CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge IGCSE™ (9–1)

DRAMA **0994/12**

Paper 1 Written Examination **May/June 2026**

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 80

Published

This mark scheme contains the instructions and marking guidance that our examiners used to mark candidate responses for this component.

Before they start marking, examiners complete a standardisation process. They review a range of candidate responses and discuss the mark scheme in detail to agree which answers can and cannot be accepted. Examiners award marks where it is clear that candidate responses have met the requirements of the mark scheme. These requirements may vary between different components or different versions of the same component, depending on the exact requirements of the question and the candidate responses seen during the standardisation process.

Sometimes, our mark schemes may allow marks to be awarded to responses which contain elements that are factually incorrect or for content not covered by the syllabus. We do this in response to the demands of a specific question to support candidates and make sure that our assessments are fair. However, these allowances should not be used as a guide for teaching and learning.

We cannot discuss the mark scheme with schools, and we recommend that schools read the mark scheme together with the assessment material and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

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General marking principles

All examiners must apply these marking principles when marking candidate responses.

1	Examiners must award marks for each response in line with: • the specific **content** defined in the mark scheme • the specific **skills** defined in the mark scheme or in the level descriptions • the **standard of response** required as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.
2	Examiners must award **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).
3	Examiners must award marks **positively**. This means that: • marks are not deducted for errors or omissions • marks are awarded for correct/valid answers as defined in the mark scheme and also for **other valid answers** which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme referring to your team leader as appropriate • the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar are judged **only** when the mark scheme indicates that these features are **specifically assessed** in the question. However, the meaning of all responses must be unambiguous.
4	Examiners must **consistently** apply the requirements of the mark scheme and any rules for what to do when candidates have not followed instructions correctly.
5	Examiners must use the **full range of marks** defined in the mark scheme, unless limited by the quality of the candidate responses seen.
6	Examiners must award marks according to the mark scheme and **must not** award marks with grade thresholds or grade descriptions in mind.

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Annotations guidance for centres

Examiners use a system of annotations as a shorthand for communicating their marking decisions to one another. Examiners are trained during the standardisation process on how and when to use annotations. The purpose of annotations is to inform the standardisation and monitoring processes and guide the supervising examiners when they are checking the work of examiners within their team. The meaning of annotations and how they are used is specific to each component and is understood by all examiners who mark the component.

We publish annotations in our mark schemes to help centres understand the annotations they may see on copies of scripts. Note that there may not be a direct correlation between the number of annotations on a script and the mark awarded. Similarly, the use of an annotation may not be an indication of the quality of the response.

The annotations listed below were available to examiners marking this component in this series.

Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
✓	Tick: correct point
?	Unclear
TV	Too vague
SEEN	Indicates that the point has been noted, but no credit has been given.
EVAL	Evaluation
NAR	Lengthy narrative
BOD	Benefit of the doubt

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Question	Answer	Marks
1	**Suggest a costume for the actor playing FERAPONT when he enters at line 165. Why would this costume be appropriate?** FERAPONT is an old man with partial hearing loss who works as a doorkeeper at the local council offices. He has arrived with a birthday cake from the local council for IRINA. He could be imagined as being well-dressed as he is the front face of the offices, or it might be suggested that he is more casually dressed since he is away from the office. However, the clue is that he is 81 years old and therefore, whatever he wears is likely to be typical of an older man. A suggestion of an appropriate costume. — 1 Mark A statement as to why this would be appropriate. — 1 Mark	2

Question	Answer	Marks
2	**Read the passage from line 5 [‘Daddy died a year ago today.’] to line 30 [‘Stop whistling, Masha. It’s annoying.’].** **Give <u>three</u> different pieces of performance advice to the actor playing the role of OLGA.** OLGA is the eldest of the three PROZOROV sisters. Her opening lines are full of pathos as she remembers her father, who died exactly a year earlier. There are many pauses, and meaningful rests. Her tone could vary between sentences as she alternates memory with her current situation. IRINA questions why she is saying these things on her (IRINA’s) birthday, but OLGA continues, unabated. IVAN blurts out that she is wrong, but OLGA ignores him. However, MASHA continues to whistle, which draws a sharp response from OLGA. Allow any **three** different pieces of performance advice for the actor playing OLGA. A piece of performance advice for the actor playing OLGA. — 1 Mark A second (and different) piece of performance advice for the actor playing OLGA. — 1 Mark A third (and different) piece of performance advice for the actor playing OLGA. — 1 Mark	3

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Question	Answer	Marks
3	**Read the passage from line 209 [‘Afternoon.’] to line 302 [‘ Yes. Yes of course.’].** **How would you play the role of ALEXANDER in this passage?** ALEXANDER is newly appointed as a commander in the army brigade. He grew up in Moscow, where he served in the sisters’ father’s brigade. He has previously met the sisters when they were children, when they used to call him ‘The Lovesick Major’. ALEXANDER is clearly delighted to meet the sisters again, and his arrival transforms the entire mood. The sisters are excited to discover that he is from Moscow, their hometown to which they are eager to return. ALEXANDER has a self-deprecating sense of humour. He is married and has two daughters, but his wife is unhappy and has previously been described by NIKOLAY (line 70) as ‘mad … talks politics and pseudo-intellectual stuff and every now and again tries to kill herself, apparently just to annoy her husband’. Allow any suggestions that recognise the complexity of the situation, perhaps including VASILY’s attempt at a joke at line 269, which suddenly stalls the conversation. ALEXANDER goes on to make a philosophical statement at line 296 but this, too, is undermined by VASILY’s juvenile behaviour. **Band 1** — A detailed understanding of how to play the role of ALEXANDER. — 4-5 marks **Band 2** — A broad explanation of how to play the role of ALEXANDER. — 2-3 marks **Band 3** — A general description of how to play the role of ALEXANDER. — 1 mark **Band 4** — No creditable response. — 0 marks	**5**

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Question	Answer	Marks
4	**Read the passage from line 396 [‘Dearest little sister!’] to line 464 [‘…a really, really good person…’].** **How could the actors playing FYODOR and MASHA portray the awkwardness of the marriage relationship?** FYODOR is MASHA’s husband, a classics teacher at the local secondary school. As IRINA says later, MASHA married him thinking he was the most intelligent man in the world (lines 469-471), but that has turned out not to be true. FYODOR has written a history of his school and gives IRINA a copy for her birthday, although she responds by pointing out that he has already given her a copy for Easter. His whole entrance is overshadowed by the arrival of Alexander, meaning that FYODOR is not given very much attention, emphasising FYODOR’s lack of excitement. MASHA is dismissive of FYODOR and shows no love or affection towards him. She has no enthusiasm for going on the headmaster’s outing that afternoon and has obviously been completely bored by such events previously. She expresses her opinion of the event to IVAN once FYODOR is out of earshot. Allow credit for any appropriate suggestions about timing, pacing, vocal intensity, pacing, proxemics, etc. **Band 1** — A detailed understanding of how to emphasise the relationship between the two. — 4-5 marks **Band 2** — A broad explanation of how to emphasise the relationship between the two. — 2-3 marks **Band 3** — A general description of the relationship between the two. — 1 mark **Band 4** — No creditable response. — 0 marks	**5**

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Question	Answer	Marks
5	**Identify <u>two</u> different props required in the extract and explain how each prop could be used to create dramatic effect.** There are many examples of props being identified in the extract. These include: • a magazine (line 75) • a bottle of perfume (line 123) • a big pink cake/trolley (line 165) • a silver samovar (line 180) • a violin (line 306) • a handkerchief (line 322) • a frame (line 330) • a glass (line 500) • a photograph (line 537) • a spinning top (line 554) Allow any suggestions that can be supported from the passage.	**5**

Band 1	A practical understanding of how to use **two** different props for dramatic effect, justified by reference to the extract.	4-5 marks
Band 2	Some understanding of how to use **two** different props for dramatic effect, with occasional reference to the extract.	2-3 marks
Band 3	Identifies **one** or **two** props that could be used but offers no further information **OR** identifies **one** prop, with an explanation.	1 mark
Band 4	No creditable response.	0 marks

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Question	Answer	Marks
6	**Read the passage from line 465 [‘Good health!’] to the end of the extract.** **How would you direct this passage to emphasise the comic elements of the play?** Chekhov referred to this play as a comedy and there are many comedic elements in it. Some of these have been set up at the start of the extract, such as VASILY’s awkward interjections. The ending to the scene has many comedic elements that could be brought out by the director, which include: • ANDREY playing the violin randomly before dinner starts. • IRINA’s comment on how odd VASILY seems. • the entrance of NATASHA, dressed in a way that obviously does not fit in. • MASHA’s indulging in more wine and recovering from her depressed state earlier in the extract. • VASILY’s ridiculous comment that the food is made of cockroaches • ALEXEY’s handling of taking photographs. • FYODOR’s reference to the symbolism of 13 at the table, meaning there are secret lovers present. • the final staged kiss between ALEXEY and NATASHA. Allow any directorial suggestions that would maximise comic impact.	**10**

Band 1	Shows detailed and perceptive insight into how to direct this passage to emphasise the comic elements of the play.	9–10 Marks
Band 2	Shows very good understanding of how to direct this passage to emphasise the comic elements of the play.	7–8 Marks
Band 3	Shows general understanding of how to direct this passage to emphasise the comic elements of the play.	5–6 Marks
Band 4	Shows some understanding of how to direct this passage.	3–4 Marks
Band 5	Shows minimal understanding of how to direct the passage.	1–2 Marks
Band 6	No creditable response.	0 Marks

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SECTION B

Question	Answer	Marks
7	**As an actor playing JANE, how would you show her obsessive behaviour?** The opening stage directions set out a pen portrait of JANE and SIDNEY and their neat house and her obsessive behaviour. Throughout the extract, JANE is focused on making the house spotless before their guests arrive. JANE has a highly-strung personality and tries to control everything, including SIDNEY. This is reflected in the way that she cleans, how she goes to buy more tonic and how she wants everything to be just right. JANE has a frantic inner energy, shown by her acting skills and use of space. Allow credit for discussion that explains how this could be emphasised.	**10**

Band 1	Shows detailed and perceptive insight into how to play the role of JANE to show her obsessive behaviour.	9–10 Marks
Band 2	Shows very good understanding of how to play the role of JANE to show her obsessive behaviour.	7–8 Marks
Band 3	Shows general understanding of how to play the role of JANE to show her obsessive behaviour.	5–6 Marks
Band 4	Shows some understanding of how to play the role of JANE.	3–4 Marks
Band 5	Shows minimal understanding of how to play the role of JANE.	1–2 Marks
Band 6	No creditable response.	0 Marks

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Question	Answer	Marks
8	**Suggest a suitable set design for the extract and how it could help the actors to create comic moments.** **You may include a labelled sketch if you wish.** The stage directions give suggestions for the kitchen layout and how it may be presented. Candidates should consider their own ideas for set, keeping in mind their view of the style, period, décor and lack of beauty of the facilities. Candidates should create a set that will support actors to create comic moments.	**15**

Shows a sophisticated practical understanding of set design considerations that help the actors create comic moments. • A comprehensive and effective discussion of how to create an appropriate set design to help actors create comic moments • Excellent, practical suggestions, applied with sustained and detailed reference to the extract.	**Band 1** 13–15 Marks
Shows detailed practical understanding of set design considerations that help the actors create comic moments. • An assured and mainly effective discussion of how to create an appropriate set design to help actors create comic moments • Practical suggestions, with consistently appropriate reference to the extract.	**Band 2** 10–12 Marks
Shows broad understanding of set design considerations that help the actors create comic moments. • A generalised explanation of how to create an appropriate set design to help actors create comic moments. • Some practical suggestions, with some appropriate references to the extract.	**Band 3** 7–9 Marks
Shows partial understanding of set design considerations. • An uneven explanation of how to approach set design considerations. • A narrow range of practical suggestions, with occasional reference to the extract.	**Band 4** 4–6 Marks
Shows limited understanding of set design considerations. • A confused, incomplete or narrative description of set design considerations. • Minimal suggestions of how to approach the extract.	**Band 5** 1–3 Marks
No creditable response.	**Band 6** 0 Marks

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Question	Answer	Marks
9	**As a director, how would you advise the actors to highlight the tense atmosphere at the Christmas party?** From the very start, the extract has an atmosphere of unease, discomfort and excruciating embarrassment, particularly in MARION and RONALD's bizarre time in the kitchen and their reaction to JANE and SIDNEY. The key is exaggeration in gestures, mime, steps, sitting, walking, eye contacts, non-verbal communications and vocal twists and excesses. Candidates should take a directorial focus rather than merely describing the play. There are many potential points of tension that could be dramatised powerfully. Allow any workable suggestions that are based on the text.	**15**

Shows a sophisticated practical understanding of how to direct the extract to highlight the tense atmosphere. • A comprehensive and effective discussion of how to direct the actors to highlight the tense atmosphere. • Excellent, practical suggestions, with sustained and detailed reference to the extract.	**Band 1** 13–15 Marks
Shows detailed practical understanding of how to direct the extract to *highlight the tense atmosphere.* • An assured and mainly effective discussion of how to direct the actors to highlight the tense atmosphere. • Practical suggestions, with consistently appropriate reference to the extract.	**Band 2** 10–12 Marks
Shows broad understanding of how to direct the extract to highlight the tense atmosphere. • A competent explanation of how to direct the actors to highlight the tense atmosphere. • Some practical suggestions, with some appropriate reference to the extract.	**Band 3** 7–9 Marks
Shows partial understanding of how to direct the extract. • A variable, sometimes unconvincing, explanation of how to direct the actors. • A narrow range of practical suggestions, with occasional reference to the extract.	**Band 4** 4–6 Marks
Shows limited understanding of how to direct the extract • A confused, incomplete or narrative description of how to direct the extract. • Minimal reference to the extract.	**Band 5** 1–3 Marks
No creditable response.	**Band 6** 0 Marks

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SECTION C

Question	Answer	Marks
10	**As you put together your devised piece, what challenges did you face in creating physicality for the characters? How did you address these challenges?** The focus of this question is on the devising process. There are many challenges in creating physicality. Candidates may (and probably will) refer to the final performance, but the focus of this question is on the way in which they worked on physicality during the process – identifying what worked, what needed further work, and what that work consisted of. This question focuses on the process of how they did this. Allow credit both for discussing challenges and offering solutions.	**10**

Band 1	Shows detailed and perceptive insight into the challenges they faced creating physicality and how they addressed them.	9–10 Marks
Band 2	Shows very good understanding of the challenges faced in creating physicality and how they addressed them.	7–8 Marks
Band 3	Shows general understanding of the challenges of creating physicality and how they addressed them; some supporting examples.	5–6 Marks
Band 4	Shows some understanding of the challenges involved and/or a few simple examples.	3–4 Marks
Band 5	Identifies one or two challenges and/or examples	1–2 Marks
Band 6	No creditable response.	0 Marks

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Question	Answer	Marks
11	**Evaluate how successfully you communicated the mood of your devised piece to your audience when you performed it.** The focus of this question is on the performance of the devised piece. Candidates should be clear about the mood they intended to create in their piece. They should include references to audience response during the performance, or audience feedback later. The important thing is that candidates demonstrate the ability to evaluate the performance rather than simply describing it or focusing entirely on the devising process.	**15**

Shows a sophisticated evaluation of how well the piece communicated its mood. • A comprehensive and detailed evaluation of how well the mood was communicated. • Excellent, practical evaluation of performance; sustained and detailed reference to the devised piece.	**Band 1** 13–15 Marks
Shows detailed evaluation of how well the piece communicated its mood. • An effective evaluation of how well the mood was communicated. • Well-formulated practical evaluation of performance, although there may be scope for further refinement; consistent and appropriate reference to the devised piece.	**Band 2** 10–12 Marks
Shows competent evaluation of how well the piece communicated its mood. • An adequate evaluation of how well the mood was communicated. • Competent practical evaluation of performance; some appropriate reference to the devised piece.	**Band 3** 7–9 Marks
Shows limited evaluation of how well the piece communicated its mood. • A limited evaluation of the communication of the intended mood. • An attempt at evaluation of performance; occasional reference to the devised piece.	**Band 4** 4–6 Marks
Reviews the intentions of the piece • A review of the intended mood. • Minimal evaluation; little or no reference to the devised piece.	**Band 5** 1–3 Marks
No creditable response.	**Band 6** 0 Marks

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