

**CCEA GCSE - Drama (Legacy)  
Summer Series 2018**

# **Chief Examiner's and Principal Moderator's Report**

# drama



## Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of CCEA's General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in Drama (Legacy) for this series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk).



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## GCSE DRAMA (LEGACY)

### Chief Examiner's Report

#### Assessment Unit 1 Understanding Drama

This is the last report on the current specification and once again all candidates were able to attempt all questions.

Once again teachers have prepared their candidates well for the examination and more pupils scored top marks in Question 2 this year but answers to Question 1 and 3a were quite disappointing in many cases. There were still some rubric problems with candidates answering for Sammy as a child in Question 1 and a number of rehearsal strategies being developed instead two or two improvisations being developed instead of only one. The majority of candidates answered the paper in the order of the questions which was a distinct advantage for timing and content and some added more information for specific questions at the end of the paper.

The most popular text again this year was Blood Brothers. A number of centres chose The Crucible, Juno and the Paycock, Philadelphia Here I Come and Across The Barricades. One centre chose Romeo and Juliet.

- Q1** Question 1 was generally answered well with an appropriate sketch and annotation. Some candidates added justification to the sketch and some merely described the costume in the justification. Some omitted period and status and many did not include an appropriate quotation with comment. Many candidates did not refer to colour, material or shape. Top band answers require the candidate to be 'perceptive' in their response and must be imaginative about the context of the scene. For Blood Brothers the scene was set in the late 70's, early 80's, but some candidates added modern costuming such as hoodies, cargos and tracksuits and some left out the gun as an essential prop in this scene. However, some candidates added imaginative props such as gloves to hide fingerprints, a balaclava for robberies, sunglasses to make him look 'cool' and a scar from getting the plate in his head and bruises from being in fights. Mary Warren from The Crucible was generally very well answered.
- Q2** The Question 2 answers were generally well attempted by candidates of all abilities, with some excellent structuring of the answer reflecting work in the top band. We had some new rehearsal methods such as 'melodrama', 'gibberish', 'mirror work' and 'Le Coq's 7 levels of tension'. A few candidates used script in their improvisation which was very similar to the original play. For some candidates the chosen moment was a response to another character's line which often proved very successful but some candidates did not include a 'chosen moment' or did not refer to the chosen moment in the application. Again there were some centres who had chosen several lines of text rather than a moment and some referred to a different moment in the application. Also some candidates are still directing the rehearsal work which is not required. Lower ability answers often had brief rehearsal work and limited or no application for a chosen moment and also often lacked reference to text. A few candidates did not refer to a 'contrasting' moments. Overall the answers to this question were of a higher standard as teachers have taught the students the structure of what is required for a top band answer and more students received full marks in this question this year.
- Q3 (a)** The 3 (a) question should refer briefly to the background, style, staging and playwright for their Scripted Performance and some candidates did exactly this but many candidates wrote about their character, performance, lighting, music,

costume and props which were not required and often included too much information on specific aspects of the play. Some candidates were influenced by Stanislavski, Brecht, Artaud and Bruiser Theatre Company in their performance and wrote in some detail about their style of performance with understanding while others simply referred to the practitioner without any knowledge of the style of performance. Some candidates referred to rehearsal work and how their role was developed for an audience and many candidates spent considerable time describing their character which was not required.

- (b) The final question was generally answered well but some candidates ran out of time. Some candidates used a range of quotations and described their voice in performance without any understanding of what they hoped to achieve. Some candidates referred to other performance skills such as movement and facial expressions. Responses from weaker candidates tended to be descriptive with some general reference to vocal performance without range and limited text reference. The plays chosen were generally appropriate. Sparkleshark and Joyriders were quite popular this year and Heaney's *Burial at Thebes* and *Requiem for Ground Zero* were challenging texts but led to positive responses. Other popular choices were, *Lord of the Flies*, *Steel Magnolias* and *Living with Lady Macbeth*.

### Further Comments

The level of language was appropriate for the candidates and many of them used specific Drama terminology with understanding in their responses. The majority of candidates finished the paper in the allocated time but some wrote at length on Question 3 (a) and were unable to complete.

Overall candidates wrote in detail on each question, with some candidates writing extensively and are to be congratulated for their comprehensive knowledge and understanding of their set text.

The overall standard of written communication was very good and the same spelling mistakes 'portray', 'performance' and 'rehearsal' were prevalent again this year.

## Principal Moderator's Report

### Assessment Unit 2 Drama Performance

The team of Moderators were generally impressed with the moderation process of this final series of the current GCSE Drama Specification. Congratulations to pupils and teachers on this year's achievements and on their past achievements for this very successful award.

Overall standards at moderation were generally good with evidence of thorough preparation at some very strong centres some of which were new to CCEA GCSE Drama. Performances and appraisals were generally well prepared for the most part and candidates were thoroughly engaged in the process at nearly all centres.

Assessment criteria were applied appropriately, however, there were more adjustments this year than in any other previous series. Ten centres were adjusted overall with five centres adjusted upward and five adjusted downward. There were also issues with centres marking right to the edge of tolerance in terms of leniency. The Moderators made note of this practice on the TAC6 centre reports.

The variety of texts explored was again extensive with a broad range of style and genre represented in the choices of centres. The range included texts from the classics of Shakespeare to more contemporary choices. There were at least eight texts presented for the first time this year and around 60 texts in total explored for the Scripted Performance. Centres are to be reminded that texts must be of a published nature, which means that unsourced internet material and screenplays are not acceptable.

The most popular choices this year were: Lord of the Flies, Blue Remembered Hills, Be My Baby and Dancing at Lughnasa. Some very strong candidates rose to the challenge presented by some great text choices and this year it was reported by several of the Moderators that candidates were "accomplished" in their often challenging roles. One Moderator reported that a group of students performing Cagebirds were "a joy to watch from start to finish."

Only one centre chose to perform Devised Drama for this series.

### Assessment

Teachers' assessment was, in general, of the standard required although a significant number of centres are still marking generously. The tolerance of +/-3 is widely known and it was again the case that a number of teachers were assessing to tolerance. Tolerance, however, may change for any series as a result of organisational requirements and those centres marking to this may find that their marking is beyond tolerance, leading to an adjustment.

AO3, Appraisal, was more realistically marked this year with less tendency to mark all students in Mark Band 4. Appraisals continued to strengthen with more evidence of research and rehearsal methods/ideas in evidence. Stronger evaluative comments were also apparent.

The team of Moderators made note on the TAC6 reports of any issues regarding inaccurate assessments. There is also a continuing tendency to award full marks for AO1; it was noted by Moderators that this level of achievement was not always reflected in the outcomes for AO2 and AO3. Assessment outcomes for AO1 should correspondent with those of AO2 and AO3 and be reflected in candidate notebooks.

Marking on the day of external moderation must reflect the marks awarded at internal standardisation. Centres who fell into this category received TAC6 reports which identified

this practice. Please take note that adjustments are always considered if there is a mismatch between internal and external assessment.

The notification of adjustment is indicated in the TAC6 report and centres should be aware of issues identified.

## **Administration**

Administration was completed accurately in nearly all centres which enabled the process of moderation to run smoothly. Paperwork was completed to a good standard, however, in a few centres again this year the TAC1 and EXA39 had not been finalised before the moderation visit.

Generally, the venues and performance spaces were suited to the process of moderation, but as was the case last year, there were a few interruptions during performance and appraisal. Disruption should be avoided through the provision of a space where the candidates can perform and appraise without interruption.

Moderators welcomed the time afforded to them before the performances began for the consideration of the documentation. This enabled the Moderators to familiarise themselves with the work of the candidates. It should be noted that an adequate amount of time must be allocated to the Moderator for the inspection of documentation and to the process of finalising marks.

## **Candidate Notebooks**

Evidence of engagement in units of coursework is contained in the candidate notebooks which are required to be completed for all candidates and for all units.

Candidates are expected to show evidence in their notebook of their research in terms of the style and period of their performances. It is also a requirement to include a discrete section for each of the two units of coursework. Notebooks must be complete and must contain evidence of preparation, research and evaluation. There was evidence of very detailed work this year with the inclusion of photographs and sketches regarding the process of preparation and rehearsal.

Notebooks at a few centres were meaningfully annotated by teachers and most notebooks met the minimum requirements this year.

There were several issues again this year regarding missing notebooks with centres requested to forward missing notebooks for inspection by the senior team at Post Moderation. Few centres complied with this request which was noted on the TAC6.

The Revised Specification introduces discreet assessment of a "Student Log" which has similar qualities to the current Candidate Notebook. Those centres who engaged their students fully in the evaluation of their work will be able to apply this good practice when undertaking this aspect of the new specification.

## **Standard of Presentations**

Once again the drama performances were generally of a good standard with some very good, excellent and "outstanding" work in evidence. Moderators described some of the best work as "highly accomplished" with "engaging and energised performances" and praised the centres for their "continued commitment."

Nearly all of the texts proved suitable and some new texts presented "challenging and enabling opportunities" for candidates. Staging was used effectively to enhance performances at a significant number of centres, including the creative use of set, costume, props, music and lighting. Moderators commented that supportive audiences, particularly

of parents, added to the sense of occasion. Nearly all performances were attended by audiences.

There were several issues identified this year in terms of work which was too short which proved a barrier to achieving marks in the top range due to lack of development. The guidelines state fifteen minutes for a minimum group of three.

In most centres the full range of marks was in evidence but there were several instances again this year where the bottom candidates were not seen on the day of moderation. If the bottom candidate is not available for moderation, then the visiting moderator must be informed prior to the visit.

## **Appraisal**

The Moderators continued to be impressed by the standard of appraisal and some of the candidates' responses were described as "articulate", "insightful" and "confident". In the main, pupils were very engaged in this process, however, it was apparent that at some points this year Moderators led the session in order to encourage a more detailed response. Effective links were often made to detailed information contained in the candidate notebooks. It should be noted that all candidates should have an equal opportunity to respond in appraisal and that questions should be directed fairly to candidates across the ability range.

Appraisals were realistically assessed this year with less tendency to mark candidates in Mark Band 4. In general they were again slightly stronger than for the previous series with more research, rehearsal and evaluative comments in evidence. There was still a tendency for weaker students to describe rather than evaluate but this was generally recognised in the marks awarded by teachers.

Centres must ensure that appraisals take place in a quiet space to enable candidates, teachers and Moderators to focus on this important process. Several appraisal sessions were interrupted by doors opening or banging; this should be avoided at centres through appropriate exam signage during the moderation session.

It should be noted that the newly revised specification does not include a post-performance appraisal.

## **Problem Areas**

Difficulties experienced this year were quite similar to last series and centred on the following points:

- Marking on the day should reflect internal standardisation and should be within tolerance.
- The process of performance and appraisal should be uninterrupted.
- The bottom candidate must form part of the sample at external moderation.
- Work presented must be of the appropriate duration.
- Candidate notebooks must be present at external moderation for all units and all candidates.

Well done to all who participated so successfully in the 2018 final series of the current GCSE Drama specification.

## Contact details

The following information provides contact details for key staff members:

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