

91215



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SUPERVISOR'S USE ONLY

Level 2 Drama, 2016

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

2.00 p.m. Friday 2 December 2016
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 2–12 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

24

ASSESSOR'S USE ONLY

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. (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:	Feminist theatre
Title of the text (or brief details of the action):	Ophelia Thinks Harder
Playwright/creator(s) (if applicable):	Jean Betts

QUESTION ONE: A MOMENT OF TENSION

- (a) Describe an important moment of tension from your chosen text. Support your answer with brief details of the characters involved, and the cause of the tension.

A moment of tension is in scene 4, when Hamlet beats Ophelia. Hamlet is misled by Ophelia, but is also contradicted with the idea of making her remain a virgin. He beats her as he is confused by lust and religion "I read all about your women, women who are so vile, corrupt and bulky." Ophelia is also confused at the impossible contradiction of remaining a virgin but yet bearing her husband children, so she accepts the abuse, as it must be the woman's fault? However, this tension is lightened through comedy, as the maid uses slapstick to muffle the sounds of the beatings. //

- (b) Explain the acting style an actor would typically use to perform this moment of tension. Support your answer with details of the actor's use of voice, body, movement and/or space in ways that are typical of the form or period.

Comedy was typical of Jean Betts's feminist theatre, to illuminate moments of tension. ~~The maid uses~~ The maid uses slapstick, for example in the performance I saw, the maid thumped a badminton racket against her leg, to mimick the sound of Hamlet kicking Ophelia in the stomach, which was occurring at the same time. When Hamlet threw Ophelia against the wall, she rebounded using her body to

spin in a daze, filling the space. As this occurred, the maid blew on a whistle in a ~~clawing~~ ^{clawing} matter (the pitch raised + lowered) portraying Ophelia's dazed emotions. This made the play comedic and humorous to watch, when normally the audience would be astounded at ~~what~~ ^{what} they were viewing. This is typical of Jean Betts's feminist theatre, as it reminds the audience that they are just watching theatre, whilst also making them realise this is happening behind closed doors, and is only now being made public. //

- (c) Discuss the purpose of tension in the text. You could consider:

- how the tension is – or is not – resolved, and what this communicates to the audience
- how the text is structured, and when the tension occurs
- how tension in the text reflects tension in the real world at the time.

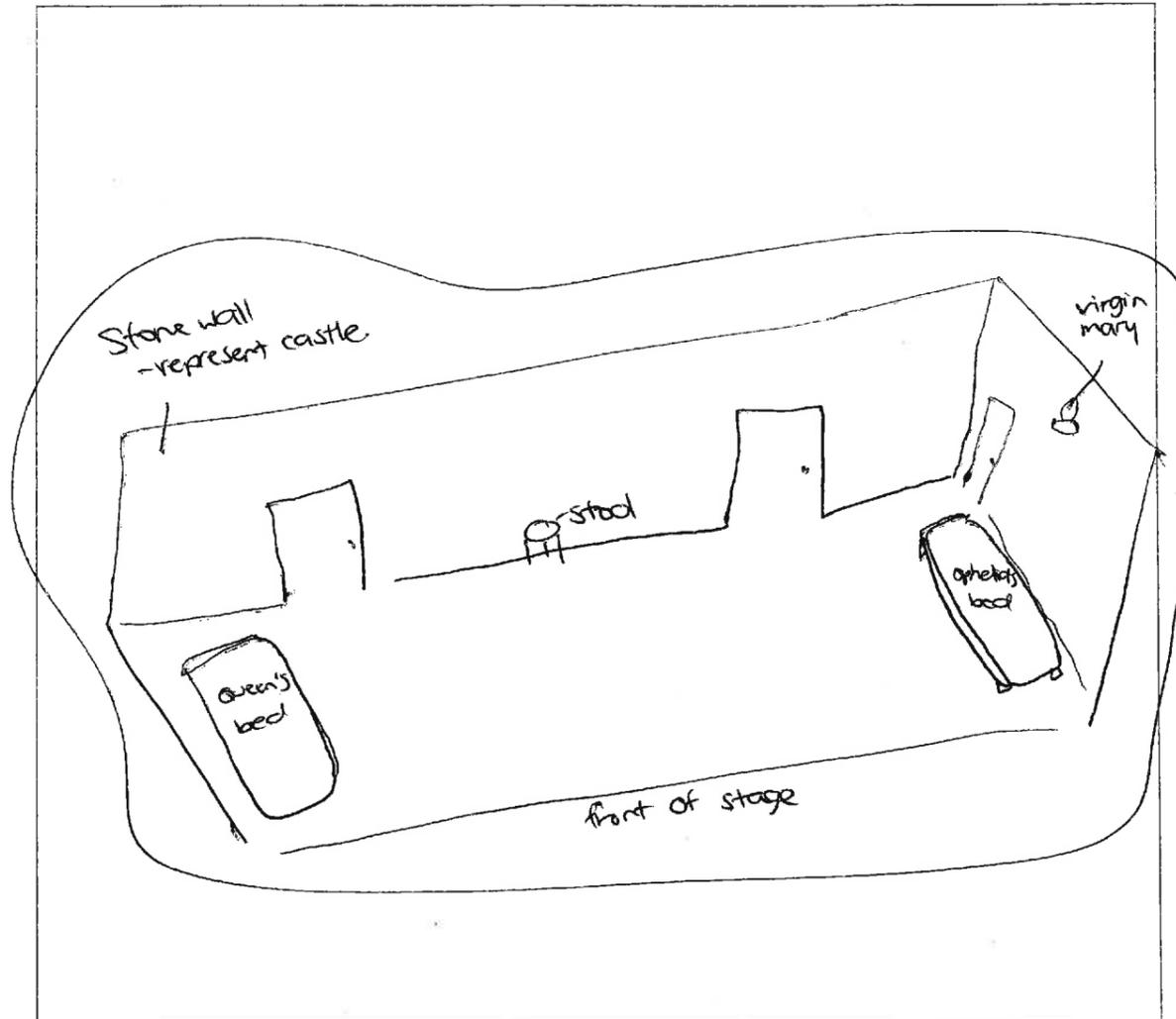
The purpose of this tension, was to reveal to the audience the same tensions occurring in their society. Domestic violence, ^{rape} on equal pay for women etc. These tensions all impact women. Betts left the tension unresolved, and even made Ophelia feel like ~~it~~ ^{it} was her fault "Cleanse me, purify me, strip me of my sins." This communicated to the audience the ridiculousness of the women blaming themselves for the abuse, and that they need to do something about it. Resolve it. The tension occurs in scene 4, near the beginning of the play. Following the tension, Ophelia finds out the true meaning of virginity in scene 5, from Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. "Virginity means independence. Being true to the self." Betts structured the tension at the beginning of the play, so Ophelia (and therefore the audience) could become educated on virginity, virgin mary and religion, therefore removing the shackles of ignorance. ^(in our real world time also) Betts purpose was to educate the audience, so they could go out and change the world, improving the lives for women. //

QUESTION TWO: USE OF A TECHNOLOGY

Select (✓) ONE theatre technology typically used in the form or period of your chosen text.

- Costume Mask Stage makeup Lighting Set/stage

- (a) Sketch to show how this technology would typically have been used in a performance of the text. Annotate the sketch to give relevant details (e.g. shape, colour, materials used).



- (b) Explain what this use of technology would have shown about the **character(s)** OR **setting** OR **style of the performance**. Give specific details to support your answer.

The use of a basic, simple set was typical of Jean Betts's feminist theatre. This is because the performance style ~~is~~ ^{of} bold, physical theatre, ~~is~~ ^{creates} open space. ~~is a result~~ The open space also made it easy to change scenes easily, or perform split-stage which is common also in 'Ophelia Thinks Harder.' The simple set also portrayed Ophelia's dull life, as she didn't leave her //

room much, yet it contains nothing personal or meaningful. Aside from the virgin mary, which is placed above her bed. Virgin Mary holds a strong hold over Ophelia, as she is always in her presence, and the kingdom is ruled through religion. The fact that Virgin Mary is the only thing 'worth of any value' in Ophelia's room, portrays ~~her~~ ^{Mary's} dominance over her, and the expected societal values Ophelia is bound by through law. //

- (c) Discuss how a **key factor** influenced the development or typical use of this technology. You could consider:
- the **availability of materials** and/or the fashions of the time
 - how the use of the technology was **innovative**
 - the **relationship** between the **actors and the audience**

A key factor for having a simple set, was the fact that Betts was a socialist, and believed all money and resources should go to the actors. She did not have much money, and set wasn't a concern for her, as her main goal was getting her message across and educating the audience. The set was simple and innovative, as it still allowed open space for the bold, physical theatre that her play required. Betts had a key relationship with her actors as she put their wellbeing first, which made them want to be there. This therefore resulted in ~~the~~ the actors have a thriving relationship with the audience, as they were passionate about what they were doing, also wanting to educate the audience and impact the world. The audience therefore was impacted by the message and the power of the actor, inspired to get out and change the world. Betts knew that this was the most important goal, therefore having a simple set still allowed her to do that, especially on her limited budget. //

QUESTION THREE: THE PURPOSE OF THE FORM OR PERIOD

- (a) Describe a key purpose of the form or period you studied.

Bett's key purpose of her feminist theatre, was to educate the audience on the political matters their society faced. Ophelia ^{originally} thinks Hamlet was performed in the 90's, which was an era that was experiencing a new shade of feminism from the 80's. Bettis wanted to address societal issues that involved women (e) domestic violence, unequal pay, rape, restrictions from religion etc. Bettis wanted the audience to become educated and recognise the issues, so they could then leave the play, ready to go out and change the world. She wanted the audience to change and benefit the lives of women, removing any patriarchal structures. //

- (b) Examples of conventions used in theatre forms and periods include: chorus, soliloquy, exaggerated action, stock characters, and breaking the fourth wall.

Explain how a convention would have been used to communicate this key purpose of the form or period to the audience. Give specific details from your chosen text to support your answer.

Exaggerated action ^{with comedy} was used to communicate the societal issues in Jean Bettis's feminist theatre. Again in scene 4 ^{when beating,} when Hamlet beats Ophelia, Hamlet uses big exaggerated movements to remind the audience that this is theatre. The slapstick of the maid whacking objects against her thighs, co-incides with the exaggerated action, as it makes the traumatic viewing of Ophelia getting beaten, palatable. You can see that Ophelia isn't actually getting hit, but the sound made by the maid makes it seem like she is. The fact that the abuse is so obvious and exaggerated, portrays the purpose of how domestic violence is well known, but not talked about. Domestic violence is obvious. Yet the audience recognises this message, but can still laugh about it and enjoy the theatre they are watching, whilst understanding the societal issue. //

- (c) Discuss how the purpose of the form or period was influenced by its historical, social or political context. You could consider:

- events that the playwright or creator(s) had experienced
- social or cultural values of the time
- laws, or religious or social customs of the time that dictated what could be shown in performance.

Bettis stated in an interview in ^{May} 2000 that she hated how Hamlet was easily forgiven, in Shakespeare's Hamlet. She had spoken to one of her peers after watching the play about her frustration and they replied with "oh yes but look what the poor boy had been through." She thought, what about what Ophelia had been through? She never realised how much of a patriarchal structure ^{was} present, until she started connecting all the dots. Her parents were feminists, ^{both} yet her mother always stayed home to look after her while her father went protesting. Why didn't her mother get to protest? Bettis social customs of the time were heavily ^{dictated} from religious structures, and still heavily assumed the values that women stayed home, did the cooking and cleaning etc. Bettis decided she had had enough of this inequality, and wanted to do something about it. She ^{re-}wrote many Shakespeare plays, to be more fitting to her feminist views. Women were main characters, women played men etc. The rise of feminism in the 80's helped Bettis to prosper for change, improving the lives for women, for future generations. You could arguably say Bettis's purpose worked, as NZ has had ^{more} women in high power following her plays (Helen Clark for example), and that Bettis's could possibly have something to do with this change in society. //

Excellence exemplar 2016

Subject:	Drama	Standard:	91215	Total score:	24
Q	Grade score	Annotation			
1	E8	<p>The candidate effectively answers all aspects of the questions, showing insight into the purpose of the tension and how it is used structurally to support the overall purpose of the form.</p> <p>The candidate clearly identifies a key moment of tension with detailed evidence to support their response. The explanation of how drama techniques specific to the theatre form are used to perform this moment is detailed and supported by examples. Insight is evident in the explanation of the purpose of the tension and its effect on the audience, and when drawing parallels between the text, the form and society at the time the play was written.</p>			
2	E8	<p>The candidate provides a clear sketch with annotations and explains in detail how the use of stage / set showed the performance style.</p> <p>The response shows understanding of how the set / stage is used symbolically to show the themes and ideas of the play; and connect the use of set to the playwright's political ideology.</p> <p>The response shows applied knowledge and insight by making an interesting point about the practical implications of the playwright's socialist philosophy on the stage / set: "A key factor for having a simple set was the fact that Betts was a socialist and believed that all money and resources should go to the actors."</p>			
3	E8	<p>This response gains E8 because the candidate makes a clear, detailed connection between purpose or convention and how the historical / social / political context shaped the purpose, supporting their response with well-chosen evidence and examples.</p> <p>The candidate shows insight in part (c) by drawing on the playwright's upbringing and the rise of feminism to show the influence on the purpose.</p>			