

DRAMA

<p>Paper 0994/12 Written Examination</p>
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Key messages

Candidates should use the number of marks that are available for each question as a guide as to how much to write. Candidates continue to write too much for 2 and 3 mark questions. The space provided in the answer booklet should also help act as a guide. Many candidates use bullet points for 2 and 3 mark questions. This is acceptable.

Candidates should ensure that they read each question thoroughly. Some candidates did not acknowledge if more than one example was required. Others missed important bits of detail within the question, and this limited the number of marks that were available to them as these candidates did not then address the question in full.

In the longer essay style questions worth 10 or 15 marks, some candidates write lengthy introductory paragraphs that do not relate to the question. This is an inefficient use of time.

Candidates must ensure that they demonstrate their practical understanding when addressing the questions. Some candidates offer strong literary responses to some of the longer essay style questions but do not offer developed practical solutions.

Candidates need to show a greater level of intent when writing about the devising work. In many examples, the script is the starting point. Candidates need to demonstrate and explain the decisions made during the devising process. This type of information is helpful when candidates are asked to evaluate the effectiveness of their work, explaining why they did what they did, what impact/effect was intended and whether this was successful.

Evaluation continues to be a weaker skill. Candidates often demonstrate unsupported assertions of effectiveness.

In **Section C**, candidates should avoid a narrative response where they retell the plot of their devised piece. Such responses do not demonstrate practical understanding.

General comments

Candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the new syllabus and the different requirements of **Sections A, B** and **C**. This meant that nearly all candidates answered only **Question 8** or **Question 9**, as requested.

Candidates engaged effectively with the two texts. Responses were mostly well-considered, and many candidates were able to demonstrate a good understanding and a level of practical application.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

The majority if not all candidates named a character and described a costume which could be exaggerated, although the comic effect was not always obvious. Suggestions were credited.

Some candidates gave detailed responses that showed good insight in terms of the period, the play, the character, and a particular approach to costume design. These examples went way beyond the 2 marks that were available for this question and serve as a good example of why it is important to note the number of marks available as a guide as to how much information is needed.

Question 2

Many candidates used lines from the script or stage directions to inform their answer. Most were able to clearly identify three separate suggestions. The suggestion had to be a clear piece of practical advice. Examples such as 'I would try to persuade him' were not credited as the approach, or dramatic action, is too vague.

Some candidates repeated themselves within the three approaches, or their suggestions were too similar. In these examples each suggestion was credited only once.

Question 3

The most successful candidates were able to explain a range of aspects of Molière's character displayed within this section and offer an actor's perspective on how the whole sequence might be performed. Most candidates focused on just one or two parts of the extract and missed opportunities for the higher levels of the mark scheme.

Question 4

Many candidates, but not all, demonstrated their understanding of the term 'proximity'. There were some obvious moments, for example Lagrange's use of the sword that were not always addressed. To achieve band 1, candidates needed to provide details of *changes* in proxemics supported with close reference to the passage, thus demonstrating understanding beyond simple quotations from the text and/or stage directions.

Question 5

Some candidates were able to demonstrate understanding of situational comedy with Bouton intruding on Molière and Armande's intimate encounter, but many did not really get to grips with the practical advice a director might give to bring out the comedy. Most candidates cited the obvious moment within the given extract involving the kiss/nose incident. Many simply described what was funny but gave no directorial comment. This type of question is a good example of when candidates should ensure that they have fully read, and understood, the detail that is being asked for within the question. Candidates often miss the directorial angle when used in comparable questions.

Question 6

This question brought about a good response enabling many candidates to demonstrate their understanding of Louis. Most candidates were able to provide plenty of direction for an actor, with the better responses understanding that they needed to direct the actor to portray the status of Louis in this scene, and not just offer ideas for showing the status of a generic king. A few did not focus sufficiently on the actor and offered ideas about the design aspects of other characters to the exclusion of advice for playing the role.

Section B

Question 7

This was a demanding question, and many candidates were able to show their understanding of the opening to the piece. Some candidates addressed only part of the section specified. Some candidates did not fully address all three aspects identified in the question: songs, movement, and story-telling skills. The stronger

candidates were able to bring their descriptions to life through their effective, detailed use of practical application.

Question 8

Most candidates who attempted this question were able to demonstrate a good understanding of Bongi. The more successful responses examined the whole section, although a line-by-line approach did not often provide the detailed discussion that is required for the higher bands. Stronger candidates considered Bongi's relationship/interaction with other characters in their answers. A few candidates correctly identified, and explored, the complexity of Bongi's character.

Some candidates demonstrated a strong literary understanding tied to the text but offered few developed practical solutions.

Question 9

This question enabled candidates to offer some imaginative ideas about the use of physicality, sound, and ensemble skills. Some candidate responses covered these three aspects in meticulous detail, clearly linking their discussion to the extract, whereas others did not reference all three aspects and/or did not use the text to support their answers. To be able to access the full range of marks available, candidates should ensure they read the question carefully and note the explicit detail within the question.

To access the higher bands, candidates should be able to demonstrate detailed practical suggestions. This needs to go beyond a simple description of the character.

Section C

Question 10

The stronger responses explored and discussed the devising process and the decisions that were made to ensure dramatic tension in the devised piece. The strongest candidates were able to demonstrate their use of dramatic technique in a way that brought their answer to life. A few candidates used dramatic terminology but their understanding of this was not always clear and did not evidence how the piece worked in performance in front of an audience.

There were a few candidates who focused on structure in this question.

Question 11

There were some excellent answers with thorough evaluation and pertinent comments about structure. However, many candidates did not understand dramatic structure. Candidates interpreted the term 'elements' in a variety of different ways including story/plot, characterisation, the use of design and even dramatic intentions. All of these were credited with the stronger responses providing practical evaluation.

DRAMA

Paper 0994/02
Coursework

Key messages

Centres are commended for producing work in such challenging and unpredictable situations. Considering how hard it has been to see live theatre in the last two years, candidates did well to emulate live performance with a good degree of stagecraft. There were some very impressive performances where dedication and commitment shone through. Moderators reported on the enthusiasm with which candidates approached live performance on stage; even weaker performances showed an enthusiasm for live performance, which shows that a key aim of the syllabus was achieved, namely, to foster enjoyment of drama.

Administration

The session ran smoothly and there were relatively few administrative issues. The new Submit for Assessment platform proved a great improvement on the previous shipping of DVDs/USB memory sticks. Inevitably, there were a number of teething problems with the system breaking down and/or centres not uploading the correct materials. A number of centres failed to provide the ICMS forms for all of the candidates in the cohort; others posted videos that had been saved in a way that made them unopenable. Files were not always correctly labelled with names and candidate numbers, which is essential. Centres are reminded that the candidate's name must match that on the file as the ICMS form.

The ICMS forms themselves were generally completed in a helpful and succinct manner. The majority of centres provided detailed and really helpful comments, which aided moderation by explaining and supporting the marks awarded. There were several exceptions where the comments made were too thin to be of very much help in supporting the mark. In some cases, the comments merely replicated the wording of the assessment criteria. There were a few isolated incidents where centres had merely copied and pasted comments for different candidates even where the candidates concerned had received quite different marks. There were instances of very good practice where teachers included an explanation as to why a higher mark should not be given.

Most centres supplied distinguishing factors for candidates to help moderators identify them in the group pieces; candidates also identified themselves at the start of the recording. In several cases, however, the identifying descriptions on the ICMS forms were either missing or too vague to help the moderator. Some centres did not include candidate introductions; in other cases, introductions were spoken too quickly; occasionally, the candidates were not in costume. There were very few close-ups where moderators could see facial expressions and a sizable number were shot from a distance, which made it hard to identify candidates.

Scripted pieces

Moderators reported that the overall standard of performance was high and there was little discernible difference in quality between individual and group pieces. Some candidates used different plays by the same playwright for their solo and group scripted pieces. While this is permitted, it often restricted candidates' opportunities to explore different styles, genres and acting techniques. In monologues, some candidates used fellow students as silent partners on stage, which provided a focus for addressing comments or asking questions. Occasionally, however, it meant the loss of direct face-on views of the candidate, who only shared side profiles.

There was a good sense of stagecraft in many pieces and many examples where candidates had mastered the acting techniques necessary to bring the script to life for an audience. Stronger performances were typified by excellent articulation and enunciation although there were inevitably a significant number where the candidates had gone through the motions of learning lines with limited consideration of their meaning. One of the most common weaknesses was where the performance was extremely static, thus not giving

opportunity to integrate the movement of the character and staging. There was sometimes no real understanding of why a move was made, or what was the motive for sitting or standing. Some candidates gave little thought to their use of chairs and tables, which often served little purpose other than unhelpfully rooting the performance in the same place.

Many candidates gave a good impression of knowing the context of the play from which their extract was taken. The best performances demonstrated thorough research and preparation, including stylistic approaches from key practitioners and consideration of the contexts of the plays. There was, therefore, a welcome sense that centres were generally more adept at choosing scripted material to suit their candidates' abilities and interests, while continuing to stretch and challenge. There was also evidence of careful cutting of the performance extracts in order for them to make sense to an audience.

There was some excellent use of costume, lighting, sound and sets in scripted performances. While the use of costume is not specifically assessed, it was often used effectively to add a sense of period, status and context to performances. Some candidates chose to wear their school uniform while performing their monologues, which in most cases showed a lack of understanding of character and context. If costumes are not available, candidates should opt for neutral clothing. Some performances used a background music track of sad or emotional music to support the dialogue. These were almost always distracting and the drama of the pieces rarely required such musical accompaniment to convey mood and meaning or support the acting.

A number of centres were extremely generous when awarding marks for AO3; pacing, levels of emotional intensity and engagement with the audience were often marked leniently, thus requiring moderation adjustments to bring marks into line with the Cambridge International standard.

Devised pieces

There were many examples of devised pieces that were carefully structured and communicated well to the audience. The choice of stimuli for the devised work was much better focused this session and much of the devised work was innovative, creative and exciting. The most impressive examples were rich in physicality with well-crafted movement and sensitively chosen music, judicious use of props/effects and pushing at boundaries in terms of content. The best devised work experimented with different styles and genres, used space and staging in interesting ways and allowed characters to be explored.

There were a few wordy, action-free performances that did not allow characters to develop. Groups who produced lengthy, wordy expositions did themselves few favours. There was a pervasive sense of teenage angst in a large number of pieces, and this did not often translate itself into effective drama. Instead, it tended to result in over-wordy pieces, mini soap operas, with a heavy reliance on sitting at tables. Where mime was used, it was often well considered and realistic, sustained and credible although the miming of door entrances/exits, handling phones or cups of drinks was often challenging. The over-use of entrances and exits with or without blackouts served no useful purpose and scenes sometimes needed editing to make them punchier.

Examples of repertoire seen in June 2022

Playwright	Title
A	
Albee, Edward	<i>Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?</i>
Anouilh, Jean	<i>Antigone</i>
Aristophanes	<i>The Knights</i>
Arnone, Joseph	<i>Outer Reaches of Space</i>
Arnone, Joseph	<i>Straight to the Nitty Gritty</i>
Arnone, Joseph	<i>Eye of the Whale</i>
Arnone, Joseph	<i>Checking in</i>
Arnone, Joseph	<i>Three Thousand Dollars and a New Life</i>
Ayckbourn, Alan	<i>Invisible Friends</i>
Ayckbourn, Alan	<i>Confusion</i>
Ayckbourn, Alan	<i>Gizmo</i>

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Playwright	Title
B Becket, Samuel Berkof/Kafka Bovell, Andrew	<i>Waiting for Godot</i> <i>The Trial</i> <i>Things I know to be True</i>
C Campton, David Chekhov, Anton Chekhov, Anton Chekhov, Anton Chekhov, Anton Churchill, Carol	<i>Cage Birds</i> <i>Ivanof</i> <i>The Cherry Orchard</i> <i>The Seagull</i> <i>Three Sisters</i> <i>Seven Jewish Children</i>
D Daniels, Sarah Davis, Gabriel Davis, Gabriel De La Barca, Pedro Durang, Christopher	<i>The Gut Girls</i> <i>Dreams in Captivity</i> <i>Goodbye Charles</i> <i>The Painter of his own Dishonour</i> <i>Laughing Wild</i>
E Euripides	<i>Medea</i>
F	
G Gaiman, Neil Godber, John Godber, John	<i>Ocean at the End of the Lane</i> <i>Shakers</i> <i>Teachers</i>
H	
I Ibsen, Henrik Ibsen, Henrik	<i>A Doll's House</i> <i>An Enemy of the People</i>
J Jonson, Ben	<i>Volpone</i>
K Kane, Sarah Kane, Sarah Kass, Sam Keatley, Charlotte Kelly, Denis Kirkwood, Lucy	<i>4:48 Psychosis</i> <i>Crave</i> <i>Lusting After Pipina's Wife</i> <i>My Mother Said I Never Should</i> <i>DNA</i> <i>Mosquitos</i>
L Lorca	<i>Yerma</i>
M Macdonald, Sharman MacMillan, Duncan Martin, Jason D Martin, Jason D McGee, Lisa McDonagh, Martin Miller, Arthur Miller, Arthur Murray Smith, Joanna	<i>After Juliet</i> <i>1984</i> <i>When It Rains Gasoline</i> <i>Dying Light</i> <i>Girls and Dolls</i> <i>The Pillowman</i> <i>The Crucible</i> <i>Death of a Salesman</i> <i>Honour</i>

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Playwright	Title
N Neff, Debra Nichols, Peter	<i>What Theo Did</i> <i>Day in the Death of Joe Egg</i>
O O'Hare, Eugene Oswald, Debra	<i>Hospital Food</i> <i>DAGS</i>
P Pinter, Harold Placey, Evan Placey, Evan Powell, Kelly Punter, Michael	<i>The Dumb Waiter</i> <i>Jekyll and Hyde</i> <i>Girls Like That</i> <i>Like Dreaming Backwards</i> <i>Darker Shores</i>
R Ravenhill, Mark Reade, Simon Rotimi, Oto Rotimi, Oto Jack Thorne	<i>Yesterday an Incident Occurred</i> <i>Private Peaceful</i> <i>Our Husband has Gone Mad Again</i> <i>The Gods Are Not To Blame</i> <i>Harry Potter and the Cursed Child</i>
S Schaffer, Peter Shakespeare Shakespeare Shakespeare Shakespeare Shaw, George Bernard Soyinka, Wole Sophocles Steel, Gordon Stephenson, Shelagh Stephens, Simon	<i>Amadeus</i> <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> <i>King Lear</i> <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> <i>Twelfth Night</i> <i>St Joan</i> <i>The Lion and The Jewel</i> <i>Antigone</i> <i>Like a Virgin</i> <i>Five Kinds of Silence</i> <i>Punk Rock</i>
T Treadwell, Sophie	<i>Machinel</i>
W Wade, Laura Wade, Laura Wilde, Oscar Wilde, Oscar Wilde, Oscar Williams, Tennessee Wymark, Olwyn	<i>The Watsons</i> <i>Colder than here</i> <i>Salome</i> <i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i> <i>An Ideal Husband</i> <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> <i>Find me</i>
Z Zeccola, Joseph	<i>Scuba Lessons</i>