

## DRAMATIC ARTS

NOVEMBER 2008

General comments: Language ability is an important skill for the successful completion of the examination paper. In most of the centres it was evident that expressing oneself clearly in written language is a problem. Candidates found it difficult to formulate answers. It is important that the assessment tasks completed as part of internal assessment address this problem. During the year, candidates should be given many opportunities to evaluate and reflect in writing on dramatic processes. This will afford them the opportunity to use drama terminology regularly.

It also became clear that the teaching methodologies in some centres are not conducive to learning in Dramatic Arts. It is important that the full amount of time allocated (and more, if possible, because of the practical nature of the subject) be spent on teaching and learning. In some schools the subject is offered after school hours as an eighth subject. It is clear that adequate time is sometimes not spent on theoretical work and that most of the teaching time is spent on practical work. It is important that teachers plan well and re-assess their teaching practice to ensure an integrated teaching approach, where practical application of theoretical work reinforces the overall understanding and coverage of the syllabus. Candidates should also be taught how to approach the theoretical examination, and also the meanings of terms such as *compare*, *explain* and *describe*, and how they should respond to these (and other) examination instructions.

Comments related to questions in the question paper:

QUESTION 1 AND 2 Epic Theatre and Theatre of the Absurd:

Essay question: 20 marks, shorter questions: 10 marks

This question tested epic conventions, alienation and historification. These questions tested higher order thinking. The balance between the essay and shorter questions was innovative as it afforded an expanded level of cognitive thinking.

The Epic Theatre question was less challenging to answer. This may be because Theatre of the Absurd is intrinsically more complex in the synthesizing of ideas. The visual stimulus in each question added interest and extended candidates' answers. Some candidates did not take up the challenge to integrate the visual sources with their answers. Teachers should work on integrating the text and the movement more directly. Theory and performance and understanding of movement should be integrated. In many centres candidates could not connect the specific elements of the movement with the play they had studied. To remedy this problem, teachers will have to teach in a more integrated manner – drama is a set of related systems and it is important that candidates understand that all aspects of drama are inter-related. Candidates were not penalised if they only referred to the movement (Epic Theatre) as the question did not formulate reference to the play clearly..

QUESTION 3 *BOESMAN AND LENA* (shorter and paragraph questions)

This question assessed basic knowledge of the play, application and creative response. Candidates fared exceptionally well in this question.

Question 3.1 assessed understanding of three themes. Some candidates did not understand the term, *themes*. In many centres candidates demonstrated a weak knowledge of basic drama terminology, like *themes*. Teachers are advised to ensure that candidates have a common understanding of drama terminology.

Question 3.5: This question relates to how a prop could enhance an actor's performance. Some candidates misunderstood this question. They referred to the description and function of the prop. Teachers are advised to ensure that candidates have an understanding of the play, but also of the theatrical performance possibilities.

#### QUESTION 4 *uNnosilimela*

No candidate in the WCED answered this question.

#### QUESTION 5 *Woza Albert!* (shorter and paragraph questions)

This question assessed basic knowledge of the play, application, synthesis and creative response.

Question 5.1: Many candidates misunderstood the term *idea* and how it would relate to a theme of the play.

Question 5.2: Candidates' answers to this question were mostly superficial. They could not specify how props would be used in order to portray many characters. They would merely describe the props.

Many candidates answered these questions as if it were a comprehension test. They leaned strongly on the extract and did not use independent or creative thought when answering the questions.

Question 5.3: Some candidates struggled with the term *workshop theatre*. It is clear that in many schools candidates are not taught practical application of theoretical concepts.

#### QUESTION 6 *Sophiatown* (shorter and paragraph questions)

This question assessed basic knowledge of the play, application and creative response. These questions did not require any higher order thinking. The questions engaged candidates on a personal level. Candidates found questions easy and accessible.

#### QUESTION 7 *Nothing but the Truth* (shorter and paragraph questions)

This question assessed basic knowledge of the play, application, synthesis and creative response.

Some candidates had a sound understanding of the socio-political background to the play, but could not apply this to the cartoon. Most candidates demonstrated a sound understanding of the play, its content and related movement.

Question 7.3.3: Many candidates did not integrate characterisation with the Stanislavsky technique.

Some candidates produced excellent answers that demonstrated synthesis of thought. Teachers are advised not to separate visual sources from the text in future papers as it makes the interpretation of the source difficult if the candidate has to turn the page.

#### QUESTION 8 *Groundswell* (shorter and paragraph questions)

This question assessed basic knowledge of the play, application, synthesis and creative response.

Candidates' answers were considered in terms of how they engaged with the question on a personal level in terms of characters and given situation. There was evidence of strong knowledge of the play and these candidates could synthesise their answers in an effective manner. Many questions demanded higher order thinking.

Question 8.2.1 Many candidates misinterpreted the word *event*.

#### QUESTION 9 *Siener in die Suburbs* (shorter and paragraph questions)

This question assessed basic knowledge of the play, application, synthesis and creative response.

Candidates demonstrated a sound understanding of all assessed aspects of the play.

The diagram of the stage could have confused candidates who had been taught according to different visual stimuli. It is suggested that candidates be exposed to a variety of visual stimuli and be taught how to integrate and interpret the picture.

Question 9.2.2: Many candidates did not integrate personalities, socio-economic background and language. Many candidates merely gave character descriptions. Teachers should ensure that candidates are well-versed in exam-writing techniques to ensure that the questions are correctly interpreted.

There were some glaring mistakes in some of the candidates' answers that suggested that the candidates had not read the play.

#### QUESTION 10      *Mis / Missing* (shorter and paragraph questions)

This question assessed basic knowledge of the play, application, synthesis and creative response.

Candidates demonstrated a sound understanding of the assessed aspects of the play.

Question 10.1.1 Many candidates could only answer on *bevryding*, and not on *beswering*. Teachers should take care to ensure that candidates have a full understanding of all themes related to the play. Many candidates confused the term *theme* with *title* and explained the title of the play.

Question 10.3.2 Candidates often referred to the character of Constable and not to the atmosphere that had to be created. Many candidates approached this question from a literary perspective. Candidates did not demonstrate the ability to visualise and to integrate their theoretical knowledge in a practical performance context.

#### QUESTION 11      Practical Application questions (LO 1 and 4)

Many candidates could not relate to the poem in the English version of the paper. Many candidates did not demonstrate the ability to apply skills and understanding within the performance of the play.

Question 11.2: Candidates did not read this question adequately. ONE vocal technique had to be discussed, but many candidates elaborated on more than the required vocal techniques. Afrikaans-speaking candidates did not show a clear understanding of terminology such as *toonkleur* and *toonhoogte*.

#### QUESTION 12      Practical Application questions (LO 1 and 4)

Many candidates did not relate to the *Legs on the Wall* – an example of physical theatre. Many candidates copied information from the extract.

Question 12.4: Candidates did not understand the purpose of theatre. This problem can be remedied by exposing candidates to a variety of theatre styles. In this question many candidates demonstrated weak examination techniques, they did not let the mark allocation guide them as to how much to write to achieve the required marks.

#### QUESTION 13:1      LO 4

Candidates could not apply what they have learnt during the year in a slightly different context. The essential question posed was 'What is theatre?' Theatre studies in the classroom should be a springboard for candidates to answer related questions. The answers did not demonstrate any theoretical underpinning in the questions. Answers did not demonstrate any interpretation and contained a lot of repetition.

QUESTION 13.2 LO 4

Candidates are strongly advised not to answer this question if they have not studied media studies. The answers did not demonstrate any theoretical underpinning in the questions. Answers did not demonstrate any interpretation and contained a lot of repetition.

QUESTION 13.3 LO 4

Answers demonstrated much insight. Candidates incorporated personal experiences, demonstrated understanding of learning points. Better analytical skills were evident in this question.