

2004 Drama

Higher Paper 2

Contemporary Scottish Theatre

Finalised Marking Instructions

Drama Higher Contemporary Scottish Theatre

Marking Instructions

The questions in this section are designed to allow as broad a range of responses as possible, while at the same time anticipating some of the preferred routes through the course taken by teachers and pupils. In all cases markers should be looking for responses which offer detailed answers to the questions posed, showing evidence of reading, understanding of and engagement with the subject, as well as an appreciation of some of the key issues at work within Scottish theatre.

Essay questions require candidates to select from their knowledge of texts in order to shape a response to each specific question. Thus, obviously “prepared” answers which entirely fail to focus on the question cannot pass. Similarly, blanket coverage, which merely touches on the question, is unlikely to do well. Credit should be given to candidates who demonstrate that they are writing an essay not just making “a list of points”. Likewise candidates should be given credit for good use of quotes. It is unlikely that candidates will be in the good response category if they fail to use quotes. (This does not apply to question 10 and question 12 of this year’s paper.)

- In general each response should be marked out of 20 with broad bands as follows –
 - a good response will be marked between 15 and 20;
 - a fair response between 10 and 14; and
 - a poor response between 0 and 9.
- Candidates must answer two questions each from different areas of study – for candidates who answer two questions each from the same area of study, markers are requested to mark both answers but log only the higher mark as the total for the paper.
- Candidates must refer to at least two plays/productions in each answer except the answer to question 12 which allows the candidate to focus on one or more productions. For a candidate who has answered on only one text in one essay that response must be marked out of 10. The broad bands are as follows: a good response will be marked between 8 and 10; a fair response between 5 and 7; and a poor response between 0 and 4.
- Candidates must refer to a minimum of three texts across the two answers – for candidates whose two questions refer to just two texts, markers are requested to mark both answers but log only the higher mark as the total for the paper.

Candidates should make reference to ‘any post 1900 play which is set in Scotland and/or written by a playwright Scottish by birth or residence and/or commissioned by a Scottish theatre company and/or performed by a Scottish theatre company using a Scots translation, a Scottish idiom or a Scottish setting’.

SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS DIMENSIONS

1 Many Scottish playwrights explore aspects of social inequality. Choose two or more plays which you have seen or studied and discuss ways in which social inequalities are highlighted in each play.

Firstly the candidate should be able to identify at least two plays that highlight social inequalities.

Allow a wide definition of “social inequality”. For example plays which highlight:

differences in class
poverty
prejudice
deprivation
unemployment
housing/living conditions
working conditions
domestic violence
the exploitation of women
the role of men in society
the plight of old people in society
gender issues such as gay relationships.

This question does not ask the candidate to merely list the social inequalities. The question also expects the candidate to be able to analyse the playwright’s choice and use of dramatic devices and/or theatrical strategies to explore each social inequality highlighted.

- For example; setting (geographical/social), description of and commentary on the depiction of a physical environment, narrative, characterisation, character background, relationships.

Allow implicit reference to dramatic devices.

A good response (15 –20)

The candidate will identify and analyse a range of social inequalities highlighted in two or more plays. The candidate will give an in-depth analysis re the choice and use of a range of dramatic conventions used by each playwright. The candidate will also make extensive reference to at least two wholly appropriate plays.

A fair response (10-14)

The candidate will identify and analyse a range of social inequalities highlighted in two or more plays. The candidate will give an analysis re the choice and use of a range of dramatic conventions used by each playwright. The candidate will also make adequate reference to at least two wholly appropriate plays.

A poor response (0-9)

The candidate will identify and analyse a range of social inequalities highlighted in two or more plays. The candidate will give a limited analysis re the choice and use of a range of dramatic conventions used by each playwright. The candidate will also make adequate reference to at least two wholly appropriate plays.

2 Discuss how political issues are explored in at least two plays you have studied.
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The question expects candidates to be able to analyse how at least two appropriate plays/productions have used a range of dramatic devices or theatrical strategies to make political points or debate political issues or ideologies. Candidates may comment on the power of drama to communicate different types of messages to the audience which are heightened when the event is entertaining as well as instructive. Candidates might acknowledge that political points are communicated through formal conventions as well as in terms of content and they may discuss how a strong political message may be delivered with a range of “entertaining” strategies, for example:

- the ceilidh format
- the use of music
- use of stereotypes
- song and dance
- storytelling
- particular actor-audience relationships
- the structure and language of the play
- use of humour
- performance style.

Allow a wide definition of “political issues”. For example plays which explore:

- nationalism
- socialism
- feminism
- war
- the need for social change
- social protest
- environmental issues
- social exclusion
- issues of class.

A good response (15-20)

The candidate will demonstrate a clear and well-argued case using well-chosen examples of dramatic devices used by playwrights, describing the possible impact that each device will have on audience. The candidate will fully justify their choices with detailed reference to at least two appropriate plays/productions.

A fair response (10-14)

The candidate will demonstrate an adequate case study of appropriate examples of dramatic devices used by playwrights, describing the possible impact that each device will have on audiences. The candidate will justify their choice with adequate reference to at least two appropriate plays/productions.

A poor response (0-9)

The candidate will offer a limited analysis of the dramatic devices used by the playwright to explore political issues describing the possible impact that each device will have on audiences. The candidate will make reference to at least two appropriate plays/productions.

3 Discuss how religious issues are explored in at least two plays you have studied.
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The question expects candidates to be able to analyse how at least two appropriate plays/productions have used a range of dramatic devices or theatrical strategies to explore religious issues.

Candidates might acknowledge that religious points are communicated in terms of content such as:

setting (geographical/social)
narrative
characterisation
stereotypes
character background
relationships.

Candidates may comment on the power of drama to communicate different types of messages to the audience which are heightened when the event is entertaining as well as instructive. Such as those used in “Mary Queen Of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off” which uses music, song and dance, storytelling, humour and a specific performance style to get across the content of the play.

Allow a wide definition of “religious issues”. For example plays which explore:

religious diversity
prejudice
intolerance
bigotry
dogmatism
fanaticism
belief
traditions of a church
indoctrination
faith
particular religious views on sexuality.

A good response (15-20)

The candidate will demonstrate a clear and well-argued case using well-chosen examples of dramatic devices used by playwrights, describing the possible impact that each device will have on audience. The candidate will fully justify their choices with detailed reference to at least two appropriate plays/productions.

A fair response (10-14)

The candidate will demonstrate an adequate case study on appropriate examples of dramatic devices used by playwrights, describing the possible impact that each device will have on audiences. The candidate will justify their choice with adequate reference to at least two appropriate plays/productions.

A poor response (0-9)

The candidate will offer a limited analysis of the dramatic devices used by the playwright to explore political issues describing the possible impact that each device will have on audiences. The candidate will make reference to at least two appropriate plays/productions.

USE OF HISTORY, NOSTALGIA AND POPULAR TRADITION

4 “Scottish playwrights portray a romanticised view of Scotland’s past.” Do you agree with this statement in the light of your study of drama? You must make reference to at least two plays you have seen or studied.

Allow candidates to answer the question using plays that explore aspects of social history. For example it is acceptable for candidates to write about “The Slab Boys”, “The Steamie” and “Men Should Weep”.

This question expects the candidate to comment on contemporary Scottish playwrights’ portrayal of Scotland’s past. Candidates can argue a case for/against the statement. Candidates may argue a case for and against the statement. Do the playwrights paint a romantic picture of Scotland? (If so what is the nature of the ‘romanticism’? To what extent is the whole play a romanticised portrayal?) If not what kind of view/s of Scotland’s past do they portray? (It is more likely that candidates will opt to argue a case which is against the statement.) What is important is that the candidate presents a coherent, well-argued case which makes detailed reference to at least two appropriate plays/ productions.

A good response (15-20)

The candidate will respond directly to the question posed. The candidate will offer a clear, well-structured analysis of the representation of Scotland’s past making full reference to at least two wholly appropriate plays. The candidate will make it clear just why the playwright paints a particular portrayal analysing what the portrayal has to say about the contemporary world.

A fair response (10-14)

The candidate will respond directly to the question posed. The candidate will present a significant analysis of the representation of Scotland’s past making adequate reference to at least two wholly appropriate plays. The candidate will draw some kind of conclusion.

A poor response (0-9)

The candidate will attempt to answer the question posed. The candidate will present a limited and perhaps inconclusive analysis of the representation of Scotland’s past making some reference to at least two generally appropriate plays. The candidate may not draw any wider conclusions concentrating instead on a limited and descriptive account.

5 “Many of our playwrights rely too heavily on nostalgia. This leads to weak plots, two dimensional characters and cheap laughs. In short, inferior drama that insults the audience.”

Discuss this statement with reference to two or more plays you have seen or studied.

This question expects the candidate to comment on contemporary Scottish playwright’s dependency on the use of nostalgia and nostalgic features in their plays. Furthermore candidates are required to comment on the merit and/or demerit of using nostalgia/nostalgic elements. Candidates can argue a case for/against the statement. Candidates may argue a case for and against the statement.

The candidate will not do at all well if all they do is list nostalgic features and describe the function of each. There has to be analysis to come in to the good category. The question has two clear parts to it. Do playwrights rely too heavily on using nostalgia and does this dependency produce inferior plays?

When candidates argue against the statement allow them to refer to plays that do not have many/any nostalgic features.

Candidates may argue that the use of nostalgia/nostalgic features can be seen by some to meet a particular demand from audiences. The candidate would then have to analyse the range of features that these audiences demand.

What is important is that the candidate presents a coherent, well-argued case for and/or against the statement, which makes detailed reference to at least two appropriate plays/productions.

A good response (15-20)

The candidate will respond directly to the question posed. The candidate will offer a clear, well-structured analysis of a playwright’s reliance on using nostalgia in their plays. The candidate will also make detailed reference to the overall quality of any given playwright’s plays as a result of using nostalgia/nostalgic elements. The candidate must make full reference to at least two wholly appropriate plays.

A fair response (10-14)

The candidate will respond directly to the question posed. The candidate will present adequate analysis of a playwright’s reliance on using nostalgia in their plays. The candidate will make adequate references to the overall quality of any given playwright’s plays as a result of using nostalgia/nostalgic elements. The candidate must make full reference to at least two wholly appropriate plays.

A poor response (0-9)

The candidate will present a limited, inconclusive analysis of a playwright’s reliance in using nostalgia in their plays. Some will offer no analysis and merely list features. The candidate will make a list of nostalgic features and attempt to answer the question posed. The candidate may not draw any wider conclusions concentrating instead on a limited and descriptive account making some reference to at least two generally appropriate plays.

6 In two or more plays you have seen or studied comment on the use of humour in contemporary Scottish plays.

In answering this question the candidate would be expected to identify, describe and analyse the playwright/performer's use of humour in plays such as, 'The Big Picnic', 'The Cheviot The Stag...', 'The Steemie'.

Reference may be made to:

the structure of a play
the tradition of the Scotch comic
pantomime comedy techniques employed in the context of a play
actor/audience relationship
acting style
characterisation
different categories of comedy from 'slapstick' to 'stand-up'
comic situations
long running sketches
local references which have comic potential
comical references to past/current events
visual comedy
black comedy
farce
pointing/delivery/pacing of certain lines and speeches
patter
gags
humorous songs
music, which in a particular context could be funny
humorous dances.

A good response (15-20)

The candidate will present a detailed analysis and commentary of the range of comic techniques used by playwrights/performers in appropriate plays/performances. The candidate will go beyond a description of each comic device, making comments on why they think each device is used. The candidate will draw examples from at least two wholly appropriate texts which will be discussed in relation to some of the terms listed above.

A fair response (10-14)

The candidate will present an adequate analysis and commentary of the range of comic techniques used by playwrights/performers in appropriate plays/performances. The candidate will go beyond a description of each comic device, making comments on why they think each device is used. The candidate will draw examples from at least two appropriate texts which will be discussed in relation to some of the terms listed above.

A poor response (0-9)

The candidate will present a limited analysis of the range of comic techniques used by playwrights/performers in appropriate plays/performances. The candidate will be unlikely to go beyond a description of each comic device. The candidate will draw examples from at least two appropriate texts which will be discussed in relation to some of the terms listed above.

ISSUES OF GENDER

7 In at least two plays you have seen or studied, discuss the extent to which women in Scottish drama are portrayed as independent.

The question asks the candidate to consider the portrayal of women and consider how much of the portrayal depicts women as being independent, or not. The candidate should include an analysis of how the playwright/s has created the portrayal. The candidate would be expected to discuss the statement by analysing in depth two or more characters.

Reference may be made to:

women's role within society

status

women's role within the drama itself

motivation

plot

theme/s

relationships to other characters

intentions of the playwright

social/historical context of the play

character background,

character development

stereotypes sometimes associated with representations of women in Scottish drama

why stereotypes are used.

A good response (15-20)

The candidate will respond directly to the question posed. The candidate will offer a clear, well-structured analysis of the portrayal of women in Scottish drama, making full reference to at least two wholly appropriate plays. The candidate will make it clear just why the playwright paints a particular portrayal analysing what the portrayal has to say about the contemporary world.

A fair response (10-14)

The candidate will respond directly to the question posed. The candidate will present a significant analysis of the portrayal of women in Scottish drama, making adequate reference to at least two wholly appropriate plays. The candidate will draw some kind of conclusion.

A poor response (0-9)

The candidate will attempt to answer the question posed. The candidate will present a limited and perhaps inconclusive analysis of the portrayal of women in Scottish drama, making some reference to at least two generally appropriate plays. The candidate may not draw any wider conclusions concentrating instead in a limited and descriptive account.

8 In two plays you have seen or studied, discuss whether or not young men display the same characteristics as their male elders.

The question asks the candidate to consider the portrayal of young men and consider how much the young men display the same characteristics as older men.

Allow candidates to write about male elders that are perhaps only two or three years older such as Jack Hogg from 'The Slab Boys' if such a minimal age difference is significant in the context of the play/society.

The candidate should include an analysis of how the playwright/s has created the portrayal. The candidate would be expected to discuss the statement by analysing in depth two or more characters.

Reference may be made to:

men's role within society
status
men's role within the drama itself
motivation
plot
theme/s
relationships to other characters
intentions of the playwright
social/historical context of the play
character background,
character development
stereotypes sometimes associated with representations of men in Scottish drama
why stereotypes are used.

A good response (15-20)

The candidate will respond directly to the question posed. The candidate will offer a clear, well-structured analysis of the portrayal of young men in Scottish drama compared to the portrayal of older men, making full reference to at least two wholly appropriate plays. The candidate will make it clear just why the playwright paints a particular portrayal analysing what the portrayal has to say about the contemporary world.

A fair response (10-14)

The candidate will respond directly to the question posed. The candidate will present a significant analysis of the portrayal of young men in Scottish drama compared to the portrayal of older men, making adequate reference to at least two wholly appropriate plays. The candidate will draw some kind of conclusion.

A poor response (0-9)

The candidate will attempt to answer the question posed. The candidate will present a limited and perhaps inconclusive analysis of the portrayal of young men in Scottish drama compared to the portrayal of older men, making some reference to at least two generally appropriate plays. The candidate may not draw any wider conclusions concentrating instead on a limited and descriptive account.

9 “Many contemporary Scottish plays explore the conflict that can exist between people of different generations.”

Discuss this statement with reference to at least two plays you have seen or studied.

Within any appropriate text, the candidate would be expected to identify, describe and analyse the nature of the conflict that exists between people of a different generation.

Reference may be made to:

an older person's outlook compared to a younger person's outlook
a young person's outlook compared to an older person's outlook
status
a young woman's/man's role within society compared to an older woman/man and vice versa
women's/men's role within the drama itself
motivation
expectations, hopes and aspirations
plot
theme/s
relationships
intentions of the playwright
social/historical context of the play
character background,
character development
stereotypes.

A good response (15-20)

The candidate will respond directly to the question posed. The candidate will offer a clear, well-structured analysis of the conflict that exists between people of different generations, making full reference to at least two wholly appropriate plays. The candidate will make it clear just why the playwright paints a particular portrayal analysing what the portrayal has to say about the contemporary world.

A fair response (10-14)

The candidate will respond directly to the question posed. The candidate will present a significant analysis of the conflict that exists between people of different generations, making adequate reference to at least two wholly appropriate plays. The candidate will draw some kind of conclusion.

A poor response (0-9)

The candidate will attempt to answer the question posed. The candidate will present a limited and perhaps inconclusive analysis of the conflict that exists between people of different generations, making some reference to at least two generally appropriate plays. The candidate may not draw any wider conclusions concentrating instead on a limited and descriptive account.

CURRENT PRODUCTIONS AND ISSUES

10 Consider the work of a contemporary Scottish theatre company.

(a) Drawing on appropriate evidence, analyse the company's use of theatre space for two contrasting productions.

OR

(b) Drawing on appropriate evidence, analyse the choice of plays in its repertoire for one season.

The question asks the candidate to focus in some depth on one C20 Scottish theatre company.

Q10 (a)

This is not a review but an analysis of two productions. The candidate must make detailed reference to two contrasting productions that were performed in the same theatre space. For example, two productions that were mounted by a company such as the Traverse. The candidate may choose to focus on a production style associated with a particular designer/director or the work of two different designers/directors.

The candidate would be expected to make reference to some of the following:

configuration of the acting space
size of theatre
actor/audience relationship
genre
plot
structure
themes
setting/location
design (set, lighting, costume, make-up, props, stage-dressing)
production style
acting style
characterisation
use of music/sound
language
movement
use of text.

A good response (15-20)

A good candidate will offer a coherent, in-depth analysis of the use of a particular theatre space for two contrasting productions. The good candidate will make reference to most of the components from the list above. There will be detailed exemplification of the points made.

A fair response (10-14)

A fair candidate will offer a fairly clear, detailed analysis of the use of a particular theatre space for two contrasting productions. There will be appropriate exemplification of the points made.

A poor response (0-9)

A poor candidate will offer a limited analysis of the use of a particular theatre space for two contrasting productions. The evidence will tend to be unsupported and generally unconvincing. There will be attempt at exemplification of the points made.

Q10 (b)

The candidate is required to go beyond a description of a company's repertoire and provide a detailed analysis of the menu of productions that they have offered to their theatre-going public for one season. The candidate would be expected to analyse the Company's choice of repertoire in terms of:

artistic direction/artistic policy/manifesto
writers/directors/performers/designers associated with a particular theatre company
a company's particular way of working
production style
the make-up of a particular audience
audience feedback
theatre-going trends
links with schools/community groups/interest groups
socio-economic factors
demography
finance/budget constraints
Scottish Arts Council funding/policy/manifesto.

"Appropriate evidence" could be drawn from some or all of the following:

publicity material (posters, adverts, fliers, production photos, internet web-sites)
programmes
reviews
newspaper articles that give an in-depth analysis re particular productions
theatre web-sites
audience questionnaires
interviews with theatre personnel (artistic directors, designers, drama officers, marketing managers).

A good response (15-20)

A good candidate will offer an in-depth analysis of one C20 Scottish theatre company's choice of repertoire for one season. The good response should make reference to a wide range of the components from the lists above.

A fair response (10-14)

A fair candidate will offer a fairly clear, detailed analysis of one of C20 Scottish theatre company's choice of repertoire for one season. The fair response should make reference to a range of the components from the lists above.

A poor response (0-9)

A poor candidate will offer a poor analysis of one of C20 Scottish theatre company's choice of repertoire for one season. The poor candidate will tend to make unsupported and generally unconvincing commentary on the company's choice of repertoire.

11 Consider the work of one contemporary Scottish playwright. Describe and analyse the range of characters that the playwright creates. You should illustrate your answer with reference to two or more plays that you have seen or studied.

This question asks candidate to focus in some depth on one C20 Scottish playwright offering description and analysis of the playwright's choice and use of characterisation. The question clearly asks the candidate to consider the range of characters that a playwright creates in his/her plays. The candidate may argue that a particular playwright has a narrow range of characters or that a playwright uses a wide range of characters. It is important that the candidate has a balance between description and analysis.

The candidate would be expected to make reference to some of the following:

role
relevant background details
status
personality
temperament
family background
motivation
symbolism
representation
relationships
character development
stereotypes
gender issues
sexuality
intentions of the playwright
characterisation associated with a particular genre/style of play
social/historical/political/social-political context of a play.

A good response (15-20)

The candidate will give an in-depth analysis re the choice and use of a range of characterisations used by each playwright. The candidate will also make extensive reference to at least two wholly appropriate plays.

A fair response (10-14)

The candidate will give an analysis re the choice and use of a range of characterisations used by each playwright. The candidate will also make adequate reference to at least two wholly appropriate plays.

A poor response (0-9)

The candidate will give a limited analysis re the choice and use of a range of characterisations used by each playwright. The candidate will tend to put more emphasis on describing each character. The candidate will also make adequate reference to at least two wholly appropriate plays.

12 Choose the work of a contemporary Scottish theatre practitioner that you consider innovative. Your answer should describe and analyse one or more plays or productions that you have seen or studied.

It is important to consider the theatre-going experience of 'Higher Level' candidates, consequently a broad interpretation of "innovative" is required. This is a wide ranging question and it is hoped that candidates will feel that they can tackle the question in many different ways. Candidates may choose to focus on a playwright, designer or director. For example: Byrne's translation of 'Uncle Varick' and Liz Lochhead's translation/reworking of 'The Theban Trilogy' are works by two innovative playwrights; The Traverse productions of 'Still Life' and 'The Straits' could be seen as being innovative re the symbolic staging.

The candidate would be expected to make reference to some of the following:

Playwright

adaptation
interpretation
translation
use of character
plot
structural devices.

Director

interpretation of text
interpretation of character
character interaction
use of performing space
use of symbolic movement/dance sequences
use of music.

Designer

set
costume
lighting.

A good response (15-20)

The candidate will give an in-depth description and analysis of one or more plays/productions by a practitioner that he/she considers to be innovative.

A fair response (10-14)

The candidate will give a description and analysis of one or more plays/productions by a practitioner that he/she considers to be innovative.

A poor response (0-9)

The candidate will give a limited analysis of one or more plays/productions by a practitioner that he/she considers to be innovative. The candidate will tend to put more emphasis on describing each innovation.

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]