



External Assessment Report 2009

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

2009 was the fourth year of the new Question Paper structure and the majority of candidates are now being presented at levels appropriate to their ability.

Once again, failure to read questions carefully and thoroughly cost too many marks. For example, in the General paper, the majority of candidates did not note that the response to Q4 (b) had to be linked to their response to Q (4a) regarding the character's personality. While this is a specific example, evidence exists across all three papers to suggest that candidates are losing marks needlessly. Centres may wish to consider and try to address this in their preparation of candidates.

Markers noted an overall improvement in candidates' knowledge of vocabulary terms.

Markers noted with concern an increase in the number of candidates applying the wrong adjective to a voice or movement term, as in *loud pitch*, *low tone* and *high volume*, and losing marks as a result.

All centres are reminded that the Body of Knowledge (BoK) will continue to be the source of questions and therefore centres' exam preparation should be informed by this document.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Foundation Question Paper

It appears that centres are preparing candidates very well for this paper and candidates coped well with all questions except the ground plan (see Foundation Question Paper section below). Question 8 was particularly well done.

General Question Paper

Scenarios are succinctly summarised by the majority of candidates. However, some scenarios are still excessively long. Centres are reminded that this results in a loss of marks, as outlined in the Marking Instructions available on the SQA website.

Credit Question Paper

Most questions in this paper, particularly Question 3, were well, or very well, done. Question 5 elicited some excellent responses.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Foundation Question Paper

- ◆ The ground plan question was poorly done. Centres are reminded that the Body of Knowledge contains information on the requirements of a ground plan, and that these requirements are reflected in the marking instructions
- ◆ The opening position of actors on a ground plan is a requirement for Higher Drama only.

General Question Paper

- ◆ Some scenarios contain so many conventions that summarising presents real problems for candidates. See the Advice to Centres section below.

- ◆ Role and purpose were confused in Q3 (a).

Credit Question Paper

- ◆ Question 4 was not well done. All centres are reminded that the Body of Knowledge will continue to be the source of questions and therefore centres' exam preparation should be informed by this document.
- ◆ In Question 6, some candidates included ways of creating tension other than through movement and motivation, as asked for. These responses could not be credited.
- ◆ Too many answers to Question 7 were generic and generalised, rather than specific to a particular drama.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

- ◆ The dramas created by candidates from the scenarios issued annually are, to a large extent, a means to an end in terms of successfully tackling Section A of the Question Paper. Pupils' chances of successfully and succinctly answering Section A questions are maximised when the scenario is short, simple, contains strong characters with varied relationships and opportunities for theatre arts. Conversely, therefore, pupils may experience difficulties with Section A questions if their scenarios contain multiple scenes, multiple shifts in time and place, non-human characters, the over-use of conventions and if characterisation techniques such as *thought tunnel* form integral scenes. Centres are also reminded that a marks penalty is imposed on over-long scenarios.
- ◆ Markers noted an increasing tendency among candidates to describe body language as simply *open* or *closed*. There is a similar problem with *good* or *bad* posture. If these types of terms are used, exemplification must follow to gain marks.
- ◆ A mobile phone as a prop should be explained rather than it being deemed a suitable prop for any and every character.
- ◆ Centres are reminded that the vocabulary listed in the Body of Knowledge constitutes the only terms accepted in examination papers.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2008	6414
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Number of resulted entries in 2009	6254
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Statistical Information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of overall awards

Distribution of overall awards									
Grade 1		23.2%							
Grade 2		30.7%							
Grade 3		22.7%							
Grade 4		14.8%							
Grade 5		5.1%							
Grade 6		1.3%							
Grade 7		0.0%							
No award		2.1%							

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		Foundation Max Mark	Grade Boundaries	
		1	2		3	4		5	6
KU	70	48	35	60	36	28	50	29	19