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91215



912150



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

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SUPERVISOR'S USE ONLY

Level 2 Drama, 2018

91215 Discuss a drama or theatre form or period with reference to a text

2.00 p.m. Tuesday 20 November 2018
Credits: Four

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Discuss a drama or theatre form or period with reference to a text.	Discuss a drama or theatre form or period with reference to a text showing informed understanding.	Discuss a drama or theatre form or period with reference to a text showing perceptive understanding.

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

You should attempt ALL the questions in this booklet.

If you need more room for any answer, use the extra space provided at the back of this booklet.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–11 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.

Excellence

TOTAL

22

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To answer the questions in this paper, name the drama/theatre form or period you have studied, and ONE text from the form or period to which you will refer.

Drama/theatre forms include (but are not limited to):

- medieval theatre
- Elizabethan theatre
- ancient Greek theatre
- commedia dell'arte
- epic theatre
- New Zealand theatre.

(If the text was not written as a script – as for example in commedia dell'arte – give brief details of the action.)

Drama/theatre form or period: <u>Feminist Theatre (New Zealand)</u>
Title of the text/play (or brief details of the action): <u>"Ophelia Thinks Harder"</u> <u>(a parody of Shakespeare's "Hamlet")</u>
Playwright/creator(s) (if applicable): <u>Jean Betts</u>

Features of the drama/theatre form or period to which the questions refer may include:

- performance space
- acting styles
- themes or ideas
- conventions
- use of technologies
- historical/social context.

QUESTION ONE: CHARACTER

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- (a) (i) From the text you studied, identify a key character, or group of characters, typical of the form or period.

Ophelia

- (ii) What are the aspects that make this character, or group of characters, typical of the form or period? Use examples from the text to support your answer.

During the 1970s and 1980s (the time at which the theatre form came to fruition), women were viewed as socially and economically inferior to their male counterparts. This subjected them to a myriad of injustices at the hands of men, including spousal rape, abuse, and unfair trials and misplaced blame. Ophelia has a character experienced all of these injustices in "Ophelia Thinks Harder," and was developed by Betts to be a character relatable to women of the era, in ways that Shakespeare's Ophelia was not. (who apparently had "such a good grasp on human nature, yet wrote his female characters so poorly") Ophelia was not.

- (b) How is the purpose of this character, or group of characters, a reflection of the society? Consider the social, political, or geographical context of the form or period. Use examples from the text to support your answer.

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During the 1970s - 1980s, New Zealand was a very patriarchal and misogynistic society who did not view their women as equals to their men. Ophelia's character was subject to all of the injustices these women of the time experienced due to their supposed "inferiority" that had been so deeply ingrained into society that most of them believed it too. This is seen in the play when Ophelia is talking to her maid and yells "Beat me for my sins! Beat me for my viciousness! Beat me!" all because Hamlet told her she was "Sinful for making me love you!" This exhibits how women were so quick to believe the opinion of the man due to the patriarchy of the society at the time*. The character of Ophelia was developed in order to inspire women to break out of the "2000 year old belief that man comes before woman" and realise their own power. Betts did this by showing Ophelia's development, from a woman who let a man dictate her life choices (Hamlet was representative of the misogyny and patriarchy exhibited in New Zealand at the time) to a woman who was able to get a grasp of her own ~~feminine~~ power as a woman ~~upon~~ being rejected by this same man. Betts wished for her female viewers to view Ophelia as a role model and break free from the idealistic mould their society wished them to fit at the time.

* (extra paper for insert)

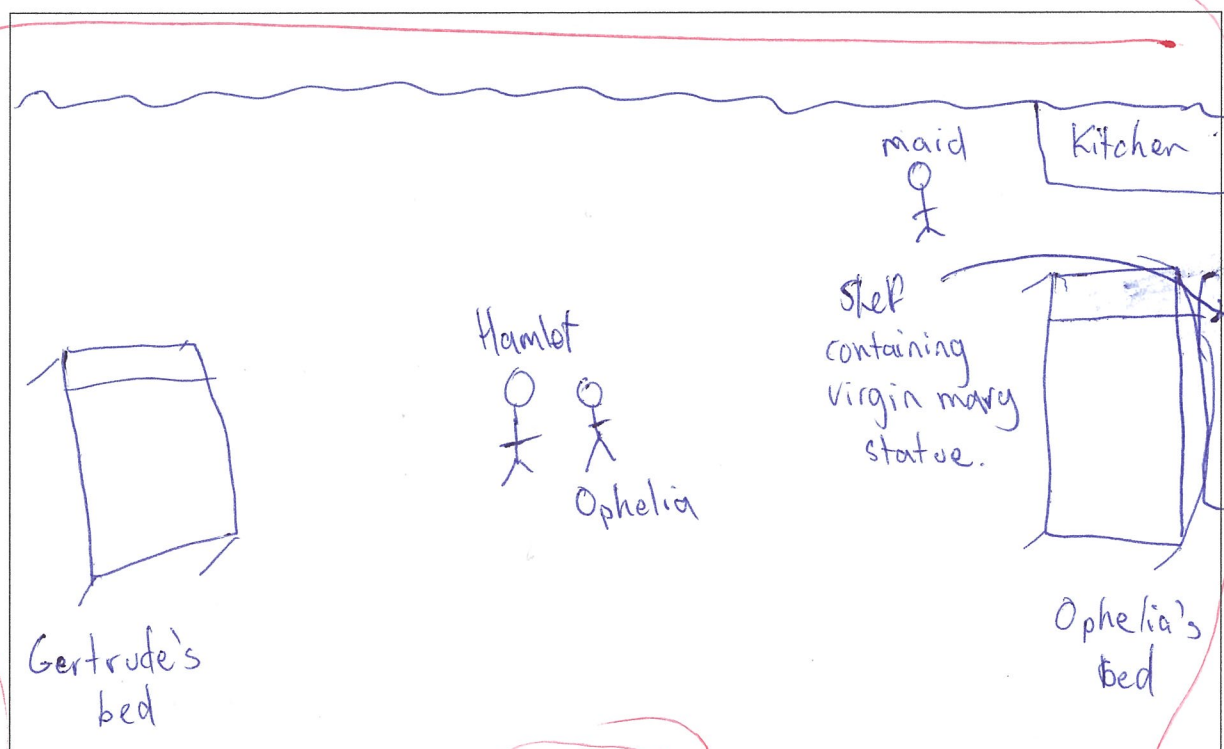
E7

QUESTION TWO: AUDIENCE

- (a) Describe a moment from the text you studied where the relationship between the performers and the audience is important. Include in your description the shape of a typical stage of the form or period and the placement of the audience.

The typical staging is an end-on stage, whilst the stage itself is typically minimal in order to draw attention to the action rather than the set. A key moment where the relationship between the audience and the performers are important is where Hamlet is beating Ophelia. The audience laughs at the comedic nature of the beating, as the maid stands in the corner whacking a baking sheet, synchronizing with Hamlet's punches. Ophelia's over-exaggerated cries and reactions to the hits also create a humorous effect. The intention of this humour is to make the moments memorable for the audience so that they will take away a message long after the ~~show~~ performance.

You may sketch and make annotations in the space below to support your answer.



- (b) In this moment, what is the intended effect on a typical audience of the form or period? Explain fully, with reference to the text **and** the form or period.

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A common feature of feminist theatre is agitprop (agitation propaganda), which Betts was inspired to use by Dario Fo's "Accidental Death of an Anarchist" and uses "theatre's most dangerous and subversive tool, humour." The theory of this is that laughing at seemingly lighthearted entertainment makes the moment stick in the mind of the viewer, and they will therefore take away the more sinister message that is masked by the humorous moment. In the aforementioned moment, Betts hoped that if the audience were to laugh at the scene of domestic abuse depicted before them, they would remember the scene and it would inspire them to take action against the real-life issue of gender inequality. By using agitprop in this moment, Betts hoped that female viewers would see what they had been disillusioned with for so long, whilst men would understand the magnitude of their wrongdoing. After being "more politically fired up than ever before after Dario Fo's "Accidental Death of an Anarchist," she adopted his technique of using humour to give the audience a sweetened version of real-life events, in the hopes to "fire them up" in the same way she had been to inspire them to advocate for political and social change to give women the equal rights they had been fighting for //

E7

QUESTION THREE: USE OF TECHNOLOGIES

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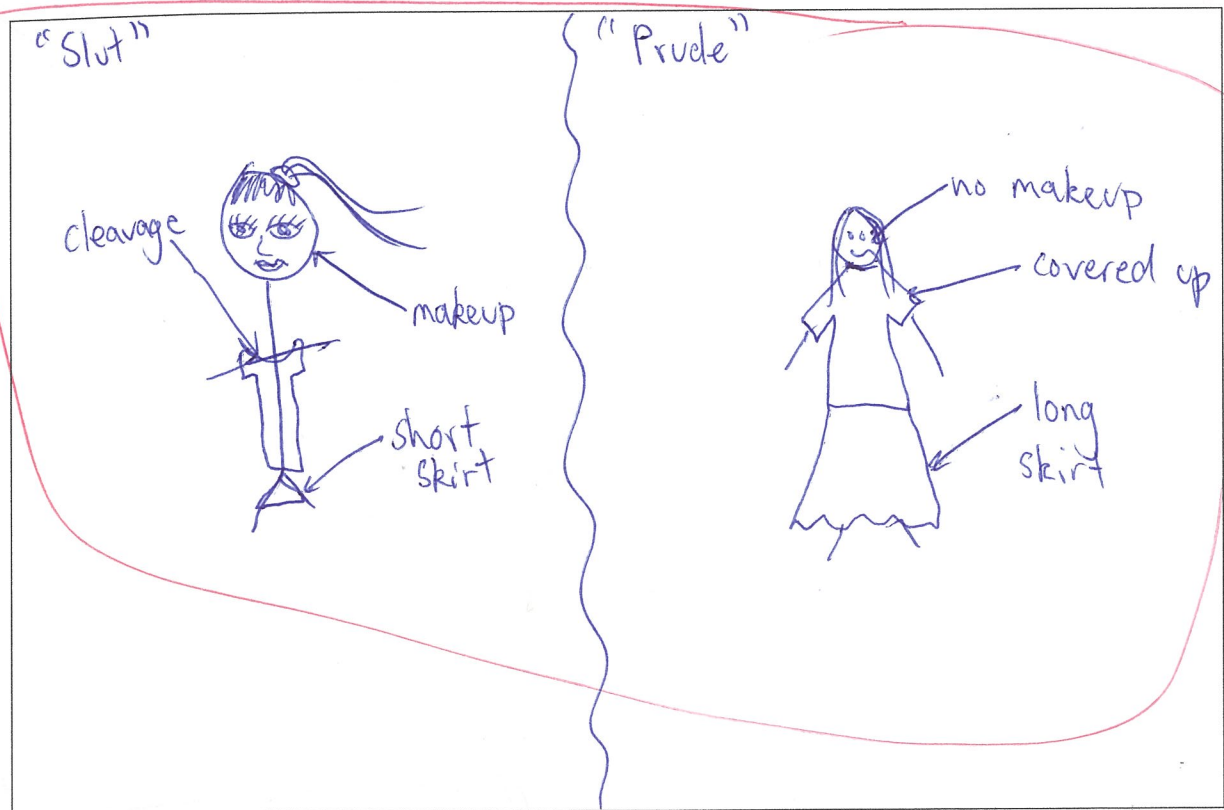
Identify (✓) ONE drama technology typically used in a performance in the form or period:

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Costume | <input type="checkbox"/> Mask | <input type="checkbox"/> Properties |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Digital projection | <input type="checkbox"/> Puppets | <input type="checkbox"/> Sound |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> Set | |

- (a) How would this technology be used in an important moment of a typical performance of the text you studied? Give detailed examples.

Costume is used to depict the "central contradiction of womanhood" in a feminist theatre style play. This refers to the confusion women felt at the time, as men wanted to their women to be virgins, as enjoying sex is "sinful," yet wanted them to reproduce and pleasure their men, which was deeply conditioned into their patriarchal society as "a woman's purpose." At the time (and even in today's society), a woman's clothes emblematically suggest her sexual experiences, supposedly. In feminist theatre, costume was used to (extra paper).

You may sketch and make annotations in the space below to support your answer.



- (b) How would the use of this technology in this moment combine with other performance features to create meaning for an audience? Support your answer with detail and examples.

ASSESSOR'S
USE ONLY

Costume, in addition with agitprop, were used to create a lasting impression on the audience via their depiction of the inner turmoil women felt at their inability to please their male counterparts. The idealistic character of the Virgin Mary is a humorous reminder of Ophelia's struggle, as she has a statue of this "perfect woman" on stage at all times. Virginity appears to be a very important concept for Ophelia, especially after Hamlet tells her to "get to a nunnery," implying that she is not one due to her sense of dress (i.e. black clothes seemingly were too scandalous for men the likes of Hamlet). We see agitprop and costume come together again to indicate Ophelia's character development at the end of the play after she learns that virginity is a social construct fabricated by men to keep women under their control; the real meaning of virginity is a strong, powerful woman. Upon realising her own power, Ophelia exclaims "At last, I am a virgin!" before putting on a pair of ^(i.e. her own costume choice) pants! This shows that Ophelia has realised her own worth and will not let her society's idea of an "ideal" woman affect her anymore, whilst the humour of the moment acts as agitprop and makes it a vivid memory for the audience. By using agitprop and costume, Betts hoped to visually stimulate the audience's memories, in the hopes that the events of the play would inspire them to take action against female inequality.

Extra space if required.

Write the question number(s) if applicable.

ASSESSOR'S
USE ONLYQUESTION
NUMBER

1b *Because women were seen as "inferior", men had developed an idealistic mould for women to fit into through the biblical character of the virgin mary.

3a highlight this confusion, and was exhibited in "Ophelia Thinks Harder" when Ophelia's friends are preparing her to meet Hamlet. One friend is slapping makeup on her face and telling her to dress "ready for it" in a short skirt, whilst the other is telling her to dress "modest" in a long skirt. This is a perfect example of the ~~so~~ confusion women felt by the contradicting statements of "what men wanted."

Excellence Exemplar 2018

Subject	Drama		Standard	91215	Total score	22
Q	Grade score	Annotation				
1	E7	The candidate discusses the purpose of Ophelia as a character of New Zealand Feminist Theatre, with reference to the patriarchal social climate of New Zealand in the 1970s and 1980s. The candidate makes insightful connections between the character – as a key feature of the drama or theatre form – and the text’s purpose; to inspire women to ‘break out of the “2000-year-old belief that man comes before woman” and realise their own power’. Well-chosen evidence is woven through the response to inform the discussion about the character, the theatre form and the playwright’s intentions.				
2	E7	The candidate discusses the intended effect on a typical audience of a moment in the performance of the text, with interpretations supported by an increasingly insightful understanding of ‘agitprop’. The candidate demonstrates some perception around the relationship developed between the performer and the spectator, and the effect of the humour developed in the moment – with regards to both the playwright’s intention and the intention of the form, New Zealand Feminist Theatre. The response is supported by well-chosen detail from the performance and the discussion of political farce text, Dario Fo’s ‘Accidental Death of an Anarchist’.				
3	E8	The candidate discusses how costume is used, alongside of ‘agitprop’, to create meaning for the audience. Holistically, Part A and B demonstrate insightful understanding of how costume is used to show the “central contradiction of womanhood” and how Ophelia struggles with the dichotomous rhetorical with regards to a “woman’s purpose”. The candidate demonstrates perception regarding how humour is used in this moment to highlight Ophelia’s development as a woman, and E8 is secured through connections made to the text’s purpose: “inspire them to take action against female inequality”. Well-chosen evidence is woven through to support the response provided.				