

General Certificate of Education
June 2007
Advanced Level Examination



DRAMA AND THEATRE STUDIES
Paper 6 Theory into Practice

DRA6

Tuesday 26 June 2007 1.30 pm to 4.00 pm

For this paper you must have:

- a 16-page answer book.

Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

Instructions

- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is DRA6.
- Answer **one** question from **Section A** and **two** questions from **Section B**. In Section B, you must answer **Question 5** and **one** further question, chosen from Questions 6 to 8.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 100.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- This unit assesses your understanding of the relationship between the different aspects of Drama and Theatre Studies.
- All questions require answers in continuous prose. However, where appropriate, you should support your answers with sketches and diagrams.
- You will be marked on your ability to use an appropriate form and style of writing, to organise relevant information clearly and coherently, and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate. The legibility of your handwriting and the accuracy of your spelling, punctuation and grammar will also be considered.

GUIDANCE

Time management

This paper is divided into two sections.

You are advised to spend about 50 minutes planning and answering your chosen question in Section A.

You should allow yourself ample time to read and assimilate the material in Section B before you attempt to answer any of the questions.

It is recommended that you spend about 50 minutes reading the material and preparing your answers for Section B, allowing yourself 50 minutes in total to answer both questions.

Synoptic expectations and opportunities

Both sections of this paper are synoptic; that is, they test your ability to make connections between a theoretical understanding of theatrical processes and practices, acquired throughout the course, and their realisation in performance.

In Section B, you are required to make explicit, **relevant reference** to your own experience of drama and theatre acquired through your AS and/or A Level courses.

SECTION A

Answer **one** question from this section.

You are advised to spend about 50 minutes planning and answering your chosen question.

If you choose Question 4, you must answer on Brook, Grotowski or Brecht.

- 1 Explain how **one or more** live productions that you have seen or participated in reflected Brook's ideas for using stage space and assess the effectiveness of the chosen space and its use for the audience. *(50 marks)*

- 2 Explain how Grotowski's 'poor theatre' concept was applied in **one** live production that you have seen or participated in and assess the success of specific techniques that were used to communicate with the audience. *(50 marks)*

- 3 Explain how the actors used Brechtian performance techniques in **one** live production that you have seen or participated in and assess their contribution to the creation of a Brechtian style of theatre. *(50 marks)*

- 4 With detailed reference to **one or more** live productions that you have seen or participated in, explain how **one** practitioner's ideas for the use of design elements were exemplified and how design contributed to the audience's experience of the production. *(50 marks)*

Turn over for Section B

SECTION B

Read the following material which is taken from David Edgar's adaptation of Charles Dickens' novel *Nicholas Nickleby*. The series of short scenes from the play is prefaced by a list of the characters who appear in the extract.

Once you have read the material carefully, you should answer **Question 5** and **one** further question, chosen from Questions 6 to 8.

It is recommended that you spend about 50 minutes reading the material and preparing your answers, allowing yourself 50 minutes in total to answer both questions.

When answering the questions, you should adopt the perspective of director, actor or designer as specified in the question. You should also refer explicitly to **relevant** wider experience of drama and theatre in order to support and illustrate your answers.

The Material

Dickens published his novel, *Nicholas Nickleby*, in 1839, but David Edgar's adaptation was specially created for and by members of the Royal Shakespeare Company, working as an ensemble, and was first performed in 1980.

The opening of the play introduces the audience to some important characters in the story; to Nicholas Nickleby, the 'hero' of the story, to his loving mother and sister and to his, not so loving, Uncle Ralph. We are shown the first meeting of Nicholas with his uncle and we are shown his first meeting with the unpleasant Mr Squeers who owns the grim boarding school named 'Dotheboys Hall' (and who appears to be a most unfit person to be in charge of children).

At the end of the sequence of scenes, we see Nicholas board the coach that will take him from London to Yorkshire a long way from his family to earn his living as an assistant to Mr Squeers.

The playwright, David Edgar, specified that everybody in the cast should take part in the narrative sequence that opens the play and that the actors in the ensemble, when "not playing a named part, would, when not changing or preparing for an entrance, sit or stand round, on the set, watching their story unfold".

* * * * *

The material has been adapted where necessary in order to provide an extract suitable for the purposes of this examination.

Pages 5–18

The extract taken from 'The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby' is from the beginning of the play up to the end of Scene Seven.

As stated above, this material has been adapted. This includes the omission of Scene Two from the extract.

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Pages 6–18 of this question paper have been deleted from this web version.

Question 5 is **compulsory**.

Answer **Question 5** and **one** further question, chosen from Questions 6 to 8.

Avoid duplication of material in your answers.

You should base your answers about the play on the given extract and refer closely to the extract in your answers.

You should also support and illustrate your interpretation of the extract with explicit reference to your own wider experience of drama and theatre where appropriate.

- 5** As a director, explain how you would use performance and/or production methods in the **opening three** scenes of the extract (lines 1 to 173) in order to establish an appropriate style and atmosphere for your production. *(25 marks)*

EITHER

- 6** How would you want your audience to respond to the character of Mr. Squeers? Explain how you would perform the role in order to achieve your aims. *(25 marks)*

OR

- 7** Outline your ideas for appropriate set design(s) for the extract as a whole and explain how your design(s) might be used, in performance, to accommodate the action of the various scenes. You should include a sketch/sketches to support your ideas.

You should consider your choice of staging form, the necessary transitions between the separate scenes and the style and period of the play. *(25 marks)*

OR

- 8** As a director, explain how you would stage Scene Four of the extract (lines 174 to 294) and what effects you would wish to create for your audience. *(25 marks)*

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page

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