

2024 ASSESSMENT REPORT

SDD315120 DRAMA

Practical Component

Practical Assessment

Exams were well prepared and students demonstrated their skills throughout the program.

Timing of Programs (Criterion 6)

Whilst we saw an improvement from last year, examiners again noted that some groups ran significantly under time. Reasons for running undertime varied from centre to centre. Some presented solos that were under time, while for others the play was under time, or there was little to no thematic linking. It is important to adhere to the specific guidelines for group exams.

A broad suggestion for consideration

Group of 3 = 30 minutes

- 15-minute play extract
- Minimum 6 minutes / maximum 12 minutes for solo presentations
- Creative Elements – thematic linking between 9 to 3 minutes depending on length of play and combined solos.

Group of 4 = 40 minutes

- 20-minute play extract
- Minimum 12 minutes / maximum 16 minutes for solo presentations
- Creative Elements – Thematic linking between 8 and 4 minutes depending on length of play and combined solos.

Teachers are encouraged to guide students in showcasing their wide variety of talents through the play and a contrasting solo, then utilising thematic linking to show more of what the students can do.

Creative Elements (Criterion 6)

The importance of the thematic linking cannot be understated. The linking material needs to be refined and provide a contrast between the solo and the play. A contrast might be – attitude, voice, movement, etc. The thematic linking should strengthen and create a well-rounded performance program with intention.

The thematic linking should provide the students with an opportunity to perform a clear, smooth full performance program with continuity. (Students shouldn't stop and start their performance to set up props or set up or pack up after the play to continue with a solo.)

Consider the following questions:

- How does the thematic linking introduce their theme and how do they use it to create a continuous 30- or 40-minute exam performance?
- What are your students bringing to each element?
- What talents are they showcasing?
- How are students showcasing their performance toolbox?

All centres are required to ensure that the thematic linking content (dialogue, text, ideas, etc) is clearly marked and included in the exam program booklets – this is the fifth year this has been requested.

Unrehearsed improvised dialogue should be discouraged.

Examiners noted that this year the following linking techniques worked well:

- use of text and movement principles
- movement with soundscapes
- manipulation of time
- statistics with meaning and projection
- tableaux with words overlaid
- game show style.

Solo Performance (Criterion 1 & 6)

Each assessment report for the last 3 years has mentioned timing of the solo. Teachers are reminded that the length requirement of the solo is 2 to 4 minutes. Students are placed at a disadvantage if they do not meet the minimum time of 2 minutes. The choice and quality of the solo was excellent this year. However, song lyrics are not considered quality literature. Low projection and inadequate breath control made some performers difficult to hear.

Placement of Performers

Another reminder about proximity of performers to examiners. Please ensure that the performers are not so close that they are almost overlooking the examiners' desk.

Dramatic Extracts (Criteria 1, 2 and 6)

It was refreshing to see some new extracts being performed rather than relying on old cuts or cuts borrowed fifth hand from other schools. A reminder to teachers that the selection of the play extract should not rely heavily on duologue work. Teachers should assist students in ensuring that blocking is clear and helps advance the action / mood of the scene. This was sometimes lost in some centres due to students not clearly understanding their blocking or performing with their backs to the audience / examiners for the majority of the play extract.

Administrative Matters

A reminder that creative scripted material and other linking information needs to be included in the program booklet.

It was much easier this year not having large bulky examiners folders. Thank you, all teachers who reduced the use of folders, and stapled or spiral bound their exam booklets.

Students and teachers are NOT to retype solo works. Some solo pieces have been borrowed from old examination booklets where there are typos, retyped wrong words and a lot of omissions or under time. This issue continues.

Teachers are reminded to read the course guidelines on the TASC website.

Written Component

General comments

- Of major concern was the increased number of students who wrote about pre-recorded/videoed shows. Please ensure you check the TASC documents.
- A general note from markers was to ensure that students use first person past tense in their essays as per TASC documents.
- Students need to answer all parts of the question. This year we saw an increased number of students who did not complete the question.
- Please ask students to keep all writing on the paper relevant to the question. It is not appropriate to write notes to the markers or jokes, etc, on their responses.
- Students should not name their school.
- Students should not name their teacher.
- Students should not write their full names.
- Legibility of handwriting was an issue for a few essays. Please encourage students to write clearly with gaps between words.
- It is correct to underline the play titles they refer to in their essays every time it is used.
- If typing responses, candidates should italicise play names.
- A three-line response that rewords the question does not meet the minimum standard or make any effort to answer the question. This constitutes a z rating.

Section A

Question 1

Contribution to engaging audience – acting, directorial, technical.

- Could also link to director's decisions in shaping the production.

Acting Performances

Use examples throughout:

- Voice
 - Pitch
 - Accent
 - Mood
 - Volume
- Physical
 - Stance
 - Gesture
 - Facial expressions
 - Leading centre
- Relationships
 - Eye contact
 - Timing
 - Proximity.

Directional Decisions

Concept and how realised through the integration of elements listed:

- Casting
- Blocking
- Timing
- Climax
- Contrasts
- Movement.

Technical Production

How were these elements used to engage the audience?

- Costuming
- Lighting
- Sound/music
- AV
- Set design
- Use of space.

General comments

- Some students wrote about the show they acted in rather than a show they saw.
- Teachers are reminded that responses must be about live shows not recorded shows.
- Analytical responses are required not lengthy descriptions of the plot.

Question 2

- Students must check the spelling of terminology.
- Often musicals were discussed that did not always allow for even discussion between the two shows.
- Some student responses concentrated on who the character was rather than what the actor did to communicate the character/s.
- Some candidates referred to characters and did not distinguish between actor and character.
- It is essential that the actor be named using the protocol of referring to the actor's last name throughout the rest of the essay response.

SECTION A Q3

* pick 2

How were tech elements used to communicate dramatic intentions?

Dramatic Intentions = the decisions made by the playwright or director/ensemble to convey

- meaning
- ideas
- feelings
- images + stories
- mood

How?

- lighting
- sound/music
- Costuming
- use of acting space/stage.

lighting = explain how use of wash/spot/moving/gobo/cyc/colour etc
used to communicate — time

- location
- mood
- transitions

= dramatic intentions

Sound/music = explain how to communicate — instrumental, orchestral used diegetic, non-diegetic.

- transitions
- mood
- genre/era
- location
- narrative
- continuity

= dramatic intentions.

Costuming

How were — colour texture changes used

- style/genre
- foreshadowing
- continuity

= dramatic intentions

Acting Space

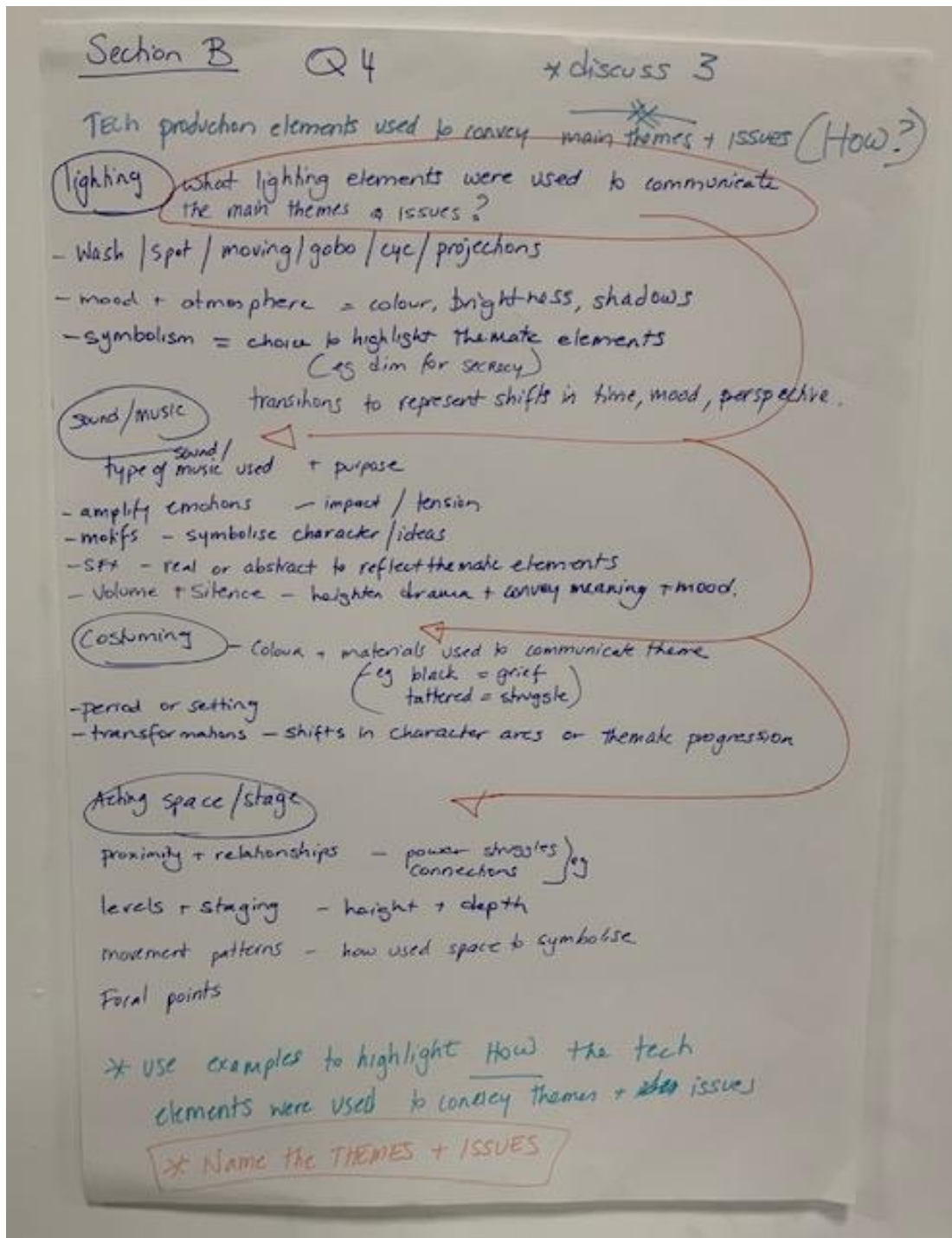
Set — realistic minimalist colours levels location

- Space
- mood
- representational
- transitions

= dramatic intentions

USE EXAMPLES

- Many responses did not mention production information (company, venue, director, etc) or other relevant details.
- Often students forgot to name up the drama intentions.



- Generally, students found this question quite difficult.
- Very few candidates successfully appraised how technical elements conveyed the themes and issues.
- Teachers should ensure that students understand the themes and issue of their production if answering this style of question.
- Students needed to break down and describe specific technical elements with specific examples.
- Very few students could translate themes and issues to how they were communicated through the technical elements. For example, students could say that a red light represented blood or fear but not relate this to a theme or issue.

SECTION B Q 5

* discuss 3.

Stagecraft skills contribution to overall dramatic impact.

Dramatic Impact = emotional or intellectual effect

Your production has on its audience
Drawing audience into the world of the play

Special Awareness

blocking + movement — align narrative
— clear sight lines

communicate style/gaure — avoid collisions
— build relationships
— build tension

Use of space for emphasis — power dynamics
— relationships
— isolation

Listening + Eyecontact

actors use these skills →

Audience reactions — focus, create characters

Building relationships — establish connections

— tension
— status

enhancing timing — active listening — cues — pacing

Solving unexpected problems

Improvisation — staying in character
— cover unexpected mishaps

— dropped props
— forgotten lines
— forgotten props/costumes
— intentional (unintentional)

Quick thinking

Collaboration — recovery from mistakes to maintain production flow.

Audience Awareness

energy
Breaking 4th wall (if applicable)
adjusting performance — pacing
— timing (dealing with laughter)

USE SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

Dramatic Impact built through — climax
Key moments
mood/emotions
themes + ideas } using stagecraft skills.

- Only a handful of students answered this question.
- Students should identify the specific dramatic impact that the stagecraft skills contributed to.
- Students are reminded to link the specific stagecraft skills to specific examples from their productions and include context to justify relevance.

Q6 * discuss *

successful communication of character

Background Research

- + historical / contextual understanding
 - time period
 - setting
 - socio / political context
- + Character biography - backstory informs
 - (Referring to application of theories if relevant)
 - motivations
 - relationships
 - actions
- + Relationship Dynamics (clues from text)

GENRE

communication of the style/genre = conventions
context
Key elements

Costuming

colour + texture

- symbolism
- status
- personality
- transformations

period + setting.

Voice + body

tone + pitch

- express emotions
- status
- relationships

Pacing + rhythm

- personality
- mental state
- accent
- mood.

Projection + clarity

- audible
- effective communication
- volume
- emotion

physicality

- gestures
- posture
- movement
- status

character traits
body language
emotional states

expression - amplify emotions

SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

- Students should introduce the play in the introduction.
- There is no need for students to go into a long explanation of plot summary in the introduction.
- Background research: students must link the research to what they did and how it influenced their character development.
- If the question refers to their own character, students must refer mainly to their own character rather than discuss other characters more than the one they played.