



Key information about the topic

This half term you will focus on Design and Technical elements linked to your set pieces of repertoire. This means that we will be looking in depth at staging types, lighting, sound, set design, costume and hair and makeup. You will take part in lessons and workshops to develop core knowledge, and then take part in presentations to the rest of class on your design concepts and proposals.

Design

Costume - You will look at how different costumes effect a character and their representation. We will look at creating our own costumes and their effect.

Set - You will look at how to dress a set space, complete a 'get in' and 'strike' as well as safe practice with building and designing set.

Hair and Make-up - You will look at how different hair and make-up effect a character and their representation. We will look at creating our own designs.

Lighting - You will look at a range of different lantern types, how they are rigged, focused, programmed and plotted, and the effect they have on a performance.

Sound – You will look at how to set up, and effectively use sound equipment within a performance as well as how to develop atmosphere using sound.

Staging - You will look at the 8 different staging types and how their use will affect the design and use of a space.

Thinking Questions

- Do I know what the teacher wants me to do?
- Do I know how to get the best marks possible?
- How do I find more information?
- Have I communicated everything I wanted to?
- Does everyone know what I mean?
- Have I included as many key terms in my writing as possible?
- Can I do more research on my own?
- How can I extend my work?

Evidence required

You will need to make notes, complete homework, and do practice exam questions.

Key words

Set / Exits / Entrances / Scenery / Selection / Genre / Space / Props / Shape / Texture / Colour / Scale / Size / Movement / Model Box / Abstract / Symbolic / Cues / Visual / Fresnel / Parcan / Spotlight / Flood / Fade / Snap / Gel / Gobo / Strobe / Underscore / Music / Sound effects / Mood / Atmosphere / Costume / Practical / Modern / Period / Sketches / Projection / Smoke machine / Haze machine / Speakers / Volume / Pitch / Surround / Naturalistic / Non-naturalistic

Mark Scheme

Component 3 will require you to discuss design ideas and concepts for your set text in Section A for 10-15 marks. Section B is Live Theatre focused but will still require you to comment on design elements, this is a 15 mark question.

Types of Staging

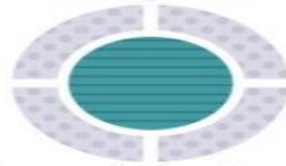
End-on



End-on

- Proscenium arch, without the decorative arch!
- Audience sit on one side, performers perform on the other.
- Everything is directed in the same direction – simple blocking.

In the round



Theatre in the Round

- Audience on all sides
- Walkways to enter/exit.
- Intimate and immersive.
- Performers must move and change positions frequently.
- Set can obstruct sightlines.

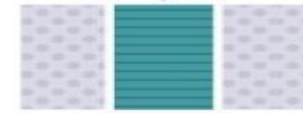
Thrust



Thrust

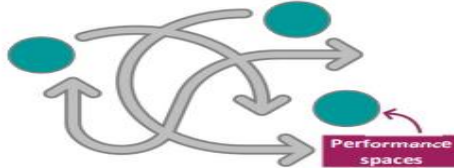
- Stage extends into the audience area.
- Seating on three sides.
- Back wall can be used for hanging backdrops and scenery.
- Blocking is easier.

Traverse



Traverse

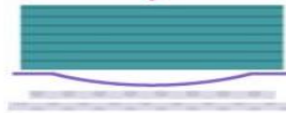
- Long, narrow stage with audience on either side.
- Audience can see each other.
- Scenery can obstruct sightlines.
- Backdrops cannot be used.



Promenade

- The audience follow the performers around the space.
 - Often site-specific in interesting and unusual locations.
 - Blocking is challenging.
- Audience and performance can be unpredictable.

Proscenium arch



Proscenium Arch

- Describes the frame separating performers & audience.
- Fourth wall & naturalism.
- Often raked seating and drapes/tabs to hide wings.
- Blocking is easy.
- Not as immersive.



Site-specific

- Performance staged at a unique location which isn't a traditional theatre.
- The location is usually linked to the performance contextually.
- Can be difficult logistically.
- Can be effective and immersive if thought through.



Black Box

- A simple studio space, commonly painted black.
- Staging is flexible here.
- More contemporary style of theatre.
- Lighting can be innovative.
- Absence of colour gives audience sense of "anyplace".

Aspects of Costume

Accessories

E.g. A bag, handkerchief, watch, necklace...



Any accessories carried are known as *personal props*

Make-up

Naturalistic? Over the top?

Use it to show:

- Wounds
- Scars
- Illness
- Age
- Glamour
- Culture



Masks

Designers should consider...

- Whether to use full or half mask
- Will it affect speech or vision of performer?
- Expression on the mask
- Impact



Hair

Think of whether you would use...

- Wigs
- Particular style
- Hair colours
- Facial hair



Remember! Choices you make in any of these areas can be symbolic and tell us information about the characters/setting/time/circumstances.

Colour Symbolism

The colours you use suggest things about the character...

| | |
|--|--|
| Green Nature, growth, innocence, jealousy... | Yellow Light, joy, energy, youth, warmth, caution... |
| White Purity, innocence, goodness, faith... | Red Danger, blood, passion, love, fear... |
| Blue Opportunity, depth, strength, cold, truth, water... | Grey Boring, plain, oppressed, routine, practical... |
| Pink Love, compassion, femininity, childish... | Brown Earth, nature, comfort, stability... |
| Black High status, night, evil, mystery, death... | Purple Royalty, high status, power, luxury, magic... |

Materials



Metal

Can look effective
Used for accessories
Noisy & heavy
Gets hot
Reflects lights



Lace

Great for enhancing costume (decoration)
Fine detail can't be seen from afar



PVC/Plastic

Lightweight alternative to leather
No excessive noise
Not breathable



Cotton

Easy to dye/alter
Cheap to replace
Rips easily
Takes long to dry



Velvet

Luxurious look
Can be expensive



Leather

Authentic look for specific eras and genres
Difficult to alter
Gets hot under lights



Silk

Soft and comfortable
Looks luxurious
Expensive to clean and maintain



Brocade

Embroidery looks luxurious
Suggests wealth
Can be heavy
Fine detail can't be seen from afar

Context – An Inspector Calls

1910-1912 is known as the *Titanic era*.
End of the Edwardian era, but before the devastation of WWI.

Women's fashion

- Evening dresses made of fine silk, open necklines, short sleeves.
- Popular materials of the time: Silk, lace, brocade, chiffon.
- Thin materials were layered to add a rich effect without bulk.
- Corsets and structured undergarments (bodices) were still popular.
- Dresses were long and columnar (straight)
- Hair was piled on top of head in an updo.
- Wide-brimmed hats were fashionable.



Men's fashion

- Men would wear suits during the day.
- Formal tailcoats for evening.
- In 1912, there was a brief fashion of purple suits.
- Double breasted suits on men who were slender, larger men encouraged to go for striped suits.
- Trench coats and duster coats used for outerwear (Inspector G...)
- Pocket watches fashionable.
- Gentlemen always wore gloves.
- Formal eveningwear consisted of black tailcoat jacket, matching trousers, white waistcoat, black silk top hat, black shoes and white bow tie.
- Hair usually short and slicked back. Facial hair such as moustaches fashionable.



As a designer, you get to make a choice. You can decide to use designs which are true to the period or move away from this. As always, you must have your reasons!

Types of Light



Profile Spotlight

- Hard Edge effect
- Used to light specific characters or elements on stage
- Can be static or moved by a person or computer ('follow spot')
- Can be fitted with coloured filters



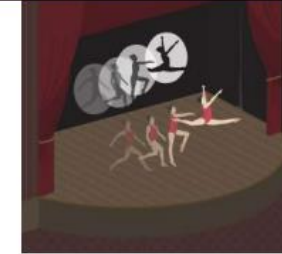
Fresnel

- Soft edged light
- Diffusing lens (look for the rings on the glass)
- Can be combined with others to create a good overall light
- Can be fitted with coloured filters



Floodlight

- Wide-angled light (covers a wide area)
- Little control over the spread of the light (risk of spill)
- Good for a general wash
- Can be fitted with coloured filters

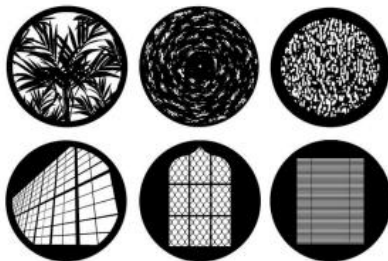


Strobe

- Flashing light, used for special effects
- Old movie effect
- Makes actors' movements appear jerky

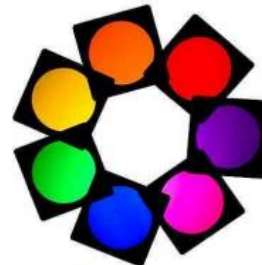
Lighting Accessories

Gobo



A small stencilled circular disk used to create projected image or pattern.

Gels/Colour filter



Coloured filters which change the colour of the light output.

Barn doors











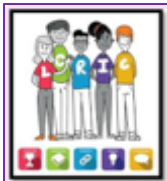
Metal flaps that can open and close to change the shape of the light output. Fixed to the front of **fresnel**.

Cyclorama



A fabric hung from a batten at the back of the stage, on which light can be cast to create effects.

| Props | | Stage Furniture |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Props</p> <p>Anything used by actors onstage.</p> <p> The telephone which multiple characters use.</p> <p>The dinnerware and glassware which is used at the start. </p> <p> The bottle of port Edna brings in and pours out.</p> | <p>Personal props</p> <p>Props which are kept by an actor in their costume/on their person and used.</p> <p> The picture of Eva</p> <p>The ring worn by Sheila </p> <p> A glass of port always held by Eric</p> | <p>Elements of the production that can be used/moved but cannot be defined as personal props. E.g. chair, table, block.</p> <p>This can also be written about to support set design.</p> <p> The “good solid furniture of the period”</p> <p> The fireplace.</p> |
| <p>These are clearly suggested in the script. <u>HOWEVER</u> As a director/designer you CAN add in props/stage furniture which you want to elaborate your ideas</p> <p>Think:</p> <p>What is necessary on the stage? Can it be symbolic or representative? Could a prop/piece of furniture be multi-use? Will you keep it minimal or detailed? Will you stick to Priestley’s vision and elaborate, or twist it completely? WHY?</p> | | |



Key information about the topic

This half term you will be working on Component 2 - Performing from a Text. This is a non-exam assessment: externally assessed by a visiting examiner. 20% of the GCSE Drama. It is worth 60 marks. You will participate in a performance from a text, either as a performer or as a designer. You will be assessed on your performance or design in performance only. There is no written assessment element within this component.

Preparing for Component 2

When selecting a text for performance, students are required to study two 10-minute extracts, within the context of the whole play, from one script of their own choice. The extracts studied must be key extracts from the text selected for study: they must each represent a scene or moment that is significant to the text as a whole. Whole plays must be studied to gain a practical understanding of drama. The chosen play must be different to your Component 3 texts and teachers can support with this. The performance need not use the full 20 minutes studied but must demonstrate understanding of both extracts. The performance must contain an appropriate amount of text from each 10-minute extract to make a coherent interpretation in performance. The text may be edited to create one coherent interpretation but must not contain any additional dialogue or characters. The performance may contain monologues but cannot consist solely of monologues. Designs should complement the text and also show consistency and/or progression in the content. For example, a full costume change might not be necessary, but the addition of an item to show a change in circumstance/time might well be appropriate. The performance or design must show consistency and/or development of character/theme, as appropriate to the role, between the two extracts.

Mark Scheme

This project requires you to - Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning for theatrical performance / Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance / Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others. Portfolio (30 marks, 900 words), Performance (15 marks, length depends on group size), Evaluation (15 marks, 1 and a half hours).

Thinking Questions

- Do I know what the teacher wants me to do?
- Do I know how to get the best marks possible?
- How do I find more information?
- Have I communicated everything I wanted to?
- Does everyone know what I mean?
- Have I included as many key terms in my writing as possible?
- Can I do more research on my own?
- How can I extend my work?

Evidence required

You will need to make notes, complete homework, and do practice exam questions.

Key words

Forum / audience / Educate / Narration / 4th Wall / non-naturalistic / Morality / Involvement / Flexibility / Over-exaggeration / Mime / cross-cutting / freeze-frames / hot seating / Thought-tracking / flashbacks / Facial expressions / body language / gait / posture / gestures / Multi-roling / Audience participation / stimulus / Forum / audience / Educate / Narration / 4th Wall / non-naturalistic / Morality / Involvement / Flexibility / Over-exaggeration / Mime / cross-cutting / freeze-frames / hot seating / Thought-tracking / flashbacks / Facial expressions / body language / gait / posture / gestures



Remember:

The Component is externally assessed by an Examiner. It counts for 20% (60 marks in total).

Important Things!

Remember: Read your text, decide on your interpretation of the character and artistic intention. Be confident – full marks can be achieved in the Component.

YOUR DRAMA:

After deciding on the play you want to perform:

Remember: Read the whole play in order to understand the style, the playwright's intention, the period involved before analysing and interpreting your role.

Style: The style of the play - Naturalistic, Realistic, Absurd, Symbolic, Brechtian, Physical Theatre.

The Playwright's Intention: Discuss contemporary themes, e.g. mental health, family problem, anorexia, drugs. Discuss a historical theme, e.g. War and its impact on society?

Period: Historical, Political, Cultural

Research: Go online, look at Youtube clips and write rough notes.

ACTING ELEMENT:

Remember: Groups of 2 to 4

Time:

- groups of 2 actors – 5 to 10 minutes
- groups of 3 actors – 7 to 12 minutes
- groups of 4 actors – 9 to 14 minutes

You must: Perform two sections 10 minutes long that are key parts of the text.

You must: Perform a text that contrasts with the play you're studying for Component 3.

The play must: Be written by a different playwright, in different historical period and with different themes to the text in Component 3.

Why? To give you new experiences, and to be able to enjoy and challenge yourselves to learn and interpret different texts.

CHARACTERISATION:

Remember the criteria:

You will be marked on your physical skills, vocal skills, interaction, interpretation, communication with the audience and individual contribution.

Also remember:

Your artistic intention must be written and submitted to the examiner before or on the day of the examination.

Once you know your text, you will need to focus on your character. Remember to use a range of practice techniques that will help you develop your role and create the rounded character: The Red Chair, Role on the Wall, Improvisation, Mime Work, The Missing Scene, Emotional Memory, The Magic If.

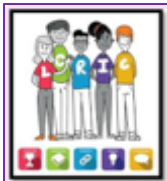
During the rehearsal periods, develop your vocal and physical skills:

VOICE: pronunciation, emphasis, pauses, tone and tempo, accent, pitch, constructiveness, highlights.

MOVEMENT: gesture, body posture, walk, position on the stage, characters' territories.

INTERACTION: distance, proximity, back turned, eye-rolling, facial response, moving away, approaching, physical gestures.

Discuss with your group what your stage shape will be, what type of set will be needed, stage equipment and props. It is also a good idea to use sound to create a mood and atmosphere either at the beginning, between scenes or at the end. You will need to carefully consider the costume, hair and make-up suitable for your role. Remember that you need consistent rehearsals and a full dress rehearsal before your final performance.



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Component 2 in reality

The piece must be performed live for a visiting examiner on a set date. The length of the piece will depend on the number of actors in the group and should be as follows: Group of two actors: 5-10 minutes / Group of three actors: 7-12 minutes / Group of four actors: 9-14 minutes. Each actor must interact with other performers and/or the audience for a minimum of five minutes. Designers must realise their design in performance. However, as it is the design itself which is assessed, the technical equipment may be operated by someone else.

You will need to research and study the *full script* and then focus on two 10-minute extracts which are edited down to your set group time.

You will need to write 150 Artistic Intentions forms to submit 1 week before your exam. This is not assessed but is necessary to assist the examiner in assessing the realisation of artistic intentions.

Mark Scheme

This project requires you to - Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance

Top band marks require you to show - Highly effective application of vocal and physical skills throughout the performance / Coherent interpretation of character sustained throughout the performance / Excellent and highly effective communication with the audience, sustaining their interest throughout the performance / An excellent, highly effective individual contribution to the performance which fully enhances the piece and clearly realises the artistic intentions

Thinking Questions

- Do I know what the teacher wants me to do?
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- How do I find more information?
- Have I communicated everything I wanted to?
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- How can I extend my work?

Evidence required

You will need to take part in a performance as a performer or designer, write artistic intentions forms.

Key words

Action / Alter ego / Back story / Chorus/ chorus work / Collage / Communal voice / Conscience corridor (also known as 'conscience alley' or 'thought tunnel') / Flashback / Forum theatre / Frame distancing / Freeze-frame / Hot-seating / Improvisation / Narration / Narrator / Pace / Pause / Pitch / Ranking / Rehearsal techniques / Role reversal / Role transfer / Sculpting / Soundscape / Split screen / Tableau(x) / Tempo / Thoughts in the head or thought tracking / Transporting a character / Alienation / Anti-climax / Arena staging / Aside / Audience / Auditorium / Caricature / Character / Climax / Composite setting / Dance drama / Dramatic irony / Dramatic tension / End on staging / Epic theatre / Fourth wall / Genre / Monologue / Naturalism / Physical theatre / Promenade staging / Proscenium / Realism / Style / Subtext / Theatre in the Round / Thrust stage / Traverse stage



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Important Things!

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Also remember:

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Once you know your text, you will need to focus on your character. Remember to use a range of practice techniques that will help you develop your role and create the rounded character: The Red Chair, Role on the Wall, Improvisation, Mime Work, The Missing Scene, Emotional Memory, The Magic If.

During the rehearsal periods, develop your vocal and physical skills:

VOICE: pronunciation, emphasis, pauses, tone and tempo, accent, pitch, constructiveness, highlights.

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Discuss with your group what your stage shape will be, what type of set will be needed, stage equipment and props. It is also a good idea to use sound to create a mood and atmosphere either at the beginning, between scenes or at the end. You will need to carefully consider the costume, hair and make-up suitable for your role. Remember that you need consistent rehearsals and a full dress rehearsal before your final performance.



Key information about the topic

This half term you will be working on Component 1 *The Exam* - Interpreting Theatre. This is a written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes. There are 60 marks available. 45 marks on FIND ME (set text) and 15 marks on Live Theatre.

You will be focused on FIND ME content and context this half term. We will look at structuring exam answers and creating your own response to the work as a performer, designer, director and audience member.

Component 2 Section A

For your set text FIND ME you will need to consider how the text is constructed and how performances create meaning through:

- ☐ the characteristics of the performance text, including, genre, structure, character, form and style, language/dialogue, stage directions
- ☐ the social, historical and cultural context including the theatrical conventions of the period in which the performance text was created
- ☐ how meaning is interpreted and communicated through; performance conventions, use of performance space and spatial relationships on stage, including the impact of different stages (proscenium arch, theatre in round, traverse and thrust) on at least one scene, relationships between performer and audience, the design of lighting, sound, set (including props) and costume and make-up, the actor's vocal and physical interpretation of character.

Mark Scheme

The exam requires you to - Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning for theatrical performance / Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance / Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed / Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others.

Top marks – You need to look at the mark schemes for the questions and to find out what each style of question needs to you discuss.

Thinking Questions

- Do I know what the teacher wants me to do?
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- How do I find more information?
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Evidence required

You will need to take part in workshops, read the script, take notes, practice exam questions.

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Historical context

Olwen Wymark was an American-born fringe theatre and BBC radio dramatist, particularly active in the 1970 and 1980s. Like her contemporary Caryl Churchill, Wymark began her writing career whilst raising a family.

Find Me was written whilst she was working as a Gulbenkian Writer in Residence at Kingston Polytechnic in Surrey in **1977**. It was then performed at both Kingston Polytechnic and later at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 1977. Wymark based the play on the true story of Verity Taylor (not her real name) who, at the age of 20, was charged with burning a chair in the locked ward of a mental hospital where she was a patient. She was remanded in custody for 3 months and, after a trial at Canterbury Crown Court, she was admitted to Broadmoor, a high security psychiatric hospital.

Wymark spent time with Verity's parents and conducted in-depth interviews and was given access to Verity's writings. Because her contact was with Verity's family, rather than with Verity herself, we see the play through the eyes of a girl who couldn't be contained and whose illness was not understood.

Although there had been a shift away from the Victorian mental asylums where the treatment was generally appalling and inhumane, people in the late 1960s and early 1970s were still locked up in horrible circumstances. There was a lack of dignity afforded to patients in some of the remaining large and overcrowded mental hospitals. A series of scandals in the 1970s around the ill treatment of mental health patients and the willingness of individuals to voice their concerns over the harrowing treatment of people like Verity forced the government to investigate. Roy Griffiths, a British businessman, led an enquiry which led to the 1988 report 'Community Care: Agenda for Action'. This report eventually led to The Community Care Act of 1990. This was a major piece of legislation that set out the basis for community care as we know it today.

The play deals with a girl living in a society that doesn't know how to deal with her and being treated by a system that failed to give her the necessary treatment and care. Wymark was one of the first female writers to tackle mental health issues and *Find Me* became and remains one of her most successful plays.

Original staging conditions

- The play was first performed at the Richmond Fringe Theatre at The Orange Tree on October 21st, 1977.
- The theatre was founded in 1971 in a small room above The Orange Tree pub. It specialised in staging new plays.
- When *Find Me* was performed, the theatre could seat an audience of 80. Six former church pews were arranged around the acting area, creating a theatre in the round performing space. Wymark was influenced by Jerzy Grotowski's 'poor theatre'. In Grotowski's plays, the audience shared the space with actors. This meant that The Orange Tree was the ideal venue.
- The original production had minimal costume and no set or props.
- Initial productions at The Orange Tree were staged in daylight and at lunch times. However, when *Find Me* was later staged, theatre lighting had been introduced and the script included lighting instructions, including blackouts, which are clearly noted in the stage directions.
- The lack of technical requirements and claustrophobic atmosphere made *Find Me* the ideal production for this intimate studio space.



The Orange Tree theatre, Richmond.

Lighting

Although *Find Me* can be successfully staged with minimal technical effects, music and sound effects can be used to create atmosphere, location, etc. The play's running time is 80 minutes, usually without an interval. Lighting, music and sound can be pivotal in helping to create the variety of different locations, atmosphere and contribute to the transitions between each episode of Verity's journey.

The style of the play

Find Me falls into a number of possible styles.

- It is a **social drama** and a **tragedy** as it shows the downfall of the central character. The audience becomes aware there is no way out for Verity.
- There are elements of **verbatim theatre** as Olwen Wymark worked closely with Verity's family and the events are based on interviews with them. The play was further developed through improvisations with Wymark's college students.
- **Epic theatre** is a type of political theatre that addresses contemporary issues. Bertolt Brecht developed it, although later in life he preferred to call it dialectal theatre. Epic theatre uses a number of techniques to distance the audience, allowing them to remain objective so they could make rational judgments about any social comments or issues.

Olwen Wymark employs a number of Brechtian techniques throughout *Find Me*, e.g. breaking the fourth wall, narration, coming out of character, direct address, multi-roling, split-role, minimal lighting, costumes and props.
- Olwen Wymark was also influenced by methods of Jerzy Grotowski and his theory of **poor theatre**. Poor theatre used the simplest of sets, costumes, lighting and props. This meant actors had to use all their skills to completely transform a space into other imaginative worlds. The most important element was the relationship between actors and their audiences. Wymark uses this method throughout *Find Me*.

The structure of the play

- The structure is how the plot or story is laid out, including a beginning, middle and an end. Olwen Wymark was influenced by the work of Bertolt Brecht and uses an episodic structure to explore the story of Verity Taylor.
- The use of an episodic structure means the scenes are fairly short and can stand alone outside of the overall story. Each episode gives the audience an insight into the characters and events that have played a significant part in Verity's journey.
- This structure allows different perspectives to be viewed and the flashbacks, e.g. the holiday in France, help to create dramatic tension and a sense of foreboding for Verity's eventual fate.
- The structure is also non-linear, splitting up the story means that Verity's story is revealed piece-by-piece. This type of structure also allows the playwright to use a variety of non-naturalistic techniques, e.g. a narrator, flashbacks, the five Verity's.

Vocal work

Here is a glossary of key terms relating to voice:

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Pitch | Speaking in a low, high or natural voice. |
| Pause | A dramatic pause or silence at a key moment can build tension and emotions, such as fear. |
| Tempo or pace | The speed in which someone speaks. |
| Tone/expression | This suggests your mood and your intention towards the listener. |
| Volume | The effect of a character speaking loud, quiet or using a stage whisper. |
| Accent | Indicating where someone is from or their status in society. |
| Emphasis | The pressure on certain words to make them stand out. |
| Intonation | The rise and fall of your voice. Intonation helps us to say what we mean. |
| Subtext | The underlying meaning of the words that are being spoken. |

Actors and directors make creative decisions regarding what type of vocals they are going to use to interpret a character for an audience.

Elements of movement

- **Posture and stance:** the position in which a character holds their body, e.g. when they are standing or sitting. A very confident character may dominate the space, with a very upright posture.
- **Pace of movement:** e.g. does a character move quickly or slowly? A queen might enter moving slowly, highlighting to the audience their status and power. The pace of a character's movement will change according to the scene.
- **Gait:** a person's manner of walking will form part of their characterization, e.g. the character of Winston in the play *1984* will walk in a very slow, deliberate way.
- **Quality of movement:** e.g. a performer playing the role of a victim might move with very light movement to indicate they are trying to avoid attention, whereas a more aggressive character might move with very heavy, definite movement.
- **Gestures:** the way people communicate with their hands or other parts of their body, e.g. when Winston is being questioned by O'Brien in the play *1984*, the gesture he might use is the clenching of his fists to show his tension.
- **Body language:** it may be the way the message is conveyed to an audience, or it may add an added layer to the words that are spoken.
- **Facial expressions:** how the face is used to convey an emotional state.
- **Eye contact:** the state in which two people look into each other's eyes. This could be used to establish status, control and passion.
- **Proxemics:** how the space is used on stage to establish relationships and mood.
- **Levels** can make a scene look visually interesting, but the positioning of characters on different levels can also suggest social status and create atmosphere.

Key themes

Parent-child relationships

The play explores Verity's fraught relationship with her parents and the impact it has on the whole family. Many of the episodes look at significant moments in the family's history and how it affected each of them. In particular, Verity's relationship with her mother is highlighted. Edward suggests that Jean might have suffered from post-natal depression because Verity was premature. Jean's monologue explores her guilt and the complex feelings she has regarding Verity's trips with Edward.

Mental illness

The play, written in the 1970s, explores the treatment Verity receives from healthcare professionals. It is a highly important, culturally and historically relevant play that explores how those suffering from mental illness have been failed by healthcare professionals. The treatment Verity receives is totally inappropriate because she is a 19-year-old locked up in a geriatric ward and many of the episodes highlight the battles Edward and Jean encounter trying to remedy this situation. The health officials realize her treatment is wrong and inappropriate and this is mainly a result of a lack of funding. The play also highlights society's reaction to individuals suffering from mental illness as well as Verity's isolation and desperation.

Seeking safety

Verity's condition means that she is constantly looking for places that allow her to feel safe. This need for safety is explored in a number of the episodes, e.g. how she feels safe in the water during the swimming gala. When these places of safety are destroyed or disturbed, it has a significant impact on Verity and results in an emotional outburst.

Contemporary staging of the play

*'Olwen Wymark's finest work is an emotionally gripping and energetic performance which explores the true story of Verity Taylor, who suffered from an undiagnosed mental disorder. With a powerful and original relationship between music, movement and text, the audience are wrenched through the labyrinth of her troubled mind. Using physical expressionistic techniques to expertly capture her desperation, Verity's turmoil is evocatively recreated by three actresses who switch from being undignified firecrackers to bundles of brokenness with unnerving ease. **Find Me** is a startling and moving piece of true theatre.'* - Review, Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2021

When *Find Me* was first staged at the Orange Tree Theatre in 1977, it was performed by a cast of eight people (five females, three males). The simplicity of the staging, with its bare stage, minimal costumes and its emphasis on lighting, had a significant impact on the audience. Over the years, bigger casts and more elaborate staging and effects have been used during productions of this play. The play allows for directors and designers to experiment with different styles and staging. The production in Edinburgh used an expressionistic style with an emphasis on physical theatre to convey Verity's mental state to the audience. What is important to remember is the relevance of Wymark's use of multi-roling, which enables the audience to view the characters as representational. The simplistic staging of the original production allowed the audience to focus on the central message and not be distracted. Would the piece be received and interpreted differently if more complex staging was used?

Even though the recognition of mental illness and the treatment/support offered to help those suffering from it has changed radically since the play was first performed, MIND have estimated that approximately 1 in 4 people in the UK will experience a mental health problem each year. These figures remind us that the message of the play is still as relevant and powerful today as it was when the play was first performed.



Key information about the topic

This half term you will be working on Component 1 *The Exam* - Interpreting Theatre. This is a written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes. There are 60 marks available. 45 marks on FIND ME (set text) and 15 marks on Live Theatre.

You will be focused on Live Theatre reviews this half term.

We will look at structuring exam answers and creating your own response to the work as a performer, designer, director and audience member.

Component 2 Section B

For section B you will need to analyse and evaluate one piece of live theatre. You are expected to analyse and evaluate how meaning is communicated through the role of theatre makers in contemporary professional performance. You must consider the role of the:

- actor - interpretation of character, character interaction, vocal skills, movement skills
- designer - creation of mood and atmosphere, use of performance space, lighting, sound, set and props, costume and make-up
- director - interpretation and style, performance conventions, spatial relationships on stage, relationship between performer and audience
- reaction and response – individual, audience.

Section B will give you a choice of two long essay style exam questions. You will need to pick one and answer this as fully as possible using the Live Theatre piece you have studied in class.

Mark Scheme

The exam requires you to - Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning for theatrical performance / Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance / Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed / Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others.

Top marks – You need to look at the mark schemes for the questions and to find out what each style of question needs to you discuss.

Thinking Questions

- Do I know what the teacher wants me to do?
- Do I know how to get the best marks possible?
- How do I find more information?
- Have I communicated everything I wanted to?
- Does everyone know what I mean?
- Have I included as many key terms in my writing as possible?
- Can I do more research on my own?
- How can I extend my work?

Evidence required

You will need take part in workshops, read the script, take notes, practice exam questions.

Key words

Action / Alter ego / Back story / Chorus/ chorus work / Collage / Communal voice / Conscience corridor (also known as 'conscience alley' or 'thought tunnel') / Flashback / Forum theatre / Frame distancing / Freeze-frame / Hot-seating / Improvisation / Narration / Narrator / Pace / Pause / Pitch / Ranking / Rehearsal techniques / Role reversal / Role transfer / Sculpting / Soundscape / Split screen / Tableau(x) / Tempo / Thoughts in the head or thought tracking / Transporting a character / Alienation / Anti-climax / Arena staging / Aside / Audience / Auditorium / Caricature / Character / Climax / Composite setting / Dance drama / Dramatic irony / Dramatic tension / End on staging / Epic theatre / Fourth wall / Genre / Monologue / Naturalism / Physical theatre / Promenade staging / Proscenium / Realism / Style / Subtext / Theatre in the Round / Thrust stage / Traverse stage

Question Focus on Acting



! Remember you are:

- evaluating and analysing a live television production
- spending about 25 minutes answering this section
- choosing one of the two options
- naming the performance, the company and the location.

Remember: The questions could vary and focus on the Director's work, interpretation and style, performance conventions, spatial relationships on stage and the relationship between the performer and the audience.

Important Things!

! Remember: Read the question carefully, use the bullet points to help you. Give your personal **OPINION** as a member of the audience.

INTERPRETATION AND STYLE:

The style of the production in question must be discussed, e.g. Musical, Naturalistic or Symbolic Theatre; then describe the shape of the set and the type of set. All of these are the Director's choice. The director might have challenged a convention and staged a naturalistic production on a round or traverse stage. Most Musicals are set on a proscenium stage, in order to get a variety of sets and stage equipment. So decide if the Director has stuck to a normal interpretation of the style or if he/she has experimented. Then you can discuss the Director's interpretation in one or two pieces (depending on the question). Discuss what was on the stage or the performance space in terms of set, equipment and props and then you may discuss the Director's choice of light and sound to create mood. Go on to discuss the style of costumes, the colours, the hair and the make-up.

! Remember to use a lot of terminology.

PERFORMING CONVENTIONS:

Again, decide on the performance's convention and style. The director will have decided on the complete picture whilst working with the actors and the designers. In a Musical, did the Director stick to the conventional styles? Did the Director use many sets and equipment, sophisticated lighting, complex costumes, also using a lot of space? This is usually a normal feature of similar shows. Nevertheless, the Director might have experimented and set the Musical on a bare stage with only a little set and equipment. This would break the usual conventions. The show you saw might reflect the usual conventions of staging, e.g. Naturalistic show on a proscenium stage, Symbolic show on a bare stage and using a more obscure set. You will need to discuss the Director's interpretation of all the elements in the piece – set, lighting, sound and decide whether his or her vision had succeeded or not. Remember also to mention the acting, and whether this was typical and followed the usual conventions, e.g. Realistic acting in a Naturalistic Drama.

! Remember to use a lot of terminology.

RELATIONSHIPS SPATIAL ON STAGE:

Discuss the production style, the stage shape and the size of the space. Specify on a specific part of parts, depending on the question. The director will have decided on the characters' equipment from the acting space and how and when they interact, e.g. the actor's locations on stage, the space, or lack of space, between them, their response, or lack of response, to each other. You may also refer to how the actors use pieces of the set or equipment in the space, and the significance of that. The Director might have created a series of moving patterns for actors and it is possible to interpret a theme or meaning throughout them. Remember that the size of the space varies from show to show and the Director's challenge is always to use the space to its full potential. There might be a huge cast on stage, but only a few actors. Nevertheless, the spatial relationship is essential and it can create a particular mood.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PERFORMER AND THE AUDIENCE:

This depends on the style of the production, e.g. Naturalistic, Brechtian. The stage shape, and the audience position, is important. If the show was in a small, narrow theatre, there would be a close and claustrophobic relationship between the audience and the actors, which is different to being a member of the audience in a large theatre like the West End. Nevertheless, actors can engage our attention on all kinds of stages and make us laugh, cry or sympathise. The actor can create a special presence on stage and get the audience to relate, e.g. through his/her voice, movements, responses, facial response, his/her use of space and interaction with others. Choose a special piece or pieces of the production (depending on the question) and explain how the actor or actors gained your attention.

Question Focus on Acting



Remember you are:

- evaluating and analysing a live theatre production
- spending about 25 minutes answering this section
- choosing one of the two options
- naming the performance, the company and the location.

Remember: The questions can vary and focus on the actor's use of PHYSICAL SKILLS, VOCAL SKILLS, INTERACTION, INTERPRETATION OF CHARACTER.

Important Things!

Remember: Please read the question carefully, use the bullet points to help you. Give your personal **OPINION** as a member of the audience.



PHYSICAL SKILLS:

You will need to specify how the actor interprets the character through his use of gestures, posture, walk, physical responses, facial expressions, position on the stage, special territories, stillness, use of space, set and personal equipment and props. To begin with, briefly mention the character, background, age, importance and social status because all of this is dependent on the actor's interpretation of the role he/she portrays. You can then specify and give examples of how the actor succeeded in physically conveying the character in a scene OR two scenes of the production in question (read the question carefully). You can give examples from the beginning, middle and end of the scene in order to organise the answer.

Remember to use plenty of terminology.



VOCAL SKILLS:

You will need to specify how the actor interprets the character through their use of tone and vocal tempo, perhaps accent, pitch, emphasis on words, use of pauses to create tension, pronunciation and constructiveness. Choose a specific scene or two, and discuss how the actor used the skills to create and enrich the role. You can refer to the character's background, age, status and motivation in this particular part. You can refer to the beginning, middle and end of a scene of your choice and elaborate on the skills associated with the voice.

Remember to use plenty of terminology.



INTERACTION SKILLS:

You will need to specify how the actor responds to the rest of the actors on stage, the distance and proximity between them and what was the significance of this. Was the actor moving deliberately to suggest a feeling or emotion? The actor may be using a series of facial gestures and responses, e.g. folded arms, eyes rolling, scrunched face, walking back and forth, pointing or back turned. Remember that the impact of this on the rest of the actors needs to be explained and how this succeeded in causing tension, a feeling or an emotion. What was the impact of this on the audience? Decide on specific examples from a scene or two scenes - once again, it depends on the question.



CHARACTER INTERPRETATION:

The character (or characters) in question will need to be discussed in terms of age, social class, intent and motivation, background and their relationship with the rest of the characters in the scene. Explain how the actor used the physical skills to interpret the role, then the vocal skills and interaction skills. Stick to the order of referring to the beginning, middle and end of a scene or scenes to organise your answer.

Remember to use the appropriate terms.

Question Focus on Design



Remember you are:

- evaluating and analysing a live theatre production
- spending about 25 minutes answering this section
- choosing one of the two options
- naming the performance, the company and the location.

Remember: Questions can vary and can focus on the following: LIGHT, SOUND, SET and PROPS, COSTUME, MAKE-UP and HAIR, ATMOSPHERE and MOOD, and USE OF SPACE.

Important Things!

Remember: Please read the question carefully, use the bullet points to help you. Give your personal **OPINION** as a member of the audience.



LIGHT:

You will need to start by discussing the style of the production, e.g. Musical, Naturalistic or Symbolic Play, then the type of set and stage shape. The designer will have selected the types of light in order to reinforce this style. Choose a particular scene or scenes (depending on the question), which will be effective examples of lighting. You can discuss the types of lamps used, e.g. wash, fresnel, beams, profile and strength; and also the angles and how the set and actors were lit. Discuss the colours and gels and how this created an atmosphere. Gobos, cyclorama, a video screen or specific images might have been used. Lighting from the back can cast shadows and create a more sinister mood. The lighting for your production may be more simple but effective for different reasons, e.g. to emphasize themes or symbolize emotion.



SOUND:

You will need to start by mentioning the style of the production and then discuss how the sound enriched the show. The designer may have chosen the sound to match the period, social background of the play or specific themes. However, the designer may want to create a more vague or suggestive sound. Once again, the sound will have to be discussed in one scene or scenes. Sound can be a piece of music that's already been recorded or live music. It may also be a recorded sound effect or a live sound effect, e.g. a gun firing on or off stage, sounds off stage. Explain how the sound created a mood and atmosphere in this piece and helped the production to flow smoothly, or created a blanket in the background. You will need to mention the sound levels and volume and its impact, e.g. sinister or peaceful sound, classical or contemporary music; appropriate instruments to create a mood e.g. saxophone.



SET AND PROPS:

Comment on the style of the production and the design of the set. You will need to mention the shape of the stage, the drama period and the general appearance of the set, e.g. naturalistic, minimalistic, symbolic, bare. You can also discuss where the audience is situated in relation to the show, e.g. theatre in the round, traverse or proscenium theatre. Then proceed to explain the type of set used and how effective that was, e.g. painted flats, the colours and patterns; they may have been covered by material. The mobile platforms and rostrum that created a specific shape and location on the stage floor. Different levels that represented the status of particular characters or areas in the plays, e.g. scaffolding, the use of stage furniture and equipment, curtains and gauze. Consider the back of the stage as well and what was used to cover the walls, and also the ceiling and floor. You can discuss the materials, e.g. metal, wood or plastics, and also the colours used.

PROPS - Don't forget to discuss the props in terms of their period, colour, quality and condition and how they created impact and reinforced the production.

Question Focus on Design



Remember you are:

- evaluating and analysing a live theatre production
- spending about 25 minutes answering this section
- choosing one of the two options
- naming the performance, the company and the location.

Remember: Questions can vary and can focus on the following: LIGHT, SOUND, SET and PROPS, COSTUME, MAKE-UP and HAIR, ATMOSPHERE and MOOD, and USE OF SPACE.

Important Things!

Remember: Please read the question carefully and use the bullet points to help you. Give your personal **OPINION** as a member of the audience.



COSTUMES MAKE-UP AND HAIR:

You will need to start by discussing the production style, e.g. Musical, Naturalistic or Symbolic Drama; then the period, venue and time. Choose the characters that are a good example of costume, make-up and hair design. You can discuss the costume's fabric, colours and style. The colour might symbolise the character's emotion or motivation and helps the interpretation. You can discuss the costume in detail from head to toe, giving your opinion on the effectiveness of design. Also discuss the costume's condition and quality and also how this lead the audience to judge or sympathise with the character.

Remember - The hair and make-up will need to be discussed and their effect explained, e.g. messy hair, white make-up, a lot of lipstick.



USE OF SPACE:

Explain what was the set's production style and also, was it essential to the shape of the stage? This will give an idea of the size of the space. The stage might be narrow and the set might be bare to give fair attention and a chance for the actors to use as much space as possible. If so, how were the locations created? Was there a change in atmosphere? Did a particular light suggest that? Were simple levels changed from one area of space to another? Was the space meant to be closed in order to create the theme of frustration and boredom? How did the actors make the most of the space they had? If the production was on a wide stage, there would be an opportunity to use several resources, sets, levels and rostra to create locations. Actors' locations could vary frequently and move to create an atmosphere of excitement and vitality. There may be many actors and a chorus coordinating and making effective use of the space in one scene of the production. Remember, when discussing space, you will need to refer to the equipment in the space and characters' locations.



MOOD AND ATMOSPHERE:

Many theatrical resources can create mood and atmosphere in a production. But whilst referring to the designer's role, you could discuss the lighting, sound, costumes and set designer's work. However, one of these may have made more of an impression on you than the others. So, choose the show carefully, and initially, discuss the drama's style and context, e.g. Musical, Theatre Show in Education, production of Shakespeare's work, perhaps. Try to describe a scene (or scenes) that was/were full of tension and built tension amongst the audience, e.g. slowly increasing sound, the light fading or changing colour, the actor adding a piece of costume or using props in a symbolic way. A series of images on screen or a film might add to the mood. Theatre designers have so many possibilities to create mood and atmosphere.