

Marking notes

November 2023

Literature and performance

Standard level

Paper 1

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Assessment criteria

These notes to examiners are intended only as guidelines to assist marking and as a supplement to the published external assessment criteria for written paper 1. They are not offered as an exhaustive and fixed set of responses or approaches to which all answers must rigidly adhere. Good ideas or angles not offered here should be acknowledged and rewarded as appropriate. Similarly, answers which do not include all the ideas or approaches suggested here may still be very good answers.

Of course, some of the points listed below will appear in weaker papers, but are unlikely to be developed.

Criterion A

[5 max]

The task is essentially focused on an analysis of a chosen passage from a prose text. Through this analysis the level of understanding will be evaluated by the examiner. This “understanding” of the text should include the relevance of the passage and its place in the context of the novel as a whole. A synopsis of the plot of the text may be a first step towards demonstrating understanding but “good” and “perceptive” understanding will evaluate style and theme as well as plot detail. The analysis of these elements of the text will always be conducted with a view to the performance of the chosen passage. The importance of support and validation of all ideas through reference to the text is crucial. The text is fundamental and reference to it mandatory.

Criterion B

[10 max]

The “ideas” for performance are generated from the text and should not be independent of it. The textual “justification” required to support the “ideas for performance” in Criterion B will be drawn from a thorough contextualization of the passage and a secure understanding of its relevance to whatever issues the questions raise.

The association of “good” and “excellent” with the word “practical” attests to the value of ideas that can be realized in a practical staging context. These are ideas for the stage or a staging area and temptations to propose grandiose scenarios more applicable to “blockbuster” cinema than theatre should be resisted.

The candidate may draw diagrams or make sketches if it is thought that these are necessary to communicate the “ideas for performance” but such visual additions are not mandatory.

Criterion C

[5 max]

This criterion evaluates the clarity and coherence of the language used in the essay and looks at the appropriateness of the register, style and terminology which the candidate employs.

Clearly in an exercise which demands a facility in two disciplines, namely literature and performance, the candidate will be expected to demonstrate a facility in the use of the terminology specific to each discipline. As a writer of prose the candidate will be assessed on clarity, variety, precision and concision. The clarity of a written communication depends on accuracy in grammar, spelling and sentence construction. The effectiveness of a written communication will depend on effective use of vocabulary and a combination of preciseness and conciseness which results in an economy of expression. The persuasiveness of a piece of writing will depend on choice of idiom and style.

1. An adequate to good answer will:

- select a relevant passage from the novel where conflict is present in the narrative
- establish the significance of the passage within the wider context of the narrative
- provide credible ideas on how tension and atmosphere inform staging choices
- support the answer with relevant references to the text, with an attempt to analyse them in reference to the question
- focus on staging the moment by considering performance elements relevant to characterisation such as (but not limited to): posture, emotion, volume, gesture, facial expression, and movement
- focus on staging the moment by considering production elements relevant to the question such as (but not limited to): lighting, sound, design, makeup and costume
- make some connections to dramatic elements that are relevant to the dramatization of the passage, such as (but not limited to): focus, tension, climax, and action
- use clear and coherent language with a few acceptable lapses in grammar, spelling and sentence structure with some attempt to use appropriate theatrical and literary terminology.

A very good to excellent answer may also:

- select a relevant passage from the novel where conflict is present in the narrative, with a persuasive rationale for that selection
- provide convincing and well substantiated ideas for dramatization of the passage and how its significance can be effectively communicated to an audience
- provide clear and convincing justification for those choices in relation to the text as a whole
- provide detailed textual analysis that engages the question and shows critical thought
- clearly articulate how literary ideas have been transformed to communicate dramatic meaning onstage
- articulate a clear and detailed understanding of the effects of the chosen performance and production elements
- make clear staging choices that go beyond the literal interpretation of the text by demonstrating an informed connection to, and understanding of, the requirements of the question
- use clear, varied and precise language with a sophisticated register and structure, including subject specific terminology that demonstrates knowledge and understanding of both literature and performance.

2. An adequate to good answer will:

- select a relevant passage from the novel where one character holds great power over another character
- establish the significance of the passage within the wider context of the narrative
- provide credible ideas on how relationship and status inform staging choices
- support the answer with relevant references to the text, with an attempt to analyse them in reference to the question
- focus on staging the moment by considering performance elements relevant to characterisation such as (but not limited to): posture, emotion, volume, gesture, facial expression, and movement
- focus on staging the moment by considering production elements relevant to the question such as (but not limited to): lighting, sound, design, makeup and costume
- make some connections to dramatic elements that are relevant to the dramatization of the passage, such as (but not limited to): focus, tension, climax, and action
- use clear and coherent language with a few acceptable lapses in grammar, spelling and sentence structure with some attempt to use appropriate theatrical and literary terminology.

A very good to excellent answer may also:

- select a relevant passage from the novel where a character holds great power over another character, with a persuasive rationale for that selection
- provide convincing and well substantiated ideas for dramatization of the passage and how its significance can be effectively communicated to an audience
- provide clear and convincing justification for those choices in relation to the text as a whole
- provide detailed textual analysis that engages the question and shows critical thought
- clearly articulate how literary ideas have been transformed to communicate dramatic meaning onstage
- articulate a clear and detailed understanding of the effects of the chosen performance and production elements
- make clear staging choices that go beyond the literal interpretation of the text by demonstrating an informed connection to, and understanding of, the requirements of the question
- use clear, varied and precise language with a sophisticated register and structure, including subject specific terminology that demonstrates knowledge and understanding of both literature and performance.

3. An adequate to good answer will:

- select a relevant passage from the novel that shows a change in the location of the action and its consequences
- establish the significance of the passage within the wider context of the narrative
- provide credible ideas on how the change of location of the action and its consequences inform staging choices
- support the answer with relevant references to the text, with an attempt to analyse them in reference to the question
- focus on staging the moment by considering performance elements relevant to characterisation such as (but not limited to): posture, emotion, volume, gesture, facial expression, and movement
- focus on staging the moment by considering production elements relevant to the question such as (but not limited to): lighting, sound, design, makeup and costume
- make some connections to dramatic elements that are relevant to the dramatization of the passage, such as (but not limited to): focus, tension, climax, and action
- use clear and coherent language with a few acceptable lapses in grammar, spelling and sentence structure with some attempt to use appropriate theatrical and literary terminology.

A very good to excellent answer may also:

- select a relevant passage from the novel that shows a change in the location of the action and its consequences, with a persuasive rationale for that selection
 - provide convincing and well substantiated ideas for dramatization of the passage and how its significance can be effectively communicated to an audience
 - provide clear and convincing justification for those choices in relation to the text as a whole
 - provide detailed textual analysis that engages the question and shows critical thought
 - clearly articulate how literary ideas have been transformed to communicate dramatic meaning onstage
 - articulate a clear and detailed understanding of the effects of the chosen performance and production elements
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