CAMBRIDGE
International Education

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DRAMA **0411/12**

Paper 1 **May/June 2026**

COPY OF PRE-RELEASE MATERIAL **2 hours 30 minutes**

6683483561

INSTRUCTIONS

- The questions in Paper 1 will be based on the **two** play extracts provided in this booklet.
- This copy of the pre-release material is for you to use in your responses.

This document has **32** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

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EXTRACT 1

Adapted from Cordelia Lynn's modern version of Anton Chekhov's *Three Sisters*

These notes are intended to help you understand the context of the extract.

Chekhov's play premiered in Moscow in 1901, while the modern version was first performed in London in 2019.

The play is in four acts, and the extract is adapted from the first half of Act One.

The three PROZOROV sisters (OLGA, MASHA and IRINA) have very different personalities but all live in a large house in a provincial town in Russia. The play opens on IRINA's birthday, 5 May, exactly a year since their father died.

The sisters are all pining for Moscow, where they grew up, as they are now a long way from home and feel alienated and purposeless. Despite the sadness of the situation, Chekhov referred to the play as a comedy, and there are some comic elements in it.

CHARACTERS

OLGA	the eldest of the three sisters, 28
MASHA	the middle sister, 23, married to FYODOR
IRINA	the youngest sister, 20
ANDREY	brother of the three sisters, an academic
FYODOR	husband of MASHA
NATASHA	an awkward young woman who dresses poorly
ALEXANDER	a Lieutenant Colonel commanding the artillery
NIKOLAY	a Lieutenant in the army, not deemed handsome
VASILY	a Captain in the army, a misfit who is infatuated with IRINA
IVAN	army doctor, 60
ALEXEY	a Second lieutenant in the army
VLADIMIR	a Second lieutenant in the army
ANFISA	an elderly family retainer and former nurse, 81
FERAPONT	doorkeeper at the council offices, elderly and hard of hearing

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ACT ONE

[*Midday.*

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[*A photograph:* ANDREY *and* NATASHA *kiss.*]

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EXTRACT 2

Adapted from *Absurd Person Singular* by Alan Ayckbourn

These notes are intended to help you understand the context of the drama.

The play is in three acts and the extract is adapted from the opening of Act One. The play was first performed in Scarborough, England, in June 1972.

The play is set at Christmas in the home of SIDNEY and JANE HOPCROFT, fawning social climbers who are people pleasers. They have invited three couples to their Christmas soirée, although only DICK and LOTTIE POTTER are actually their friends. The other two couples are influential people, whom the socially inept HOPCROFTs wish to impress. However, rather than being a relaxed social gathering, there is a tense, awkward atmosphere throughout the extract.

CHARACTERS

SIDNEY HOPCROFT	a businessman, social climber, 30s
JANE HOPCROFT	his longsuffering wife, 30s
RONALD BREWSTER-WRIGHT	an influential banker
MARION BREWSTER-WRIGHT	RONALD's wife
EVA JACKSON	troubled wife of influential GEOFFREY JACKSON
DICK and LOTTIE POTTER	friends who are heard but never seen

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ACT ONE

[SIDNEY *and* JANE HOPCROFT*'s kitchen of their small suburban house.*

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SIDNEY *gawps at her*]

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