



Questions & Answers

Higher Drama Webinar Content

1 Question paper – section 1

As a director, can a pupil refer to just acting, or a combination of acting and production areas?

Answering as a director provides the scope to cover all areas and it is good practice to reference more than one area, but it is not essential. A candidate could access marks only referring to acting but equally, could access marks by only referring to other production areas. They could also combine an acting and production area, such as lighting for example, together to make one point. The candidate needs to write enough detail to allow the examiner to clearly visualise their concept.

Both 'b' tick parts are very lengthy with lots of lexicon vocabulary for concepts, used accurately. Can you offer guidance about how much is required to access this 'b' tick?

Due to the different demands of the text chosen, there is no definitive number. The 'b' tick should be awarded for a holistic concept. For example, when writing about acting, one voice or one movement term is **not** considered a concept. The candidate needs to write enough to allow the examiner to visualise the concept clearly. Accurate and appropriate concepts will be awarded marks.

In section 1, to access a 'b' mark must the candidate describe voice and movement concepts, or may they mention only voice or only movement concepts?

The 'b' tick should be awarded for a holistic acting concept and so, where possible, try to include relevant voice and movement for the moment being discussed, as that would help the candidate make their point. Voice can be very important when discussing how the character will deliver the quote line however, it is understood that movement may be equally relevant here. We realise that there are some moments where voice is not used and vice versa. This should be reflected in the quote chosen in the 'a' tick.

Do pupils need to write detailed explanations of acting concepts, eg angry facial expressions shown as furrowed eyebrows, a clenched jaw etc, or do they only need to state 'angry facial expressions'?

'Angry facial expression' is wholly acceptable and reasonable due to the time constraints. Where the candidate can give extra detail, this is commended and helpful to create the picture on stage.

Regarding the 'b1' (insightful comment - section 1) mark, could this be taught as 'how does it make the other character feel and how does the audience react'? There are some examples where I thought the 'b1' mark would be awarded, but you have said it is repetition. How do you teach the 'b1' mark and what do you ask candidates to include?

There are numerous approaches to this. The 'b1' mark should justify why the candidate's acting/directing/design concept would have an impact on the audience and answer the question posed. This insightful comment could also allow us to, for example, think about the deeper meaning of a moment or the social/historical circumstances of the time or foreshadowing something that is to come.

'This is just from Act 1' - doesn't the candidate have to draw from the whole play as I believe this used to be the case?

The example used was just from Act 1. The current Higher qualification asks the candidates to consider the play as a whole and it is good practice to do so. However, candidates may decide to focus on one particular part of the play, and this is acceptable. Some questions even state to consider a scene therefore, candidates do not need to draw from the whole play to access the marks. This was a rule in the old Higher qualification.

2 Question paper – section 3

Would it be acceptable to answer this question analysing only 5 key moments? The pupil would choose the 2 areas they wish to answer on and use the same moments for each area.

Finding and analysing 10 moments is best practice as candidates often self-penalise if they are using the same point/moment for both production areas. Using 5 key moments is accepted and can still access 10 marks, if analysis and depth is produced in the answer. Candidates need to make sure they avoid repetition.

With the emphasis on correct use of terminology in section 3, how many points do they need to make describing the acting, versus the number of points that aren't correct within the mark? The candidate used 'baby-like' to describe body language, which I thought should always be described as an emotion. Would 'baby-like' as an emotion be accepted?

The 'how' part of the question must provide enough depth and detail that the examiner can visualise what is actually happening on the stage at that moment. The correct use of terminology is best practice here however, not everything you see on the stage may be described and analysed with specific terminology. What is meant by 'baby-like'? This would conjure different images for different people and so, needs to be broken down into a description of how the actor is being 'baby-like'.

3 Question paper – general

Is it best to advise candidates to only offer directing/acting concepts for one actor on stage?

This depends on what section of the question paper you are referring to. In section 1, the question will lead the candidate to the answer in the wording. The candidate may be asked to discuss the acting concepts of one character however, could be asked to discuss the relationship and therefore, it could be relevant to talk about another actor. For example, one character being centre stage in close proximity to another character.

If it is in section 3, the candidate could refer to many different actors throughout the play when analysing what they saw.