



External Assessment Report 2011

| | |
|---------|-----------------------|
| Subject | Drama |
| Level | Standard Grade |

The statistics used in this report are pre-appeal.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers/lecturers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published question papers and marking instructions for the Examination.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

The number of candidates being entered for Standard Grade Drama continues to increase year on year. The majority of candidates are now being presented at levels appropriate to their ability. Inappropriate presentations this year again tended to apply to whole centres rather than to individual candidates within centres.

All three Question Papers were generally well done and candidates are attempting virtually all questions in all papers.

Results at all three levels, Foundation, General and Credit, indicate consistent or improved attainment this year.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Foundation

Candidates coped well with all questions in Section A, except for Q4, the theatre arts question:

Q4 Lighting, sound and costume are theatre arts. In what ways could you have used two of these arts in your group's final presentation?

In Section B, candidates coped well with the vocabulary grid, Q7:

Q7 The following adverts are items 'For Sale' or 'Wanted' in a local newspaper. What theatrical item is being described in each advert?

and with Q6 (a)–(d), (f) and (g).

General

Most scenarios are well done, succinctly summarised and correctly set out in scene-by-scene format, stating changes in time and place.

Q3 (a) and (b) were very well done (*character card*), as were Q5 (*drama terms*) and Q6 (a)–(f) on *movement words and description of set/set dressings*. Q7 (*stylised movement terms*) and Q8 (*characterisation techniques*) were reasonably well done.

Credit

Q1, 2 and 3 were generally well done.

Q1 (a) Identify one type of evaluation that your group used during the creating and presenting process.

(b) Explain how this contributed to the success of your final presentation.

Q2 Think about the drama created by your group. Consider the last scene in which your character appeared. (This might not be the final scene of your drama.)...

Q3 Now think of the overall design concepts for your character's costume and make-up. Explain how your ideas could enhance your character's impact on the audience.

Q2 and Q3 elicited some excellent answers, the latter demonstrating that candidates are becoming much better at describing overall concepts rather than merely giving a list of costume details.

Q5 was well done by the majority of candidates, although in (b) some did not relate their answer to the mood and atmosphere described in (a).

Q5 You are the director of the scene below. (a) What mood and atmosphere would you want to establish in this scene and why? (b) To reinforce this mood and atmosphere, your design decisions are important. What design decisions would you make about set, set dressings and lighting for this scene?

Q8 (ground plan) was generally well done.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Foundation

In Q4, too many candidates failed to relate their answer to their final presentation and instead made general comments such as 'costume could help to show who the characters were'.

In Q6 (e) and (h), some candidates did not use movement and voice terms and instead gave, for example, *the emotion* involved.

Q6 (e) Describe two movement words David could use when he reads the letter.

Q6 (h) Describe two voice words Angela could use when she replies.

General

Some scenarios, although increasingly few, are still too long and are penalised as a result.

However, too many scenarios still contain too many conventions, eg 'Sc. 3 is a dance drama showing how they felt'; 'Sc. 5 Megan does a monologue to the audience'. This, too, is costing candidates marks as a plot cannot adequately be outlined when it unfolds through a series of conventions.

In Q3 (c), candidates who failed to read the question properly and consequently did not answer about the characters in (a) and (b) lost marks in (d) as a result.

Q4 was generally well done but too many candidates, mostly presented at F/G level, gave generic answers about the need for or usefulness of theatre arts and did not relate their answers to their final presentation.

Q4 Choose three (Theatre Arts) and explain how they could enhance your group's final presentation.

Credit

Answers to Q4 (*vocabulary*) revealed that many centres are substituting terms in the Body of Knowledge with terms of their own; '*lighting board*', '*character profile*' and '*bald cap*' were examples which recurred frequently.

Responses to Q5 revealed candidate uncertainty over the difference between set and set dressings, and in some cases over what set dressings actually are.

Q7 (a) and (b) were fairly well answered — when candidates used voice and movement terms correctly (see Advice to Centres below).

The most poorly answered question in this paper was Q7 (c) as too many candidates failed to read the instruction to relate their answer to the creation of tension. Once again, careless reading of the question cost marks.

Q7 (a) What would the audience see happening during pause 1 (line 3)? You should refer to three of the movement terms listed below.

Q7 (b) What sounds would the audience hear during the second long pause (line 11)?

Q7 (c) Choose either the OLD MAN or the OLD WOMAN. What voice instructions would you give to the actor to create this tension? Make reference to three voice terms.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

General

- 1 A significant reason why candidates lost marks in all three Question Papers was failure to read the questions properly. Anything centres can do to address this problem would greatly benefit their candidates.
- 2 Centres should ensure that their pre-examination assessments of student performance allow for presentation of candidates at the appropriate F/G or G/C level.
- 3 The dramas created by candidates from the scenarios issued are, to a large extent, a means to an end in terms of successfully tackling Section A questions. Candidates' chances of successfully and succinctly answering questions in Section A are maximised when the scenario is short, simple and contains strong characters with varied relationships and opportunities for theatre arts. Conversely, pupils may, and do, experience difficulties with Section A questions if their scenarios contain multiple scenes, multiple shifts in time and place, non-human characters and the overuse of conventions and characterisation techniques. Centres are also reminded that a marks penalty is imposed on over-long scenarios.
- 4 Centres should be aware of the scenario requirement to state the time and place of the opening scene and then state all changes in time and/or place in ensuing scenes. It

therefore follows that a scenario laid out in a 'Sc. 1, Time, Place, Action, Sc. 2. Time, Place, Action' format is conducive to gaining full marks. The marking instructions in 2012 will reflect the need for clear scene divisions and statements of time and place.

- 5 The requirements for the marking of voice and movement questions were amended in 2010 and are repeated in this report. Centres should note in particular the reference to body language because the requirements state that, from 2011, references merely to *open* or *closed* body language will no longer be awarded marks without accompanying detail or exemplification.
- 6 Centres are reminded that the vocabulary listed in the Body of Knowledge constitutes the only terminology accepted in exam responses and that the Body of Knowledge will continue to be the source of questions and therefore centres' examination preparation should be informed by this document.

Voice and movement questions

In all **voice-** and **movement-**based questions, from now on, the following guidelines will apply:

The adjective used with a **voice** term must be accurate, because it is the adjective which indicates knowledge and understanding of the term. For example, if a candidate says *low tone* it is not clear if the term is understood. If a candidate says *angry tone*, understanding of the term is clear. Therefore, the adjectives associated with each word must be accurate to gain marks. Normally, the adjectives associated with each term are:

- ◆ *Volume: loud/quiet, high or low*
- ◆ *Pace: fast/slow*
- ◆ *Pitch: high/low*
- ◆ *Tone: must refer to an emotion*
- ◆ *Pause: long/short*
- ◆ *Emphasis: on word or phrase, not usually on entire sentence*
- ◆ *Accent: reference to a place/area/country required*
- ◆ *Clarity: poor/ no/ with/ good/ poor*

There will be variations, but this is a general guide. No longer, at F, G or C level will, eg *low tone* or *high volume* be credited with marks.

Neither will marks be awarded if a candidate merely states that a voice term would be used, as in *I would use pace/tone/pitch* etc.

The description of **movement** terms will be similarly amended.

- ◆ *Body language: cannot be described as open or closed. Detail or exemplification must be given.*

This change was not applied to the marking of 2010 papers, but will be applied **from 2011**.

- ◆ *Eye contact: made/not made/ made intermittently*
- ◆ *Use of space: no/little/extensive/full*
- ◆ *Facial expression: must refer to an emotion*

- ◆ *Posture: good/bad/poor, or descriptions such as slouched/upright*
- ◆ *Gesture: big/small not acceptable, must be described*

There will be variations, but the above is a general guide.

As with voice, marks will not be awarded if a candidate merely states that a movement term would be used, as in: 'I would use gesture/posture' etc.

Appeals — some helpful advice

- 1 For each candidate, centres should submit both levels of the Question Paper as Appeals evidence. If there is insufficient evidence for the estimated grade/level, it may be possible to award a grade at the lower level, but this can only happen if both papers are submitted.
- 2 Centres should base their cut-off scores on those published on SQA's website for the most recent years.
- 3 It is helpful if prelim paper totals are given in marks and not percentages and if prelims could be based on the 50, 60, 70 mark pattern for F, G and C in the external examination.
- 4 Evaluation items are not accepted as evidence. They are used in the grading of the Presenting Element, and therefore cannot be considered to be evidence of Knowledge and Understanding.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Standard Grade

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| Number of resulted entries in 2010 | 6,317 |
|------------------------------------|-------|

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| Number of resulted entries in 2011 | 6,554 |
|------------------------------------|-------|

Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of overall awards

| | |
|----------|-------|
| Grade 1 | 26.8% |
| Grade 2 | 28.6% |
| Grade 3 | 22.2% |
| Grade 4 | 14.5% |
| Grade 5 | 5.1% |
| Grade 6 | 0.9% |
| Grade 7 | 0.0% |
| No award | 1.8% |

Grade boundaries for each assessable element in the subject included in the report

| Assessable Element | Credit Max Mark | Grade Boundaries | | General Max Mark | Grade Boundaries | | Found-ation Max Mark | Grade Boundaries | |
|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|----|------------------|------------------|----|----------------------|------------------|----|
| | | 1 | 2 | | 3 | 4 | | 5 | 6 |
| KU | 70 | 48 | 35 | 60 | 36 | 28 | 50 | 29 | 19 |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |