



GCSE Examiners' Report

Drama
GCSE
Summer 2024

Introduction

Our Principal Examiners' report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each unit.

This report opens with a summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.¹

The information found in this report provides valuable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with exam preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

Further support

Document	Description	Link
Professional Learning / CPD	WJEC offers an extensive programme of online and face-to-face Professional Learning events. Access interactive feedback, review example candidate responses, gain practical ideas for the classroom and put questions to our dedicated team by registering for one of our events here.	https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/
Past papers	Access the bank of past papers for this qualification, including the most recent assessments. Please note that we do not make past papers available on the public website until 12 months after the examination.	Portal by WJEC or on the WJEC subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For unitised specifications grade boundaries are expressed on a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS). UMS grade boundaries remain the same every year as the range of UMS mark percentages allocated to a particular grade does not change. UMS grade boundaries are published at overall subject and unit level. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the subject, rather than for each unit that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: Results, Grade Boundaries and PRS (wjec.co.uk)

¹ Please note that where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

Exam Results Analysis	WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC Portal. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	Portal by WJEC
Classroom Resources	Access our extensive range of FREE classroom resources, including blended learning materials, exam walk-throughs and knowledge organisers to support teaching and learning.	https://resources.wjec.co.uk/
Bank of Professional Learning materials	Access our bank of Professional Learning materials from previous events from our secure website and additional pre-recorded materials available in the public domain.	Portal by WJEC or on the WJEC subject page.
Become an examiner with WJEC.	We are always looking to recruit new examiners or moderators. These opportunities can provide you with valuable insight into the assessment process, enhance your skill set, increase your understanding of your subject and inform your teaching.	Become an Examiner WJEC

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Executive Summary

Unit 1

Moderators felt that candidates excelled in generating imaginative ideas aligned with the chosen stimuli and practitioners. However, there were still some candidates who continued to struggle with choosing an effective portfolio structure and remaining within the suggested word limits. Performances demonstrated strong execution of selected techniques but occasionally lacked clarity in chosen styles and group dynamics. Evaluations often focused excessively on the rehearsal process rather than the final performance impact, missing connections to initial aims and influences. Moderators continue to note the importance of accurate assessment, with errors in documentation and marking calculations a challenge to the moderation this year. Where teacher feedback was provided, it proved beneficial to the moderation process in clarifying why candidates had been awarded certain marks. Ongoing recommendations include consideration of chosen portfolio structure, ensuring consistent application of chosen styles, and emphasizing performance impact in evaluations, thus better aligning with the assessment criteria.

Unit 2

Examiners recorded strong performances and innovative text selections across the visitation period this year, including a growing number of works by emerging playwrights. Although in most cases, examiners reported the effective use of vocal and physical skills, it was still reported that too many candidates continue to struggle due to a reliance on scripts. Collaborative design efforts between actors and designers yielded standout results this year, contrasting those weaker submissions which reflected inadequate understanding of basic assessment requirements. Preparation time was cited as critical, influencing the quality of polished performances across all ability levels. Administrative concerns included missing paperwork and lapses in exam day professionalism, prompting reminders for thorough preparation and adherence to protocol. Clear articulation of artistic intentions was encouraged, aiding examiners in assessing multi-character performances. Centres are reminded of upload deadlines and the need for a professional exam environment.

Unit 3

Examiners felt it evident that centres who had employed practical exploration of texts yielded innovative responses, particularly in acting elements; although it remains apparent that candidates' understanding of design still lags in comparison. In some cases, candidates missed specific rubric requirements, thus affecting the relevance of their answer. Effective time management allowed completion of detailed responses in both sections. Overall, while candidate responses demonstrated strengths in performance comprehension, particularly in character focused questions, there remains a need for candidates to better understand exam technique.

Areas for improvement	Classroom resources	Brief description of resource
Portfolio Writing	Guidance for Teaching	Guidance document with outline of how-to best approach creation of Portfolio
Overview of the GCSE Courses	WJEC GCSE Drama CPD	Available CPD courses and resources on the Drama Website
Effective Administration	WJEC Administration	Guidance for e-Submission, including paperwork guidance and process help.
Classroom Pedagogy	WJEC Educational Resources Website	A range of pre-prepared educational resources to support with the teaching of the course.
Past Exemplar Materials	Portal by WJEC	Varied exemplar materials

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UNIT 1: DEVISING THEATRE

Overview of the Unit

Non-exam assessment: Internally assessed, externally moderated

40% of qualification

Learners participate in the creation, development, and performance of a piece of theatre using either the techniques of an influential theatre practitioner or a genre, in response to a stimulus set by WJEC.

Overall, moderators felt Unit 1 was well-handled by centres; commenting that that most candidates take great pride in their work and have enjoyed the opportunity to explore issues and topics which are relevant to them. The choice of stimuli, whilst being open to interpretation, provided opportunities for candidates to creatively investigate a wide range of areas and topics.

Moderators noted that the number of centres/candidates choosing the design option for this component continues to increase and there were numerous examples of design work of an exceptional standard.

Overview of Assessment Objectives

This unit exams three assessment objectives:

AO1 Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning for theatrical performance.

As in previous years, moderators noted that candidates whose work was accurately placed in Band 5 demonstrated highly imaginative ideas in response to their chosen stimuli , including how the initial idea was developed and researched. There was an excellent range of relevant techniques selected to demonstrate their understanding of their chosen practitioner/style.

As in previous years, centres continue to experiment with a range of different practitioners/styles and the most effective work demonstrated a high level of understanding of both the practitioner/ style and how selected methods can be incorporated into a successful devised performance. The very best work detailed the candidate's highly relevant contribution to the creation and development and there was a sophisticated understanding of why specific performance ideas had been developed, amended, and refined. However, moderators noted there were instances where the work of some candidates did not display the depth of understanding to merit the marks awarded.

As in previous years, a minority of centres used a combination of two practitioners/styles. This approach diluted the quality and understanding of the work across each of the three elements and had a significant impact on AO1.

A minority of centres did some exciting work using Punchdrunk as their chosen style. Both the portfolio and performance demonstrated a high level of understanding of some of this company's methods but also made effective use of space by using a promenade performance. The positioning of the camera had also been considered when capturing this immersive work which was essential for the moderation process.

AO2 Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance.

Moderators noted that this element produced some exceptional work. The very best work demonstrated, by both acting and design candidates, a sophisticated understanding evidenced through the way selected techniques were embodied throughout the final performance. This work demonstrated an excellent interpretation of the role/design using highly relevant aspects of the practitioner/ style to successfully realise artistic intentions.

As in previous years, the work involving some practitioners tended to focus on one specific aspect of the style. For example, there were some highly successful examples of Musical Theatre, where candidates had carefully crafted song, movement and dialogue into a devised performance, thus fulfilling all the assessment criteria. However, some work consisted of a random selection of songs and dances displaying little relevance to the chosen stimuli, with the realised performance lacking shape and structure.

Centres should also note that the chosen style must allow candidates to access all the assessment criteria; for example, Physical Theatre must include dialogue and should not be comprised solely of movement.

AO4 Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others.

As in previous years, moderators noted the evaluation for many candidates is still the weakest of the three elements. Many evaluations still focus on the rehearsal process as opposed to the final performance. This emphasis does not allow candidates to fulfil the relevant assessment criteria and can have a significant impact on the final mark.

Comments on individual questions/sections

AO1 Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning for theatrical performance.

The portfolios were generally of a good standard. As in previous years, where centres had adhered to the specification and the assessment objectives, the quality of the work across the ability range resulted in work that allowed all candidates to fulfil their potential. Moderators noted that a significant number of centres did not follow the specified structure and the quality of the work was substantially diluted. Where candidates had adopted a haphazard approach, moderators noted it was difficult to recognise where the required elements had been addressed. Some portfolios contained extraneous material which had not been separated sufficiently from the main body of the portfolio, again making it difficult to assess the submission relevant to the word count. There were also an increasing number of instances where candidates exceeded the specified word count which impacted on the overall quality of the work.

The specification notes several formats which candidates can use when presenting their work and centres should choose the format which is best suited to the candidate. However, moderators observed that when the portfolio was presented in a highly visual way, it sometimes impacted on the quality of the written work. Some candidates had obviously taken a great deal of care with the presentation of the portfolios, but this was sometimes to the detriment of the overall clarity of the submission.

The most successful candidates adhered strictly to the required elements and did not include work which was not relevant to the criteria for this section. Those which explored the three sections systematically gave themselves the best opportunity to fulfil the assessment/marketing criteria. Portfolios which successfully fulfilled the assessment criteria contained work which was balanced across each of the three sections as opposed to too much concentration on one section to the detriment of the other two.

- How ideas were researched, created and developed in response to the chosen stimuli.

Moderators noted that candidates used the range of stimuli and produced some interesting and challenging work based on their choice. The very best work clearly articulated how ideas had been created and developed, citing a highly relevant individual contribution. There were occasions where the link to the stimulus was tenuous without justification. Similarly, individual contributions were weak and lacked development

- How ideas from the chosen practitioner/genre were incorporated to communicate meaning.

As in previous years this tended to be the weakest section. The very best work focused on articulating how the chosen techniques had been “incorporated highly creatively” as opposed to describing the technique, giving little indication of how the chosen technique conveyed meaning. This area was significantly weaker for candidates who had chosen the design option.

- How ideas had been developed.

The very best work focused on specific amendments/refinements which had a significant impact on the quality of the work during the rehearsal process. The most successful work focused on two/three amendments, analysing and evaluating the significant impact these changes had on the performance piece.

- Communicating meaning.

Moderators noted that the quality of the portfolios had frequently not been considered when awarding marks. For example, whilst the techniques of the chosen practitioner were evidenced within the performance, the candidate’s understanding of how these techniques were used during the development were not evidenced to the same standard within the portfolio. Similarly, moderators felt that the performance space had not been used “imaginatively” to justify the marks awarded. Centres are reminded that the quality of work in both the performance and the portfolio must be evidenced when awarding the mark for this area.

AO2 Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance.

The performances were generally of a good standard, with some outstanding examples of good practice at some centres. The most successful candidates, both in acting and design, demonstrated a clear understanding of the chosen practitioner. Similarly, where the design work was of a very high standard, it was evident the designer had worked consistently with the actors throughout the rehearsal process. The chosen style was often not clear in the case of weaker candidates but this was, generally, acknowledged in the centre marking.

Group timings were not adhered to with a minority of centres. We would remind centres to adhere to the specified timings as these make a significant contribution in helping candidates shape and structure their final performance.

As in previous years it was apparent in a small percentage of groups, a candidate had been misplaced. For example, a candidate who had learnt the work had been placed within a group where the others consistently forgot their lines or were under rehearsed. Whilst the board recognises the difficulties and logistics of organising the realised performance, the structure and composition of a group can have a significant impact on the candidate's final mark. The structure of the group should be considered at the beginning of the process.

Most centres ensured that candidates were provided with a suitable space and simple design elements, such as costume and music, which had a significant impact on the overall performance. Whilst we acknowledge that not all centres have excellent facilities, we would encourage centres to use simple lighting, costume, music/sound and basic set to help create a sense of theatricality. However, we would ask centres not to use extended blackouts and numerous set changes, which have a significant impact on the structure and flow of the final performance. Whilst candidates are marked/moderated on the quality of their work, if the final performance must be performed in a classroom, we would remind centres that part of the assessment criteria states, "the performance space is used imaginatively to communicate meaning". It would be helpful if desks could be rearranged, and wall boards covered to help create a sense of theatricality. As technology improves, moderators noted that candidates are increasingly using lighting, projections, sound, and music to enhance the quality of the final performance.

AO4 Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others.

The evaluations tended to be more polarised in the level of attainment. The successful work clearly focused on the evaluation and analysis of performance/design skills, highlighting successful and unsuccessful elements of the piece, role/design interpretation and individual contribution to the work as a whole. This work concentrated wholly on their individual performance as opposed to the group. It focused on the final performance and did not veer back into the rehearsal process. Clear and meaningful examples from the final performance were referenced to illustrate key points.

The weakest section for many candidates tended to be how their individual performance contributed to fulfilling their initial aims and objectives by referring to the practitioner and stimulus. Candidates need to analyse and evaluate where, in the final performance, they were responsible for highlighting the stimulus and practitioner.

Centres are reminded that candidates are allowed to use two sides of A4 bullet points; however, these should be uploaded with the rest of the work for any selected candidates.

Summary of key points

- Both written and practical work was fairly assessed in most centres. The assessment was generally accurate regarding the rank order of candidates, but a minority of centres were generous with their marks when the work did not reflect the assessment band(s). Teachers are encouraged to be objective when assessing the work and be realistic in terms of candidate attainment by not awarding band 5 marks for band 4 work. Centres are reminded that the best candidate in a particular cohort may not be a full-mark candidate when the assessment criteria are applied.
- Centres are reminded when awarding marks for AO1, the quality of work in both the performance and the portfolio must be considered and should not be wholly based on the performance.

- Although teacher comments are not required on the candidate's work, moderators noted where these were included, they proved helpful indicating where and why marks had been awarded.
- Moderators noted the most time-consuming element of the moderation process involved inaccurate uploading of required documentation. Centres are reminded to check that every element of the sample is included.
- Centres need to check the positioning of the camera to ensure the performance is being recorded with optimal effectiveness. Moderators noted that cameras positioned at a distance from the performance, with audience obscuring the view etc, did make the moderation process more difficult.
- Candidate introductions are still proving problematic. Centres need to ensure that moderators can be certain of identifying clearly who each candidate is.
- Moderators noted a significant number of errors when centres added up the three separate marks for candidates. This resulted in an incorrect mark being uploaded into to IAMIS.
- Centres are reminded to check the moderator's report, which will comment on how the centre applied the marking criteria for each area. This guidance should inform centre marking for the subsequent cohort. Several moderators noted that some centres had not followed the guidance issued the previous years and as a result, the same errors were repeated when assessing candidate's work.

We would like to thank all centres for their hard work in preparing candidates for this unit.

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UNIT 2: PERFORMING THEATRE

Overview of the Unit

This unit is worth 20% of the qualification.

Non-exam assessment: Externally examined by visiting examiner.

Overview of Assessment Objectives

Learners are required to participate in a performance based on the study of two significant, ten-minute extracts from a text, which has been performed professionally and/or written for theatrical performance. An examiner marks the performance which focuses on three assessment objectives:

- Application of performance/design skills to realise artistic intentions.
- Interpretation and engagement to realise artistic intentions.
- Contribution to the performance as a whole to realise artistic intentions.

Overall, examiners reported that, as in previous years, the work generally was of a very good standard, with examiners noting the privilege of experiencing some outstanding performances and design. There was a breadth of new texts evidenced this year which is particularly pleasing. These included playwrights Morgan Lloyd Malcolm, Ryan Calais Cameron, Claire Dowie, Ali Taylor and Anya Reiss. Work by these playwrights seemed to work well for young actors and gave them the opportunity to meet the requirements of band 5. It was also noted that a significant number of centres choose work by Welsh playwrights which produced work that many candidates across the ability range were able to identify with.

Examiners noted that there was also some excellent exploration of more traditional playwrights; for example, there was some excellent performances using the work of Harold Pinter. Centres that were the most successful explored pauses and silence, utilising these to show expert understanding of character and relationship. Comedies such as *The Importance of being Earnest* and *Blithe Spirit* demonstrated an excellent understanding of performing comic characters and comic timing.

Where all candidates, across the ability range, were able to fulfil their potential, examiners noted that extracts had been carefully selected to suit everyone's ability. There were instances where every candidate had been given the same play or scene, which is not necessarily the best way to support pupil attainment, as one specific scene/play may not cater for each candidate's skills or ability. As in previous years, examiners felt that multi-rolling (other than in clear ensemble work for example, *Bouncers*, *Shakers*, *Teechers* etc) did impact on the work of some candidates. For example, in *Blood Brothers*, a candidate played Edward in one scene and Mrs Johnson in the second. Whilst the specification does not specify candidates cannot multi-role, it does put additional pressure on candidates to fulfil the assessment objectives for two separate characters within a brief performance.

Similarly, when changing the gender of a character within a play, centres are reminded to consider whether that change can fulfil the assessment objective: “Excellent and fully effective and fully coherent interpretation of character sustained throughout the performance”

Examiners noted that it was useful when centres choose extracts that show a clear development in character, for example a moment at the beginning of the play and a moment at the end of the play. This allowed candidates to showcase their range of skills and show a high level of understanding of the shifting dynamics of relationships between characters. Most centres ensured that candidates had a specified performance space, basic costume, set/props and some lighting and sound. One examiner commented that in the best centre they visited, candidates performed in a small classroom, but every effort had been made to make it a theatrical experience. The candidates had been taught extremely well and as a result achieved high marks.

Centres are reminded that if set and props are to be used, please ensure they have rehearsed with them prior to the day of the exam. Also ensure that candidates are wearing suitable footwear as this can impede the movement within the performance. Some examiners noted that a minority of centres had significant gaps between the two scenes. Centres are reminded that even with a design candidate, the two scenes should flow seamlessly with the minimum of disruption.

Although much improved from the previous two years, examiners reported that a significant number of candidates were still unsure of their lines and relied on scripts, which made it very difficult for them to fulfil the assessment criteria. For those who have chosen acting as their skill, knowing their lines is a basic requirement for this unit. We would remind centres that scripts should not be used. Candidates will receive more marks for learning a small proportion of the script, even if it falls under the specified time, rather than just reading a script.

The number of candidates opting for the design option continues to grow. As with Unit 1, the very best design work showed a close collaboration between actors and designers throughout the rehearsal process. Although facilities vary, some examiners noted that some outstanding work had been viewed in centres with limited facilities but with highly imaginative design ideas. The weakest design work tended to be by candidates who had chosen the design option but had little or no understanding of the basic requirements. Centres are reminded to familiarise candidates with the minimum requirements for Unit 2 to ensure all specified criteria are fulfilled. For example, costume, hair and make-up for **one** character.

Centres are also reminded that the size of the group and length of the performance must be adhered to. Undoubtedly the best work across the ability range in both performance and design indicated that candidates had been given sufficient preparation time to rehearse and refine their work which resulted in polished, final performances.

Examiners noted that a significant number of candidates had been given texts which clashed with their Unit 3 texts. Centres have been repeatedly reminded of this.

**The text chosen for Unit 2 must contrast in date written for the text chosen for Unit 3
This is a requirement stipulated by OFQUAL and failure to adhere will result in
candidates being penalised 5 marks.**

Comments on individual questions/sections

AO2 Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performances

Examiners noted that a significant percentage of candidates applied performance skills effectively. The very best performance work utilised vocal and physical skills effectively, with mature interaction between performers. Design work which was deemed excellent demonstrated sensitive application which made a significant contribution in enhancing the mood and atmosphere.

Both performance and design work which demonstrated a high level of understanding showed an excellent understanding of character/text. The performance/design was focused, sustained throughout and had been thoroughly researched and rehearsed.

Where the individual contribution both in performance and design was excellent, it **fully** enhanced the overall piece.

Artistic Intentions

The artistic intentions, although not assessed, form an integral part in assisting the examiner in assessing the realisation of artistic intentions.

Examiners reported that the standard of the Artistic Intentions forms continue to improve. Most centres had followed guidance and encouraged candidates to focus on specific areas as opposed to the generic “use my movement and voice to create a character”. Where candidates performed multiple characters, it is useful to clearly outline the interpretation of each character within the artistic intention form. This helps the examiner gain a clearer understanding of their aims and objectives.

Design candidates can and should include additional material, for example, lighting plots and mood boards, to support their design in performance. Although not assessed, additional material for design candidates can aid the examiners understanding of the design in performance.

Summary of key points

- Centres should check their school’s calendar thoroughly before submitting/accepting an exam date.
- Many examiners felt that a significant number of centres did not have the specified paperwork available on the day of the exam. Centres must check what forms are required and which forms need to be signed. The examiner will clearly outline the necessary paperwork requirements in their initial email.
- Centres are reminded that programme proformas and artistic intentions should be sent to their examiner at least two weeks before the visit.
- Visting examiners will not conduct vivas with GCSE design candidates.
- Performances should be uploaded onto SURPASS within 14 days of the final performance.
- All candidates should introduce themselves at the beginning of each performance, stating name, role and candidate number.

- Although most centres recognise this, it is worth remembering that Unit two is an **external exam** and should be treated accordingly. Examiners reported that some centres treated the exam with nonchalance and an overly relaxed approach. Whilst examiners recognise it is a stressful day for both candidates and teachers, it is disconcerting to see students eating throughout the performance and using their phones whilst other candidates are performing.

We would like to thank all centres for their hard work in preparing candidates for this unit.

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UNIT 3: INTERPRETING THEATRE

Overview of the Unit

This unit is worth 40% of the qualification.

Written Examination: 1 hour 30 mins.

This was the first year of the new texts being examined, with all texts proving popular with candidates. The format and style of the questions remained the same as in previous years. There was evidence, within many of the responses that, centres had explored their chosen text practically which resulted in some innovative and highly creative work.

As in previous years, the questions in this year's paper were balanced with a focus on both acting and design elements. Like previous years, examiners noted that the candidates' understanding of performance far outweighed their understanding of how design worked within their set text. The design question tended to lack understanding of a holistic set/lighting design for the specified stage. There was often an omission of the key elements associated with design for example colour, material, texture and with a significant number of candidates unable to differentiate between set and props.

Centres are also reminded that one of the requirements of band 5 in questions 4 and 5 there must be "highly appropriate references/examples" to the specified /chosen extract.

As in previous years a significant number of candidates failed to read the question and focused on areas, which were not specified in the rubric. This led to information, which was not relevant or required, and subsequently not awarded marks.

However, most of the candidates timed the paper well allowing them to complete both sections with detailed responses.

Centres should note that from 2025 the selected extract for Section A (questions 1-4) will be printed on the question paper. However, candidates will be allowed to take in **clean copies** of their chosen text to refer to when answering the wider knowledge question Section A, question 5.

Centres are reminded the text chosen for Unit 3 must contrast in date written for the text chosen for Unit 2. This is a requirement stipulated by OFQUAL and failure to adhere will result in candidates being penalised 5 marks

Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A

1. (i) This question was generally well answered with most candidates stating one movement and one facial expression relevant to the specified character. A small number of candidates stated two movements or two facial expressions or stated the movement/ facial which was not relevant to the character at the beginning of the extract.
(ii) Most candidates stated one reason for their choice of movement and facial expression linking their response to the information stated in part (i). A few candidates only stated one reason.
2. (i) Most candidates successfully explained how the specified character would speak the stated line. They focused on tone, tempo, accent and how the use of punctuation could impact on how the line was delivered.
(ii) Most candidates successfully stated two relevant reasons for their vocal choices. A small number of candidates only gave one general reason or failed to link their response with the information they gave in part (i).
3. (i) All of the chosen scenes had two distinct atmospheres. Most candidates only gave a very general description of the atmosphere within the specified scene, with only a few noting how the atmosphere changed.
(ii) Most candidates gave a balance of both lighting and sound ideas which could communicate the atmosphere. Candidates used relevant terminology; for example, colour, gobos, projections, underscoring, volume which enhanced their response. The most successful responses referred to specific sections, stating what lighting or sound effect they would use to communicate atmosphere. A small number of candidates discussed either lighting or sound which impacted on their overall mark. Candidates should be reminded that if a specific element is asked for within a question, such as lighting and sound, they will not be awarded marks for stating they would not use lighting or sound.
- (4) This question was generally well answered:
 - The most successful responses demonstrated a perceptive understanding of character motivation using specific lines from the whole of specified extract to illustrate their ideas.
 - Voice: The most successful responses focused on key lines and gave vocal suggestions discussing tone, tempo, volume, accent, pause, subtext and how voice could communicate the specified character
 - Movement: The most successful responses focused on key lines and gave movement suggestions discussing quality of movement, gesture, facial expressions, stillness, proxemics, set and props and how movement could communicate character
 - The most successful responses made highly appropriate references to the whole extract and displayed highly relevant knowledge, understanding and use of drama terminology.
- (5) This question was generally the weakest response with many candidates failing to follow the specified rubric and discussing sound, costume, positioning of characters and different types of stages, as opposed to the specified **Proscenium Arch Stage**.

Most candidates choose a different extract but a minority of candidates referenced the scene specified for Q1-4. Q5 should demonstrate a candidate's wider knowledge of the play.

Whilst most candidates understood **Proscenium Arch** in theory i.e. where the audience was positioned, but this understanding was not evident in their understanding of how a set design would work on this type of stage.

- A significant percentage of candidates stated “minimalism” as their chosen style and subsequently went on to describe detailed and elaborate sets.
- A significant number of candidates failed to explore creatively the opportunities awarded by the specified scene within specific plays, adhering rigidly to the requirements of the play. Whilst these responses were awarded marks, we would encourage centres to experiment and to develop their own ideas for staging scenes.
- Many candidates, whilst stating an appropriate overall set design, did not specify props.
- Many candidates were unaware of the correct original staging conditions of their chosen text. We would remind centres that an understanding of the historical, cultural, and social background of a text is an OFQUAL requirement. Detailed notes and blended learning activities covering all these areas are available on the WJEC website.
- A minority of candidates discussed the set design for the play in general as opposed to making it relevant to their chosen section. This was particularly pertinent in *Lion Boy* and *The Glass Menagerie*.
- However, some responses, particularly *Face*, produced detailed and imaginative responses, covering all specified areas.

Section B

As in previous years candidates had been given the opportunity to view theatre, whether live or online. It was evident from the responses that these productions had both inspired and excited them.

Both the design and acting option were generally well answered, with the majority of candidates following the required rubric.

- A small number of candidates discussed the interaction of two actors in two moments as opposed to the specified one.
- A small number of candidates discussed how set and props were used in two moments as opposed to the specified one.
- A small number of candidates did not state the production they had viewed or the production style.
- A small number did not discuss their individual response to the set and props or character interaction. Their response as a member of the audience is an integral part of the question.
- Some candidates gave detailed plot summaries which are not required.
- Some candidates described the moment, as opposed to analysing and evaluating, which was the requirement of the question.
- Centres are reminded that the production chosen for viewing in Section B must not be the text studied in Section A of this unit.
- Centres are reminded that whilst candidates can use productions staged by amateurs in their responses, they are not allowed to use productions staged by their peers i.e. their own school production.

Summary of key points

- Ensure the chosen set text is explored practically.
- Remind candidates that the allocation of marks for each question relates to the amount of information required.
- Familiarise candidates with the different design requirements for each of the four main stages: Proscenium Arch, Thrust Stage, Traverse Stage and Theatre in the Round
- Remind candidates that the most successful responses make specific reference to the whole of the specified/chosen extract to highlight their design/acting ideas.
- Responses must be relevant to the specified/chosen extract as opposed to a generic response referencing the whole play. This point is particularly pertinent to design questions.
- Remind candidates to read the question carefully and only give the information which is specified in the question.
- Remind candidates, in Section B, to look carefully at the question requirements; for example, two actors in one moment or one costume in two moments.
- Centres are reminded of the range of resources, such as SAMS, exemplar papers, blended learning activities and forthcoming CPD dates, which are available on the WJEC website.

We would like to thank all centres for their hard work in preparing candidates for this unit.

Supporting you

Useful contacts and links

Our friendly subject team is on hand to support you between 8.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Tel: 029 2240 4299

Email: drama@wjec.co.uk

Qualification webpage: [GCSE Drama \(wjec.co.uk\)](https://www.wjec.co.uk/gcse-drama)

See other useful contacts here: [Useful Contacts | WJEC](#)

CPD Training / Professional Learning

Access our popular, free online CPD/PL courses to receive exam feedback and put questions to our subject team, and attend one of our face-to-face events, focused on enhancing teaching and learning, providing practical classroom ideas and developing understanding of marking and assessment.

Please find details for all our courses here: <https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/>

WJEC Qualifications

As Wales' largest awarding body, WJEC supports its education community by providing trusted bilingual qualifications, specialist support, and reliable assessment to schools and colleges across the country. This allows our learners to reach their full potential.

With more than 70 years' experience, we are also amongst the leading providers in both England and Northern Ireland.



WJEC
245 Western Avenue
Cardiff CF5 2YX
Tel No 029 2026 5000
Fax 029 2057 5994
E-mail: exams@wjec.co.uk
website: www.wjec.co.uk