

Teacher Resource Bank

GCSE Drama

Candidate exemplar answers

Unit 1 - 42401



SAMPLE CANDIDATE ANSWERS

GCSE DRAMA

INTRODUCTION

The sample answers and comments which follow are provided to illustrate the application of the mark scheme for the written paper in the new specification.

Marks have also been assigned but at this stage they have to be regarded as provisional. For an operational exam senior examiners' decisions are based on having seen and discussed a wide range of candidates' responses and definitive marks can only be awarded when the full standardisation processes have been completed.

Section A: PRACTICAL WORK COMPLETED DURING THE COURSE

Question

Choose a piece of practical work of which you were proud.

You must answer the questions that follow from your experience as actor or designer or technician.

- 1 Describe what the piece was about including the style, performance space, period and genre. State what theatrical skill you contributed to it. *(10 marks)*

Answer

I was proud of our practical piece that was influenced by Blue Remembered Hills. Our play was about a group of present day children aged around 14-16, who had endured bad experiences that had affected their everyday lives. The play took place on a school trip with their rather incapable school councillor to a type of clinic in the hope of improving their behaviour. The play had a sequence of interrelated scenes telling some of each character's back story. Each member of our group of four had to play a range of parts to make each of the back stories work, while we each had our own central story. I played the part of Jessica, whose story related to child abuse. We set the story in modern times so that we could use influences from newspaper articles and from our friends. We were concerned at the start that we wanted to do a piece of drama that carried serious issues as we have all mainly created comic pieces in the past. We wanted to move our audience and to raise their awareness of a range of issues. We performed it in the school Drama studio in an end stage setting with minimal staging, some physical theatre and stage lighting. Our costuming was black tops and trousers, with signifying additions to help change character, for example, as Jessica I wore a light blue blouse that I could put on and remove quickly in order to play different roles.

Comments

This candidate identifies the style of play that they were intending to create, to move their audience and raise issues. The stimulus of the work is stated and some of the relevance to the finished work. The period is stated as 'modern times', the manner of staging is identified as end stage setting and the approach to acting is identified. The balance between comic and serious is mentioned. A little more detail on the piece itself would raise this to top band – this answer would be placed in Band 2 (7-8 marks).

Mark awarded = 8

Question

- 2 Explain what it was about your contribution that made you proud. Give details of **at least one** aspect of the performance in support. (10 marks)

Answer

My character of Jessica was a great part to play, although her story was harrowing. There were three distinctly different aspects to Jessica's character and these were represented in three particular scenes. My first character was the hard bully of present day. I developed a coarse voice and an open posture; I developed some good put-down lines to deliver to the other children, while saving my most cutting ones for the councillor, Mr Watkins. This was a big, confident character, but my first flash back was to when my character was 8, like in Blue Remembered Hills. For this I needed to loosen my posture, lift my voice tone and develop a range of childish mannerisms - these I based on my younger sister. This was good fun to play and helped to make sure that the play was not completely without humour. In this scene my father, played by Patrick, makes his first abusive approach to my character. The third task for my acting in the play was one of a series of flash forward scenes, with Jessica making calm arrangements to end her life by swallowing an overdose of pills. I was most proud of this scene as I was alone on stage at this point, having had a huge row with my father. In the development of this scene we, as a group, made sure that there was a believable thought process, while also keeping the tension high. I was told by many in the audience that this scene had been particularly effective and that they had been moved by Jessica's situation. This made me feel that I had done a good job in developing the character and that we as a group had created a worthwhile piece of drama. We wanted the performance to be interesting and hard hitting, bringing up serious problems in some people's lives. It made me realise that comedy had its place but that the serious edge to this piece helped make it the most memorable performance for us so far.

Comments

The candidate has a good understanding of the process that she undertook and she identifies particular challenges for her role in the group. There is focus on what made the candidate proud. More on the development of acting skills and a specific example would raise this to a higher band. This would score in Band 3 (5-6 marks).

Mark awarded = 6

Question

- 3 Analyse the work by identifying **at least one** key section of the piece that developed in rehearsal and provide details of **at least one** occasion where progress and improvements were made.

(10 marks)

Answer

We had a limited time to work on this piece, but this helped us to keep our focus and stopped us dithering too much at the ideas stage. We quickly decided on the idea that we would have a central scene from which each character flashed forward and backwards and one of our tasks was to develop a way of doing this that was not repetitive or cheesy. Once we had developed all, or at least most, of the scenes, we brainstormed ideas that might work in transferring us forward or backwards. We developed a variety of soundscapes using percussion and recorded sound but decided that we should create vocal collages to indicate that the naturalness of the scene before was about to be broken. These were accompanied by a lighting sequence and some physical movement that incorporated costume and minimal set changes, the vocal work was developed from sentences of dialogue that were related to the character to be explored in the next scene. As we had male and female members of the group, we were able to use the different qualities of the voices to create a range of possibilities from which we chose our favourite. I think that we created some interesting and unusual qualities at these moments, and I was very proud of this work. My transition had the other three move towards me, extending their arms towards me in a sheltering action, while there was a collage of statements from school friends, teachers, neighbours, all dominated by Patrick's father-figure saying 'Daddy's little girl' over and over again at different speeds and intonations. This created just the right level of creepiness, helped us break the naturalness of the scenes and gave some indication of the scene to follow.

Comments

The candidate has a good grasp of the skills required to play the part; she identifies a specific area of the play, the links, and gives a good account of the process that the group undertook to arrive at a very acceptable solution, well expressed here. There is good knowledge and understanding of acting skills here and an excellent focus on a specific section. There is purposeful focus on what made the candidate proud. This would score in the top band (9-10 marks).

Mark awarded = 9

Question

- 4 Evaluate what you learnt from the experience of working on this piece. Give details of your own strengths and/or weaknesses in this piece. (10 marks)

Answer

I believe that I learnt from this play that comedy can work in a piece that is mainly serious and that it can increase the effectiveness for an audience. I learnt that an audience can be emotionally affected by a piece of original work and that the timing of my performance in the suicide scene could affect the impact. I also learnt that my strengths lie in plays of this kind and I can reach some emotional depth when required, empathising with people in upsetting circumstances. I also learnt that it is possible to create a worthwhile piece in a short time. In fact I think that it is a good thing to do so. I have learnt the need to shape a devised piece, the need for good, reliable team work and the need to give variety to the linking scenes. I have learnt that a short piece should keep the interest of the audience by working towards a powerful scene late on in the play. This was my suicide scene and I learnt here to pace my approach to the events that happened in the scene, keeping the audience involved and unsure that I will go through with the action. I really enjoyed this play, and particularly this last scene, as it gave me confidence to try other testing roles, created a worthwhile play as a result of good teamwork and did what we set out to do, to create a play that raised issues and involved the audience emotionally.

Comments

There is a good understanding of areas of improvement and an understanding of areas from which she has learnt. There is good reference to strengths that she felt that she possessed through working on the extract. There could have been more specific detail from the scene to raise this to top band. This response would score in Band 2 (7-8 marks).

Mark awarded = 8

Section B: STUDY AND PERFORMANCE OF A SCRIPTED PLAY

Question

Choose a role from **one** play you have studied and performed during your course. Choose **one** extract from this play. Your answer to both parts of this question should focus on acting.

- 1 Explain what the main acting challenges were in playing your role in this extract of the play. Give clear details of the research, rehearsal and other preparation work to explain how you developed your own acting skills during this process. (20 marks)

AND

- 2 Analyse how well you achieved what you and the rest of the cast set out to do. Give clear details of your interpretation of the role, the reasons for your approach to the performance of your role and how you worked with others. (20 marks)

1 Answer

Animal Farm adapted by Peter Hall

The role that I studied and performed was the part of a pig called Squealer. The play is adapted from the novel by George Orwell and it shows the growth of communism in Russia after the revolution. The story is set in Manor farm, where the animals have been mistreated by the drunken farmer, Mr Jones, and they take over the farm but in the end the pigs become as bad as the human farmer had been. My role of Squealer was based on the newspaper Pravda and a man called Molotov, who spread favourable stories about the way Russia was being run after the revolution. The section that was most challenging was after Snowball had been scared off of the farm. Squealer becomes more powerful here and he explains to the animals why this happened to Snowball. The speeches start to become longer and this became a challenge to learn them. The role is supposed to be a pig and the acting challenge was to give some idea of the animal. I had pig ears to wear on an alic band and I had to work with the other pigs to give a similar way of speaking. We decided on adding occasional snorts and grunts as we spoke. This was most challenging for me because I had these long speeches where I was trying to convince the animals that we were on their side, but I also had to keep the grunts and snorts going. There is also a change towards the end of the play when the pigs stand on two legs so at this point the pigs should be on four legs. To give this impression we had lengths of broomsticks to place on the ground in front of us. These were attached to our wrists so that they would not fall and allow us to use our hands. It was still very challenging to get to use the sticks effectively, and for them not to be in the way. At this point in the play Squealer is speaking against Snowball and in favour of 'Comrade' Napoleon and I had to find a way of speaking that was convincing here, to be strong and yet supporting the animals. I also needed to become like a politician on a soap box with a loud, clear voice and my posture needed to be quite tall. Acting this character was difficult with the addition of the character of the pig. When Squealer answers Boxer he says that Napoleon has said 'categorically' that Snowball was Jones' agent he repeats the word 'categorically' with more emphasis and I found that I had to be careful not to appear too vicious but be very assertive. The performance space was also challenging as the audience was not set out in an end stage organisation but was included in the middle of the acting area. This meant that we had to

act in different parts of the Drama studio and this was challenging as I had to be aware of where most of the audience were seated in order to give my speeches at this point in the play.

1 Comments

The candidate gives clear indication that there has been some study of the script. There are very good indications of challenges in playing the character of Squealer, with consideration for the textual demands and the character demands of playing a pig. There is very good understanding of the skills of acting as applied to this clearly defined section of script. There is evidence of some research and the development that took place during the rehearsal process. This would score in the top band, 17-20 marks.

Mark awarded = 19

2 Answer

I think this part of the play was one of the highpoints for me when we performed it. The animals have been scared by the dogs and Squealer tells them that Snowball had always been a traitor. I stood with the wooden front legs and found that I could use them to add stress to what I was saying, so when I called out 'Comrades' I banged the right 'foot' down hard on the wooden staging. I was careful to speak clearly and loudly. At the end of this first long speech I added a loud grunt that worked really well as there was a silence after it. I was in a corner of the studio on a raised block so that I could be seen clearly and so that the audience was in front of me. I was able to prowl backwards and forwards as I answered the questions like a politician would. I kept a strong eye contact with the animals particularly Boxer who asked most questions and I became less stressed as they began to accept my words. I rested here, stopped prowling and gave a smile as I said that they had 'the true spirit of animalism' Straight after this Napoleon places some of the animals on trial and has them executed by the dogs. Here I had to be a strong support for Napoleon and I stood with tall posture almost like a soldier standing just behind Napoleon, repeating in a kind of scream that the hens should 'confess'. I believe that this was a very well acted section as the animals cowered and nervously approached the pigs. Eddy who played Boxer was particularly good as he struggled to understand what was going on and Zak was a scary Napoleon, powerful in voice and in his posture. The way that we used the unusual staging was effective as the hens, who were puppets operated by some of the class, moved into the centre of the studio and fled behind a screen by one of the walls to be noisily killed amongst the barks, growls and squawks of the dogs and hens. The people that I knew in the audience told me that this was a part of the play that was very well acted and I know that I enjoyed this part a lot. Squealer was a good part to play for at the start of the play he was a supportive pig who wanted to help, giving information to them, but by the second act he was a horrible, manipulative pig who dictated to all the animals on the farm. This made it an excellent part to play.

2 Comments

There is a very clear knowledge and understanding of the acting skills required in this section. There is close detail and a very good enthusiasm for the piece. There is purposeful use of supporting elements in the performance, including detail of other performances, staging choice and audience reaction. This would score in the top band, 17-20 marks.

Mark awarded = 20

Question

Choose **one** play that you have studied and worked on practically during your course from a design or technical approach. Choose **one** extract from this play.

Your answer to both parts should include clear reference to the studied text. You should focus on **at least one** aspect of design and/or technical skill. You should include reference to some of the following, as appropriate to your skill: the style of production, period, fabrics, textures, colours, use of space and levels and an awareness of health and safety factors.

- 1 Explain what the challenges were in applying your design and/or technical skills to the extract. Give clear details of the rehearsal and other preparation work with reasons for the choices that you made. (20 marks)

AND

- 2 Analyse how your skill combined with other aspects in the performance of this extract. You should include reference to some of the following: the acting, the audience, and other design and technical areas. (20 marks)

1 Answer

Black Comedy adapted by Peter Shaffer Samuel French acting edition

I designed the lights for the Year 11 production of Black Comedy by Peter Shaffer and it was clear when I read the play that I would have many challenges in carrying out this task. The cast of actors came together earlier than my involvement as they wanted to make decisions on their approach to the play before others were involved. The play was written in the 1960s and the time is identified in the script as 'the present' and, while there is no reason why it should not be set in our present, the cast decided to set it in the original period. This suggests lots of colour and Brindsley's artwork should be like modern Art of that period. The play is a farce, and a lot of the fun is in the changing of light to dark and dark to light. The opening section is in 'complete darkness' so there are health and safety issues in the direction of this section. We considered having a low level working light so that the actors could make out any obstacles but the director said that this would spoil the joke and arranged a 'safe' path across the stage so that the actors' voices would give the effect of free movement across the stage in apparent darkness. The section that provided me with the most challenges was the section when Harold Gorringer enters the flat in darkness for him but full light for the audience and matches are struck by characters so that they can see but requiring the stage lights to reduce appropriately. The state of darkness for the characters should be a very bright state for the audience and I set a wash that covered the whole stage with a combination of fresnel lanterns and set them at as sharp an angle as possible to avoid too much shadow as the characters walked, or rather stumbled, across the stage. Earlier in the play the darkness on stage had been replaced by this complete wash of light as the fuse has blown in the house. By the time that Harold Gorringer arrives there are most of the characters present on stage, Brindsley, Carol, Miss Furnival, Colonel Melkett to be joined by Clea a little later than my selected section. Harold is pulled by Brindsley into his apartment so that Harold doesn't see that his fine furniture and possessions have been moved from his apartment into Brindsley's. The Colonel lights his lighter to take a look at Harold and as he did so I had to reduce the light accordingly. We made sure that the actor playing the Colonel was in a particular position and I set two fresnels to this point with others set in twos

across the stage from there to the edge of the stage. I set the central two at a low level on the memory board and the nearest to them at a slightly higher level and the next closest slightly higher, the highest being the ones nearest to the edge of the stage, these highest level lights were still quite a lot lower than the previous 'darkness' state. I was able to set this state with the same lanterns for both states just by setting them at new levels. My next challenge was the timing of the lighter with the effect of the lights. After attending a number of rehearsals with the cast I was able to add a stutter to the lights that was similar to the sparking of the lighter and then provide the new state. This I was able to do for the next few occasions when Harold lights matches but I thought it would be good if I set a new state focused on a different part of the stage for Harold's matches. This I was able to do by setting new levels for the lanterns already in place. I was able to do this because I had paired them all across the lighting grid. I used straw gels because I wanted to give a natural light across the stage and, ungelled, the lights would have been too harsh. The main challenge from this point was to respond quickly to the onstage addition of lighter, matches and later torchlight.

1 Comments

The candidate demonstrates clear knowledge of his craft and there is a good confidence about the way technical terms are introduced. There are very good indications of the challenges in lighting Black Comedy and these are well expressed. There is a good steady focus on one section and there is a very strong explanation as to how the challenges were met. There is evidence of good working practice and the development that took place during the rehearsal process. This would score in the top band, 17-20 marks.

Mark awarded = 20

2 Answer

As I said in the last part I had to work closely with the actors, and they had to be rehearsed in doing the action to a similar timing and in the same places on stage. There was a lot of discussion also with the stage designer and stage manager as the stage was quite small but had to have a number of key items, seats for a cast of six at one point, large pieces of modern art, a model of Buddha set in sufficient view for the audience, chairs that can be removed and chairs to set within the action, like the rocking chair. All of these had an effect on the early stages of my lighting rig. Getting access to the rig by constructing the lighting tower meant that the setting had to remain the same once the lights had been set. Costuming could be affected by the lights and this production used bright reds, greens, mauves and blues for their costumes, but my choice of straw gels did not affect them as they gave a neutral light to the stage. I felt that I had been very successful when we performed the play as the audience reacted to the quick changes in lighting state, and there was laughter when lights reduced as a result of on stage light from lighter, matches and torch. I was particularly pleased with the way I had been able to reduce shadows on stage in the 'darkness sections, but this was not possible during the moments of half light, although, because of the sharp angles of the lanterns, the shadows were limited. The lighting board has a memory function and this was useful in the rehearsal stage, and in the performance I could set the levels and timer fade the changes between each state. There is also a 'flicker' function, usually for on stage fire effect that I used for the lighter action before the reduced light state. I had to work closely with the stage manager to make sure that the lights worked together with the other

technical and design areas. The stage manager was also useful for health and safety aspects of rigging the lights; he was at ground level, helped move the tower, passed the lanterns up to me at the top of the tower, and manned the lighting board in order for me to focus the lights.

During the first night, the movement of the furniture, that happens just after the entry of Harold, was a little slower than they had rehearsed and this threw some of the timing of the lines. With the number of light state changes at this moment in the play I had to keep my focus strong so I was able to operate the show with no errors on any night. I was pleased that I did this and so were the cast.

2 Comments

This candidate has answered the question with close attention to areas upon which to concentrate. Relations with actors, design, technical and stage management are all addressed in some manner. There is a very clear knowledge and understanding of the lighting skills required in this section. There is very good enthusiasm for the piece. This would score in the top band, 17-20 marks.

Mark awarded = 20

Section C: STUDY OF A LIVE THEATRE PRODUCTION SEEN

Question

Choose **one** live theatre production you have seen during your course where the acting was effective. Choose **one** actor from this live theatre production.

- 1 Describe in detail his or her acting in **one** scene or section. Your answer should include references to voice, movement, gesture, facial expressions and details of the characterisation. (20 marks)

AND

- 2 Analyse why you considered this performance so effective. Your answer should include references to some of the following: the relationships with others on stage, the impression on you in the audience and the overall effect of the performance. (20 marks)

1 Answer

Lost in the Wind - Lost Spectacles Theatre Company The Egg Theatre Royal Bath 8TH May 2009

Lost in The Wind was an outstanding piece of Drama and I was really lucky to see this performance. This play was a performance piece that had moments of great humour and others of great sensitivity. The play started with an unnamed character leaving his house and starting on a journey with a map on a very windy day. The force of this wind rips the map and the man becomes lost, finally ending in a snow storm, covered by a snow drift. Although the plot appears thin, there was a Kafka feel to the play like 'The Trial', as the central character struggles against the elements and meets a series of unusual characters, which all have their own stories to perform. What set this play apart from all the others that I have seen was the invention of the cast, working within a minimal set and using a variety of toys and found materials to develop the storyline, creating puppets and locations with excellent creative skill. The piece was an ensemble performance by a cast of five. Richard Kiess played the central role, but it was Tobi Poster who most impressed me as one of the, again, unnamed characters. The play was based on physical theatre work and had very little dialogue; the interactions were performed through sound, movement, gesture and facial expressions, and it was Tobi that most moved me with his performance. As the central character becomes increasingly lost, he happens upon Tobi who has a huge orange balloon that he throws and catches in a way that expresses his complete joy and happiness - the balloon was almost the same diameter as his height and had a floating action as it left his arms and returned to them. This was repeated a number of times as another character, female, enters and watches transfixed from down stage right, slowly sitting to watch cross legged. Tobi's character became aware of Naomi's presence shown by a sly sideways look in her direction and a quick return to his ball, gradually moving the location further stage left, away from the threat that Naomi appeared to offer. As Naomi steadily stood and moved closer to Tobi, his facial expressions were so effective, showing his concern that his personal space was to be invaded. The ball continued to be thrown and caught but there appeared to be more intensity to the catching and Tobi moved the activity further stage left, with his back to the approaching Naomi. At the climax of this interaction Tobi caught the ball, held it very close and still, while Naomi held out her hands. The tension grew, as Tobi's facial expressions

went through a subtle range of states, all demonstrating his wish for her to leave. As Naomi got the message and withdrew to down stage right and sat in a closed position, Tobi renewed his game with the balloon, first with an attempt at the enthusiasm he had shown earlier, then with slightly less excitement and gradually to almost no interest, as he became more concerned for Naomi's situation and he finally grabbed the balloon in a swift clutch, slowly turning his face to look across at Naomi, still seated head in hands. Tobi placed the balloon down stage left and moved one step towards Naomi, paused then stepped again, then a third and fourth step until he was fairly close to her. His attention was focussed on her hidden face as he gradually crouched to be on her level. All of this was done with such care and great control, that the audience were hooked on what would happen next. As Naomi raised her head slowly, Tobi indicated the balloon on the other side of the stage and she showed a desire but then turned away again. Tobi then swiftly strode to the other side of the stage and picked up the balloon with a swift action then returned to be near Naomi who raised her head again to look. The next section traced a growing confidence in the relationship between Tobi and Naomi, as they passed the balloon between them in a wild and wide range of ways. What was so impressive about Tobi's acting was that his movement, gestures and facial expressions left no doubt as to his emotional journey. The scene became touching, humorous and sensitive as their relationship developed and it ended with the two characters joined together moving the balloon forward and eventually off stage left. What was most effective about the acting of Tobi in this scene was that there was no regular dialogue used, just occasional vocal sounds that perfectly fitted the situation at each point they were used, moving from the ecstatic early sounds through the whimper of threat to the cooing of contentment. All of this was so cleverly done that Tobi was my favourite performance that I saw during my course.

1 Comments

The candidate writes with enthusiasm on the performance of this piece. There is a good level of detail and the focus scene is clearly identified, with comments focused on the action within the scene. There is a clear knowledge of the production and a very good understanding of the acting skills required to perform it successfully. The choice of production is risky, as there does not appear to be any dialogue and the production will not have been seen by many in relative terms, but the candidate makes a strong case for the quality of acting and there does appear to have been a selection process in choosing this to write about. This would score in the top band, 17-20.

Mark awarded = 17

2 Answer

Although the scene may sound a little simplistic, I was totally involved in the action of the scene and concerned for the two characters and this was due to the intensely powerful performances of the two, in particular Tobi. There was a complete other story here, as there were at other points in the play, and the wind had brought the two together and then taken them away again. Tobi's physical control was most impressive, and he drew the audience into the short story of loneliness, growing friendship, courtship and love with real skill. His movement was graceful, but could change pace quickly, and his range of facial expressions was really effective and impressive. While there was no traditional dialogue, Tobi left us in no doubt as to his state of mind through a range of cleverly controlled sounds, supported by the communication of his whole body. Naomi Rothwell was also an excellent performer and the reason it worked so well was due to the way they worked so well

together. The actors appeared in earlier scenes separately and established excellent characters but it was here where they appeared together that they impressed most. The audience showed their appreciation by interrupting the gentle atmosphere with a sturdy round of applause, which I understood but wished had not broken the mood they had so skilfully created. The play was full of creativity, with clever use of props and full of impressive effects, but it was the simplicity of this section that was so affecting and made the strongest impression on me. The cast were very skilful and, while the story appeared to be slight, there was real depth in the performances and Tobi Poster provided the most effective performance for me in this scene.

2 Comments

This response is fairly short but it does address the terms of the question. Some material in the first part could have been better placed in this part, but there is still a good indication of the interactions with other actors, audience reaction and an overall effect of the performance. These are all very clearly focused on the selected section of the play and demonstrate purposeful reference to theatrical skills as demonstrated in this extract of the play. This would score in the top band, 17-20 marks.

Mark awarded = 17

Question

Choose **one** scene or section from **one** live theatre production you have seen during your course where you thought that **one** area of design or technical skill was particularly effective.

- 1 Describe in detail **one** area of design or technical skill that had most effect in this scene or section. (20 marks)

AND

- 2 Analyse how your chosen area of design or technical skill worked with other performance, design or technical areas in your chosen scene or section to maximise effectiveness. (20 marks)

1 Answer

Lord of the Flies - Pilot Theatre Everyman Theatre Cheltenham September 2008

The play that I have chosen to write about is Lord of the Flies by Pilot Theatre based on the novel by William Golding. The scene that I have chosen to write about is the part where the boys are chasing the pig. I was impressed with the way the actors used the set in many different ways to incorporate their needs, showing when the set acted as one thing or another and I thought that the set was particularly effective.

The set was a combination of metal structures that looked like the fuselage of an aeroplane. It was basically in two parts, what looked like the wings and what looked like the passenger section. Both parts could adapt to the circumstances of the play in very clever ways. The wings had a large pole coming out of them near the centre, which was used a lot as to balance the actors as they stood on them. It could rock like a see-saw and could be fixed into place at different levels of steepness. So at different times they represented a cliff, a bridge, a ledge and a hill. The passenger section was open at both ends so that the characters could run through it, hide in it, climb over it, rock it as required by the action of the play. It acted as part of the plane wreckage and it looked torn with parts of it capable of being removed to show the inside of the shell. It was a cave, a hill, a shelter, a mountain top as the play required. The two pieces of set gave different location, with different levels in a most effective manner. They were metallic in look, silvered and looked like an aeroplane, but were barren and unwelcoming, although near the start of the play the young boys used the structures as their playground. At the start of the play the reduced lighting made it look like a complete plane but when the lights came up and the wing section was swivelled around it looked like a wreck of the plane. In the section with the pig it was used most effectively. There was no pig on stage, it was the actions and reactions of the boys that made the animal come to life. The boys surrounded the passenger section of the plane like a hunting party and moved slowly towards the front opening as if the pig was hiding in there. They had lengths of stick like spears and got closer to the piece of set. As the tension built up there was a sudden movement and the boys acted as if the pig had made a run for it and the boys ran after it around the stage. The fuselage section was turned and the wing section became a hill section that the boys ran along as this part of the set was rotated so that the stage was filled with chaos. Eventually the pig was 'trapped' in the other end of the fuselage. Here the boys detached panels from the structure to use as shields while they used their spears to prod through the many holes in this part of the set. After a while the pig is killed and a prop was brought onto the stage which seemed to bleed from where the spears had killed him.

I thought that this was not as effective as the mimed pig before this point and the set was a huge part of the effectiveness of the scene.

1 Comments

The candidate describes in a lively, detailed manner the set and focuses in a very clear manner on a specific section. There is a clear knowledge of the play and a very good understanding of the way the set contributed to the effectiveness of the play at this point. There is purposeful reference to the skills of design demonstrated through this very clear example. While a sketch can be useful to help visualise the set, this candidate has not been disadvantaged as the description has excellent clarity. This would score in the top band, 17-20.

Mark awarded = 20

2 Answer

The structures were very effective but many other elements of design and technical skill were used to increase their effectiveness. As I said in the last part the lights were reduced in the opening scene so that the structures were in shadow, but in this scene the lights were flashing with bright colours to increase the effect of the chase and reduced to give the idea of shadows in which the pig could hide. The cyclorama at the back was occasionally lit with a bright blue to give the idea of this island isolated in the middle of a sea. At the point of the chase the lights on the cyclorama were sometimes very bright to put the structures in shadow, but this was turned down at the end of the chase with tight spotlights focused on parts of the fuselage shell. Sound also played its part, with loud electronic music increasing the tension of the chase. The boys' costumes were now torn versions of the school uniforms that they had worn at the start and this made the chase look good as lengths of material streamed behind the running boys. As I said previously I was not as impressed with the prop pig as, even though it looked like a dead animal, the previous section had worked so well without a pig. The wooden spears were very effective as they threw shadows on to the wall at times from the different levels of the set structures and this was exciting to watch. The main thing about the set though was the way that the actors used it so creatively and the movement of the wings gave them more and more opportunities for grouping on the stage. The set contributed to the effect of chaos with the actors constantly moving on and around the structures. The effect on me in the audience was one of worry, as I could tell that if they were not careful, someone would end up getting hurt, but it also gave a feeling of freedom as they clambered over the structures, creating a hectic mood as the characters dived from one structure to the other following the pig. I thought that this section of the play *Lord of the Flies* was the most effective use of a set that I have experienced.

2 Comments

The candidate very clearly suggests how the effect of the set was complemented by sound, lights, costume and acting. These are all very clearly focused on the selected section of the play and demonstrate purposeful reference to theatrical skills as demonstrated in this extract of the play. This would score in the top band, 17-20 marks.

Mark awarded = 19