with some noticeable improvements in the choice and delivery of monologues. The requirement that this individual performance should now be taken from an existing piece of repertoire encouraged a higher level of performance skills.

Centres also responded well to the streamlined administrative requirements for Coursework. There was a noticeable improvement in the quality of documentation thanks to the new Centre check-sheet. There were also far fewer arithmetical errors on the Internal Candidate Mark Sheets (ICMS) this session, mainly as a result of the widespread use of the new interactive PDF version of the form, which automatically totals the mark for each candidate. All Centres are therefore encouraged to adopt the interactive version in future sessions.

In most cases, the work was presented in a clear methodical way that made the moderation process straightforward. Most Centres selected an appropriate sample, which contained the work of six candidates, covering the full range of marks and including the candidates that achieved the highest and lowest marks, with an even spread of mark points in between.

Moderators reported some improvement in the technical quality of the recordings, although there were still a number that suffered from awkward camera angles and/or gloomy lighting. A small number of DVDs proved problematic to play. Centres are reminded that they should check their discs in a DVD before posting the material to Cambridge. Those DVDs with chapters made for easy identification of candidates and made the moderation process much more straightforward. It was helpful to have each candidate introduced and identified prior to the start of their performance, especially when the performers were in costume.

Irrespective of the quality of the recording, the most impactful performances were delivered to a live audience, generally consisting of parents and other candidates. Performances in classrooms or other small spaces presented direct to camera tended to have a filmic quality and were less believable as a section of live performance from a stage play.

Comments on Specific Questions

Monologues

The new requirement for monologues to be drawn from standard repertoire required the selection of material that suited the skills and enthusiasm of candidates. A wide selection of plays was chosen, as seen in the table below, representing varying styles and calling for different techniques.

The syllabus requires the monologue should be learned in the context of the whole play, but some of the performance decisions taken by candidates made it evident that this had not been the case. The strongest candidates had clearly spent considerable time and effort researching the plays, style and characters of their chosen monologues, which meant that their performance gave a rich insight into their chosen role. Candidates who performed less well had little evidence to demonstrate that they had researched style, genre or character development throughout the play. The weakest performances often revealed little context to the realisation of character, and which limited the candidate's achievement in Assessment Objective 1. Moderators reported that, on occasions, AO1 was confused for confidence and reliability rather than the ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the play.

Those candidates who scored well delivered their lines in a very confident manner and interpreted their monologues in a mature and sophisticated way, typified by excellent phrasing and timing, a strong stage

presence and keen audience awareness. Most candidates were aware of the importance of facial expression, gesture and physicality, and there were fewer examples of candidates delivering a static monologue seated on a chair or at a table. Nevertheless, there were a significant number of individual performances that were very static, which limited their success in demonstrating physical variety during the extract. A small number of candidates performed their pieces carrying their script, reading off the page. This was extremely limiting physically, as they were unable to immerse themselves in their character and perform effectively.

Moderators reported that some candidates had paid careful attention to set and costume, particularly where period drama was tackled. This was commendable and enabled candidates to get into character and develop their role stylistically. Whilst costume is not a requirement of the syllabus, candidates could consider carefully what they are wearing. There were several examples of day-to-day clothing worn for performances which may have detracted from the roles candidates sought to deliver.

Group repertoire pieces

The comments made above concerning monologues were largely true of the group repertoire pieces seen, especially regarding contextual knowledge of the play from which the extract was chosen, and the quality of the acting skills of the candidates.

The strongest performances reflected a detailed understanding of the play, its characters, themes and social and historical context and were able to recreate these imaginatively on stage. Most candidates had a good understanding of the audience/performer relationship, with those who had a strong sense of stagecraft, discipline and performance focus proving the most successful.

Weaker candidates had normally learnt their lines but had often struggled to make the journey from page to stage. A greater attention to detail was needed to bring the performance alive as such performances appeared more like an accomplished reading than live theatre. Some potentially strong candidates had been allocated roles in the group that did not allow them to demonstrate their skills fully and such candidates were therefore left unable to achieve their full potential. This again brought home the need for Centres to select material carefully to enable all group members to have well-rounded and fulfilling parts to play.

Moderators commented that several performances were constrained by weak vocal skills, with issues of diction and projection, lines being garbled or dialogue lacking pace. Furthermore, some of performance spaces chosen led to intrusive background noise.

Group devised pieces

Moderators reported that although there were some very good examples of work seen during the session, the quality of devised work was generally weaker than that of repertoire work.

The strongest performances had a clear sense of dramatic purpose, and worked in a well-structured manner to communicate the piece to their audience. Successful inspiration for some of these performances seemed to have come from playwrights or companies the candidates had studied: for example, excellent physical work inspired by DV8, Frantic Assembly, Motionhouse and other performance groups. There were a number of non-naturalistic pieces that exuded true sophistication, and were powerful even through the DVD recording.

The quality of subject matter was another distinguishing feature of the most accomplished performances, with those who used historical events or political issues as their starting points producing stronger pieces. Stories, legends and myths were also rich sources of inspiration, especially where the performance style was clearly related to dramatic content as, for example, in some forms of storytelling.

Strong pieces were also typified by a rigorous approach to structure. Indeed, careful consideration of the structure of the piece was also an effective means of shaping the content and narrative. There was a clear correlation between the ability of group to see the bigger picture of the piece and their ability to shape an appropriate structure to communicate this to their audience.

Moderators were found it helpful when Centres had provided adequate explanation of each candidate's role in the piece. This was often most appropriately included in the comments on the ICMS form for Assessment Objective 2, which allows teachers to comment on the creation of the role, and some details about it. The same is true in terms of identification of candidates in the devised performance itself.

Indicative repertoire used in repertoire performances (monologues and group pieces)

Edward Albee	<i>The Sandbox</i> <i>The Zoo Story</i> <i>Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?</i>
Alan Ayckbourn	<i>Absurd Person Singular</i> <i>Confusions</i> <i>Invisible Friends</i> <i>The Norman Conquests</i>
Samuel Beckett	<i>Waiting for Godot</i>
Steven Berkoff	<i>Metamorphosis</i> <i>The Trial</i>
Alan Bennett	<i>A Cream Cracker Under the Settee</i> <i>An Englishman Abroad</i>
Edward Bond	<i>The Sea</i>
Bertolt Brecht	<i>Fear and Misery of the Third Reich</i> <i>Happy End</i> <i>Mother Courage and Her Children</i> <i>The Caucasian Chalk Circle</i>
Jim Cartwright	<i>Two</i> <i>Road</i>
Anton Chekhov	<i>The Anniversary</i> <i>The Cherry Orchard</i> <i>The Seagull</i> <i>Wild Honey</i>
Caryl Churchill	<i>Top Girls</i>
Ray Cooney	<i>Run for your wife</i>
Gabriel Davis	<i>Goodbye Charles</i> <i>I Ate the Divorce Papers</i>
Denise Deegan	<i>Daisy Pulls It Off</i>
Shelagh Delaney	<i>A Taste of Honey</i>
Euripides	<i>Medea</i> <i>The Trojan Women</i>
Dario Fo	<i>Accidental Death of an Anarchist</i>
Athol Fugard	<i>Master Harold and the Boys</i> <i>My Children, My Africa</i> <i>The Coat</i>
John Galsworthy	<i>The Fugitive</i>
John Godber	<i>Shakers</i> <i>Up n' Under</i> <i>Teachers</i>
Nikolai Gogol	<i>The Government Inspector</i>
Lorraine Hansberry	<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i>

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David Hare	<i>Skylight</i>
John Hodge	<i>The Collaborators</i>
Henrik Ibsen	<i>A Doll's House</i> <i>An Enemy of the People</i>
William Inge	<i>The Dark at the Top of the Stairs</i>
Eugene Ionesco	<i>The Bald Prima Donna</i>
Sarah Kane	<i>4.48 Psychosis</i>
Charlotte Keatley	<i>My Mother Said I Never Should</i>
Dennis Kelly	<i>DNA</i>
Thomas Kyd	<i>The Spanish Tragedy</i>
Federico García Lorca	<i>Blood Wedding</i> <i>The House of Bernada Alba</i>
Mike Leigh	<i>Abigail's Party</i>
Tracey Letts	<i>August: Osage County</i>
Mary O'Malley	<i>Once a Catholic</i>
David Mammet	<i>Oleanna</i>
Arthur Miller	<i>All My Sons</i> <i>A View from the Bridge</i> <i>Death of a Salesman</i> <i>The Crucible</i>
Molière	<i>The Bourgeois Gentleman</i> <i>The School for Wives</i>
Eugene O'Neill	<i>Thirst</i>
John Osborne	<i>Look Back in Anger</i>
John Pielmeier	<i>Agnes of God</i>
Harold Pinter	<i>The Birthday Party</i>
Dennis Potter	<i>Blue Remembered Hills</i>
J B Priestley	<i>An Inspector Calls</i>
Terence Rattigan	<i>The Winslow Boy</i>
Mark Ravenhill	<i>Pool (No Water)</i> <i>Some Explicit Polaroids</i>
Willy Russell	<i>Blood Brothers</i> <i>Educating Rita</i> <i>Shirley Valentine</i>
Jean-Paul Satre	<i>Dirty Hands</i>
Peter Schaffer	<i>Amadeus</i> <i>Equus</i> <i>Five Finger Exercise</i>

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Mark Schultz	<i>A Brief History of Helen of Troy</i>
William Shakespeare	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> <i>The Winter's Tale</i> <i>As You Like It</i> <i>Hamlet</i> <i>Macbeth</i> <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i> <i>Othello</i> <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> <i>The Taming of the Shrew</i> <i>Twelfth Night</i>
George Bernard Shaw	<i>Back to Methuselah</i> <i>Saint Joan</i> <i>Pygmalion</i>
Richard Brinsley Sheridan	<i>The Rivals</i>
Neil Simon	<i>Broadway Bound</i> <i>The Odd Couple</i>
Wole Soyinka	<i>The Lion and the Jewel</i> <i>The Trials of Brother Jero</i>
Gordon Steel	<i>Like a Virgin</i>
Simon Stephens	<i>The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time</i>
Tom Stoppard	<i>Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead</i> <i>The Coast of Utopia</i>
August Strindberg	<i>Miss Julie</i>
John Webster	<i>The Duchess of Malfi</i>
Mark Wheeler	<i>Too Much Punch For Judy</i>
Tennessee Williams	<i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> <i>The Glass Menagerie</i>
Oscar Wilde	<i>An Ideal Husband</i> <i>A Woman of No Importance</i> <i>Lady Windermere's Fan</i> <i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i>
August Wilson	<i>Fences</i> <i>King Hedley II</i>
William Wycherley	<i>The Country Wife</i>
Olwen Wymark	<i>Find Me</i>