

Level 3 Lead Examiner Report 2001

January 2020

**Level 3 National in Performing
Arts**

***Unit 1: Investigating Practitioners'
Work (31555H)***

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A grade boundary is where we set the level of achievement required to obtain a certain grade for the externally assessed unit. We set grade boundaries for each grade, at Distinction, Merit and Pass.

Setting grade boundaries

When we set grade boundaries, we look at the performance of every learner who took the external assessment. When we can see the full picture of performance, our experts are then able to decide where best to place the grade boundaries – this means that they decide what the lowest possible mark is for a particular grade.

When our experts set the grade boundaries, they make sure that learners receive grades which reflect their ability. Awarding grade boundaries is conducted to ensure learners achieve the grade they deserve to achieve, irrespective of variation in the external assessment.

Variations in external assessments

Each external assessment we set asks different questions and may assess different parts of the unit content outlined in the specification. It would be unfair to learners if we set the same grade boundaries for each assessment, because then it would not take accessibility into account.

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Unit 1: Investigating Practitioners' Work (31555H)

Grade	Unclassified	Level 3			
		N	P	M	D
Boundary Mark	0	9	19	30	41

Introduction

Unit 1: Investigating Practitioners' Work is a mandatory externally assessed unit on the following qualification sizes of the BTEC Nationals in Performing Arts: the Certificate, Extended Certificate, Foundation Diploma, Diploma and Extended Diploma. January 2020 is the sixth opportunity for assessment of this unit. However, due to changes made to the external task in acknowledgment of feedback from the DfE (these changes are summarized in the Sample Assessment Materials Issue 3), it is the third time that learners have responded to this structure of the paper and set task activities.

This Level 3 unit has 90 guided learning hours, ensuring learners have plenty of opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of the performance and production repertoire of two practitioners; one chosen from a set list in the unit specification and a second practitioner that can either be chosen from the same list or be one of the learner's own choice.

During the teaching and learning phase for this unit learners should also develop their knowledge and understanding of the contextual factors that have influenced their practitioners' practical work and develop their ability to critically analyse this performance and production work.

The focus of the task paper is to assess learners' investigation into the performance and production repertoire of two practitioners, along with the contextual influences that have influenced the practitioners and the performance and production repertoire of those practitioners.

The paper is set twice every year with a Part A pre-release paper containing the theme released in December for January assessment, and in March for assessment in May. Learners have four weeks to refine their research into their chosen practitioners' performance and production repertoire in response to the set theme for the series, which in this series was Conflict. At the end of this independent research period, learners spend three hours in one or more monitored sessions writing up their independent notes and preparing their bibliography. These notes, and the bibliography, are the only notes learners can use in the formal assessment period for Part B.

The Part B task paper requires learners to respond to three activities. The task paper and the specific focus of the three activities changes every

series and it is essential that learners respond to the specific activities on the task paper in the year and series of their assessment.

Discussion and analysis of practitioners' performance and production repertoire can be in response to live or recorded performance work seen during the delivery of the unit. The response can be to professional, semi-professional or amateur work, as long as the performance and production style accurately reflects that of the chosen practitioner's own work and is not the learners' own work.

Some examiners noted a small number of scripts where learners had copied and pasted a significant amount of their response to an activity, for example a description or analysis of a scene or moment from a piece of performance/production repertoire, in order to reuse exactly the same description or analysis in another activity. Centres are strongly advised to warn learners against simply copying content from one activity to reuse in one or more of the other activities. It is appreciated that learners may wish to reference and give examples from the same scene or moment in more than one activity, especially where they feel this example is relevant and appropriate, but it is important that learners respond to each activity as a separate task rather than simply copying and pasting the same content, which is a form of assessment malpractice.

Introduction to the Overall Performance of the Unit

As outlined above, the knowledge and understanding learners must demonstrate in their response to each of the activities in the Part B task paper remains very similar to that required by task papers in previous series. Much of the information in the Lead Examiner report from The June 2019 series is relevant and thus repeated for this series.

Learners need to refer to their practitioners' performance and production repertoire in order to demonstrate an effective application of an investigation process. In successful responses it was clear that learners had watched and studied live, or recordings, of live performances.

Examiners reported seeing a very wide range of work covering the full range of marks available. Most learners responded well to the activities and produced work that fulfilled the requirements of this set task with many very effective responses. The specific focus of the three activities in part B of the task paper supports many learners to respond to the specific requirements of each activity and therefore achieve high marks. However, there were also a few less effective and/or brief responses to each activity from some learners.

Some very good responses were seen in all performing arts disciplines, especially in relation to Akram Khan, Matthew Bourne, DV8, Steven Berkoff, Sondheim and Frantic Assembly. In all of this work there was a clear sense that the practitioners' performance and production work had been watched, studied and analysed thoroughly in relation to the theme of Conflict.

It is important to note that the careful selection of practitioners is paramount to success in this unit. There were, unfortunately, still some learners who had chosen practitioners that were not ideal and/or were inappropriate for the completion of the activities in the Part B task paper. Examples of such practitioners are individuals or companies that do not have international recognition and an established reputation and presence; practitioners where learners were not able/or did not see live or recorded work which had been created by their practitioner or which accurately replicated their work, and those where there was very little contextual information available on the practitioners' work. This has an impact on learners' achievement as it means they have not addressed an important demand of the unit specification and are often not able to successfully respond to the specific requirements of the assessment activities.

It is important to select appropriate practitioners who have live or recordings of live performances available which are relevant to the selected

theme, which this series was Conflict. Students must be able to see repertoire which accurately replicates the intentions of their chosen practitioner.

A number of practitioners or companies may fit the description of being internationally recognized, with their performance work being readily available, but there may be little evidence or research to support the learner in exploring contextual factors that have influenced the practitioner or company. This may disadvantage learners, especially for Task 1.

It is important to note that playwrights such as Shakespeare, Ibsen, J.B. Priestley, Arthur Miller, Willy Russell etc. are not ideally suited for study in this unit. The work of playwrights is interpreted by theatre practitioners and it is this element of live performance, not the text itself, that is the focus for this unit. Learners who analysed playwrights' texts and who did not discuss live/recorded performance and production repertoire were disadvantaged as they struggled to reference 'at least one specific scene or moment from each practitioner's performance and production repertoire', required by each activity. They also struggled when discussing the performance and production elements in Activity 2.

Similarly, some companies such as the RSC, Ballet Rambert and National Theatre do not have a house style – they employ individual directors/choreographers who have their own individual directorial approach to the work. It is this individual directorial/choreographic approach of the practitioner of putting the work on stage that is relevant to this unit.

If learners are looking at, e.g., Stanislavski as their practitioner viewing a naturalistic production using elements of his style is crucial research for learners. Ideally if it is a play that has connections with Stanislavski, such as a performance of a play by Chekhov or Ibsen which fully reflects Stanislavski's approach, this would be most beneficial to learners as it has a clear connection to Stanislavski's ideas.

One practitioner who can be a little problematic is Bob Fosse as the direction and choreography of his films such as *Sweet Charity* and *Cabaret* are integral to the overall effect he wished to create. What learners need to avoid is discussing the filmic devices such as the use of camera angles etc, as this is not relevant to the focus and discussion of the choreographic performance elements of Fosse's work. Also, it may disadvantage learners to discuss the filmic production elements such as lighting, set and staging as these are not filmed as live theatre productions. This may limit the choices learners can successfully respond to in Activity 2.

Examiners commented that learners tended to provide effective responses when they felt a connection to the work of the practitioners and had actually seen live or recorded work so that they could vividly describe moments of repertoire relevant to the activities. Effective examples of this was seen in repertoire such as Love Song, Swan Lake, The Cost of Living, Metamorphosis, Ghost Dances and Into the Woods.

In the most effective responses, examiners were impressed with the depth of the learner's knowledge and understanding of the repertoire of their chosen practitioners and with their ability to write persuasively in response to the specific focus of each activity. There were many instances of clear thought, detailed knowledge and insightful critical analysis of the practitioners' performance and production repertoire.

High quality work was seen where learners responded to the specific demands of each activity, particularly the reference to and/or analysis of practical performance and production repertoire. This work was well written and the application of research and a thorough investigation process was clearly evident.

The use of citations within the learner's response to each task is good practice, however it is not essential if learners are not including direct quotations. If learners are using direct quotations in their response to any of the three activities then they should obviously reference and cite the source of the quotation. Whilst there is no set style of referencing prescribed, Harvard appears to be the most popular format used in this and in previous series.

It is important to note that learners are still able to demonstrate a very sophisticated application of an investigation process, with perceptive use of a range of meaningful sources to fully support their conclusions, without including references and citations in the body of their response to an activity. It is the quality of the learner's response and their specific reference to relevant performance and production repertoire that evidences the quality of their investigation process.

In some cases it appeared that learners had not seen any of their chosen practitioners' performance and production repertoire. In these cases the learner's response was often limited to a narrative discussion of the plot, which tended to mean that they were not applying critical analysis skills or demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of performance and production repertoire, thereby making it difficult for them to achieve highly for any activity. Some learners appeared to have only seen brief trailers of productions on YouTube and were therefore very limited in how they could develop their response to specific performance and production repertoire across the tasks.

Some learners who used Stanislavski, and several learners who used Brecht, as their practitioners did not analyse practical performance and production repertoire. These responses sometimes discussed the theories and practices of the practitioners with often quite literary and plot driven narratives. As with all practitioners it is essential that learners watch live or recorded productions which allow them to discuss performance and production repertoire.

Learners do not need to discuss or analyse the whole piece of repertoire but it is strongly advised that they have watched the entire piece of work so that they can choose their own moments to discuss. They should include carefully chosen moments of repertoire in response to the specific focus of the activity. If the analysis of the repertoire is pertinent and contains some detail, then it should take the examiner on 'a journey', and when reading the response they should be able to visualise what was happening on the stage. In these cases it was always clear that the learner had undertaken a sophisticated investigation process and could be justly rewarded for doing so.

Overall the responses to each activity were generally well-written and structured, with a clear use of language.

Almost all learners had provided a bibliography. These ranged from a comprehensive list of sources, with clear reference to live and/or recorded performance and production repertoire, reviews, books and education packs; while others only used references to Wikipedia and/or very short YouTube clips of work.

There was some evidence of learner responses that were unbalanced. For example, some learners spent too long on Activity 1, which is worth 12 marks, and then didn't leave themselves enough time to respond in full to Activity 3 which is worth 24 marks. There was also evidence of learner responses to Activity 1 that were unbalanced in terms of the focus on each practitioner. Learners should be advised when preparing for this external assessment that they need to consider both practitioners equally in Activity 1 and fairly equally in Activity 3. Plus, that they should follow the timing recommendations in the Part B task paper for each activity.

A few learners made differentiating between the three activities difficult and had merged their response to Activity 1 and Activity 2, and in some cases, their response to all three activities. This was never an effective approach to take, as learners did not respond to the specific requirements of each activity.

Examiners reported an increase in work that was received without the centre register and/or without the learner record and authentication sheet. In some cases, examiners received work without names and/or learner registration numbers on it. Please refer to the Administrative Support Guide for this unit and the documents on the Pearson website for guidance on what needs to be submitted and how learners' work, as a hard copy only, should be submitted.

Set Task

Activity 1

This activity requires learners to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of how social contextual factors have influenced the performance and production repertoire of their two chosen performing arts practitioners. Whilst doing this, learners also need to discuss at least one specific scene or moment from each practitioner's performance and production repertoire, connected to the theme, Conflict.

In most cases learners responded successfully to the requirements of this activity and nearly all learners were able to make reference to social contextual factors that have influenced their chosen practitioners' work, with the word social being interpreted in the broadest sense.

In the most successful responses, learners then explained how relevant social factors were evident in the practical performance repertoire being discussed. In the most cohesive and insightful responses the performance and production repertoire was connected to the social influences on the practitioner and reflected the theme of Conflict.

In slightly less successful responses, learners outlined broadly relevant social factors that had influenced their chosen practitioners' work, and then discussed an example from the practitioners' performance and production repertoire that reflected the theme of Conflict without connecting the two different requirements of this activity.

As previously stated, the choice of practitioners and the availability of research connected to the full range of contextual factors is of utmost importance for this task. Often when discussing social factors influencing Frantic Assembly there was only general biographical details concerning Volcano Theatre Company, Ignition Project or Swansea University which was vague and under developed in relation to influencing social factors.

'The play The Unreturning was inspired by the men who were in the Ignition Project and after doing it for a couple of weeks they had a lot of stories about their time there. This meant that when they got back home they wanted to talk to people about their experiences however as the people they are talking to didn't do the programme they lost interest.'

There was often a sense that many candidates were a little unclear as to what social factors are.

'Another social factor that influenced Berkoff could be from German expressionism. There were many riots, social and political that were against naturalism in theatre. These riots influenced the early years of epic theatre, a style that Berkoff used. . . Kafka's social life affected his work, his writing. One of these being Metamorphosis which Berkoff performed an interpretation of.'

Many learners spoke about social issues within the repertoire and general social 'themes' but often missed the link as to what influenced or inspired the practitioner to create the work in the first place.

Most learners, even if a little unclear about social factors often made very clear links to the theme of Conflict within the work of the practitioners citing specific moments of repertoire, often in detail.

In a few far less successful responses, there were unfortunately still some instances of learners tending to give general biographical details on their practitioners or, as often seen for Brecht, Stanislavski and Berkoff, a discussion of the practitioners' theories on theatre with little reference to the specific requirements of the activity and/or to discussing how social factors have influenced their practitioners' work.

In contrast, many very successful learners had focused on one main social contextual factor for each of their chosen practitioners and provided a good level of detail on how this social factor had influenced their practitioners' performance and production repertoire, providing detail about the repertoire in relation to the social context being discussed and the theme of Conflict.

'The Paperbirds production of In A Thousand Pieces is about a girl and her story to get to the UK and within minutes of meeting her contact she is raped. This production tells of the repeated rape cases that are inflicted on trafficked girls today ... Paperbirds have taken inspiration from these news stories to turn it into a production to inform and raise awareness about sexual trafficking of women. This is a worrying social issue and portrays conflict as the girls struggle with their own mental health and physical abuse ... and the taxi driver, being an older man holds more power than the girls due to the men sexually trafficking the young women... A scene where conflict is visible is when the unnamed girl is holding a button whilst being raped, the button is meaningful to her as it reminds her of home . . . she places the button in a tin and this visualises the amount of times she is abused.'

Learners who included specific detail of moments from the repertoire tended to be more successful than those who provided a plot or general outline of the work with relation to social contextual factors and the theme of Conflict.

'Within Larson's work which was produced in 1996, there was a social catastrophe in terms of living conditions in New York in particular. There was conflict between the government and people as homelessness statistics were rising and young people were living under the breadline. This influenced Larson's personal life and his creation of Rent as Larson lived in a small flat .. and 'he was truly flat broke.' The living conditions portrayed in Rent projects the theme of conflict in the opening number where Mark and his friend Roger lock eyes with each other and harmonise 'how are we gonna pay this year's rent?'

A few learners responded to this activity by only discussing the social influences on one of their chosen practitioners' or an unequal balance between the two, with, on occasion, only a very brief paragraph on their second practitioner. This unfortunately was self-limiting. Most responses however provided a fairly balanced response between both of the two chosen practitioners.

There was a tendency for learners who had used dance practitioners to make clear links between highly relevant social factors, the theme and detailed reference to repertoire. Examiners reported that the level of detail when discussing repertoire was often impressive and gave a clear sense of understanding of the work.

'Pina Bausch lived through WW2 and Nazi Germany which became a major social influence on her and her family as they endured the effects of Nazi Germany, especially given that her family owned a restaurant. Her family's position ... gave Bausch ample sight of the effects of war seeing destitute people, people arguing over differing views of the war as well as love coming and going especially within the restaurant setting. All of these social conflicts would later influence Bausch's repertoire heavily even leading her to create her father's memories of working at the restaurant in a piece called 'Café Muller,' where she replicates vividly in interpretative dance all of the aforementioned ideas. One particular example within the piece that references social conflict is a brief moment where two of the dancers share a loving, close embrace ... the embrace is then physically altered by an actor who manipulates their positions so that the female dancer is held in the arms of the male dancer, though when she then drops to the floor the dancers quickly switch back to their former embrace. This action is repeated a dozen times with each repeat being quicker and more frantic than the last and continues even when the actor exits the stage . . . This could infer an example of enforcement that the Nazis applied to people with them being forced into a particular state but reverting to their previous position when enforcement has gone.'

Some learners referenced multiple social contextual factors, often in less detail, and made limited reference to the practitioners' work. Unfortunately, in

many cases, learners did not make reference to any practical and performance repertoire work at all. As already mentioned, learners who had not seen any of their practitioners' performance or production repertoire tended to be at a severe disadvantage when responding to this activity.

Again, it was evident that some learners wrote a lot in response to this activity and seemed to have spent longer than the suggested 40 minutes in completing their response. This was usually at the expense of the other activities, which attract higher marks: 24 marks each for Activity 2 and Activity 3 in comparison to the 12 marks for Activity 1.

As previously noted, the choice of practitioners who were able to provide clear research into a range of contextual factors relevant to their repertoire allowed learners to access higher bands.

Activity 2

This activity requires learners to analyse three specific elements of one of their chosen practitioners' work, thereby demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of moments of the practitioner's performance and production repertoire which communicate the theme of Conflict.

As reported by many examiners, Activity 2 was usually responded to most effectively and this tended to be the activity in which learners who had seen performance and production work achieved their highest marks as they focused on specific moments of repertoire in relation to the theme.

Some learners analysed one piece of repertoire in their response to this activity and considered how each of their chosen elements was evident in this one piece of performance and production work. This was an effective approach to take. Other learners discussed a different piece of performance and production repertoire for each of their chosen elements, which was an equally effective approach when responding to this activity.

Some learners helpfully listed the three chosen elements at the top of their response to this activity and then analysed the performance and production repertoire holistically with a focus on the three chosen elements. Other learners analysed the repertoire under subheadings from their three chosen elements. Either approach was equally effective, as long as there was a detailed consideration of each chosen element; the analysis of which demonstrated the learner's understanding of the

performance and production repertoire and how it reflected the theme of Conflict.

Learners should clearly list the chosen three elements they are discussing in this activity, preferably as an introductory statement to the activity.

In the most effective responses, learners were able to demonstrate accomplished analytical skills by providing a detailed analysis of the chosen elements in their practitioner's performance and production repertoire. In these instances, the moments being discussed were always very closely related to the theme of Conflict.

The most popular elements discussed were character; set and/or staging and/or special effects; costume and/or hair and/or makeup plus choreography and/or direction.

There was some misunderstanding by some non-dance learners of contact work and dynamics which was often a starting point for discussing proxemics. There were also some strong responses to the use of dynamics musically by learners discussing musical theatre repertoire with specific terminology and examples.

There were a large number of learners who discussed general lighting under the production element of set and/or staging and/or special effects. General lighting is not relevant to this element unless it creates a particular special lighting effect. There were instances where candidates noted that 'there was no set' and wrote about props instead, this approach was self-limiting for learners.

Costume was a popular response but often resulted in very generic description:

'Within The Nutcracker costumes are extremely important as they speak for the character and show us the type of character they are. The costumes for the orphans are extremely relevant as they are dark grey . . . which could emphasise the lack of respect they have. When Fritz and Sugar enter they are dressed in black and white and are smart, this allows us to see they are better than the children in the orphanage. This

highlights the conflict in the costumes and how Bourne has carefully selected them to show different classes.'

Frantic Assembly was again a very popular practitioner for Activity 2. Many learners had engaged with the performances of Lovesong and Things I Know to be True often evidencing perceptive understanding of the relationships and characters portrayed in these plays. Akram Khan, Christopher Bruce and DV8 were also very popular and learners often gave very detailed examples of repertoire and assured analysis of the works.

Contact work:

'There is a constant sense of control in the duets (Vertical Road / Khan) where the male behind the woman is essentially controlling and overpowering her movements, however the partner does not agree to this and adds kicks and flicks to show the battle and conflict they have with each other. In the duet the man keeps hold of the woman while she tries to move and she replies by trying to spin away from him, while he is holding her and she pushes her elbows back sharply as if to attack him. The ensemble at the back are always in unison, they are transfixed on this journey of self-discovery and new life. They are always fighting in conflict with the world and each other and you can see this when they are pushing and pulling each other using firm weighted movements e.g. lead and follow and trust work to present their relationships through contact work. Within the duets there is always one person in front of another, someone is always in control battling against one another because they have lost who they are, trying to find a sense of peace. . . Features of space, e.g., pathways are explored through contact work by the man, who is trying to control the woman by throwing her onto the floor and in anger she gets up to begin conflict with him. When the woman loses control in the second duet performed more upstage, the woman spins out of control and travelling through air jumps into the arms of the man. These duets explore different pathways to show the conflict they are struggling with to find the journey to new life and spirituality.'

As with Activity 1, learners who had not seen any of their practitioners' performance or production repertoire were at a severe disadvantage when responding to this activity. There were, again, disappointingly several instances where learners did not appear to have seen a performance influenced by their chosen practitioner and they were therefore not able to analyse the performance and production repertoire itself. These learners

tended to write about a play or musical in a literary way, often with quite a narrative approach. Some learners did achieve more effectively than would be expected by, for example, choosing character and/or style as two of their elements and offering some analysis of the work; however, it was often very difficult for them to analyse the application of another performance or production element effectively.

Character:

'Brecht was rather meticulous within his writing and made sure all the characters within the play carried conflict through the process... one quote that caught my eye was in Act 2 of the play, the quote was 'The Fat Prince remarks that it is too bad he was unable to kill Michael.' This shows that in the second part of the play conflict was used massively between the characters. Caucasian Chalk Circle was heavily influenced by WW2 and the events surrounding war. One event that had a massive impact on Brecht's ideas was when Nazi Germany invaded and this was when the play was officially created, as it has a huge declaration about war. Therefore I think the character element was an influential and deciding factor on the theme of conflict and how it can be portrayed.'

Less effective responses tended to be when learners did not define which three elements they were analysing. In these instances, learners often wrote about a piece of repertoire incorporating many performance and production elements often not listed on the task paper, and discussing each of them very generally. In these cases, even if learners analysed the performance and production work effectively, they rarely demonstrated thorough understanding of the prescribed elements and thus tended to provide a more generalised response to the specific focus of the activity.

Other less effective responses provided very little specific detail on their chosen element, often reverting back to narrative with tenuous or no links to the theme.

'During 'Things I Know To Be True' the play mainly consists of being in the house but it is still very simplistic but you see enough things to know that they are currently in a kitchen or they are outside since in a couple of scenes they are out in the garden so they are able to put a bunch of leaves and some tress to one side when it is needed and they could just light up that part of the stage.'

or

'Social conflict is shown in Sweetieland . . . Clara is reminded of the social conflict and view of the lower class as she is joined by luxuries that she would not have in real life. . . All these images of upper-class life are a constant reminder of the social conflict Clara is experiencing reflecting the social hierarchy system in the 19th century and the way lower class citizens were mistreated, "The condition in which the working class lived was horrible . . . despite toiling hard for hours, the wages paid to these workers were insufficient for their survival.'"

The best responses in relation to the element of character had, at the heart of them, a clear sense of performance, not just a textual analysis.

Character:

'Berkoff's use of character is varied but often follows one creative rule: they are two dimensional in nature. I say this for in Decadence, Steve, the fake upper-class male is purely lustful, with a nasally voice and a repulsive behaviour is completely emotionally manipulated by Helen, a genuine upper-class woman; she presents herself formally with straightened shoulders, a graceful movement and clear diction. Immediately we can see the conflict in their social differences... Berkoff presents the lower-class characters in a borderline caricaturesque sense with Les possessing a gravelly voice whereas Sybil, a downbeat drunk of a woman, has slouched shoulders ... This abrasive way of presenting characters with their exaggerated physiognomies and offensive language clarifies the social conflict that hovers over them emphasising the overarching British mood of political tensions and the aggressive moods that are seen in society.'

Effective responses provided more specific detail on the chosen elements with often insightful connections to the theme supported by perceptive examples from the chosen repertoire.

Set and staging

'The production of the Crucible is set in an in-the-round theatre space, a choice made by Farber to influence the way the audience view the action onstage and the themes within it. The choice means that the audience sit

like a court, observing the conflicts and chaos that unfolds on stage with the distance to ensure they fully comprehend the meaning of the play. In the first scene, the setting of Parris's attic where the bewitched Betty lies in bed, the set is minimalistic yet effective. Betty's bed is central with a small desk beside it . . . there is only one point of entry and exit which is the hatch on the ground and a staircase below stage... As this scene develops, more and more characters enter until eventually they stand surrounding the bed ... arguing over unimportant matters. Betty remains the epicentre of the play in the bed, a staging decision by Farber to show the conflict in the quarrelling characters' disregard to the real issues at hand and how this will later impact them.'

or

Choreography

'In Bruce's Ghost Dances, the main idea of conflict is the Chilean villagers wanting to escape the oppression that they were enduring from the ghost who represent the Chilean government and military coup. The movements that Bruce choreographed for the villagers show this idea very clearly. The villagers perform movements such as turns with flexed feet, arm gestures such as pushing them away from their body, clenched fists, fast rotations and a lot of travelling. The travelling in particular illustrates the idea that the villagers are trying to escape the torture they are facing. The flexed feet and clenched fists show the resistance they felt against the military coup because all they wanted was piece. The conflict is evident because these movements representing resistance is showing the villagers fighting and conflicting back with the government to try and stop them from doing more harm.

Rooster's (1991) main idea of conflict in the piece is against the men and women and their opposing views on how women should act and during the 60s this is when women started to feel more liberated and free which men did not like. Bruce choreographed the women in the piece to perform movements which were very sassy, confident and sexualized to show their changing attitudes. The women perform movements such as hip rotations and circles while pushing their bottoms out and also movements where their hips and very close to the male dancers while performing duets. Another movement Bruce choreographed for the women to go is kick the male dancers to the floor and this is where conflict is most evidently see and women are now starting to have more control over their bodies and there is a change in male to female dominance which the men did not like and felt friction towards this. Therefore, the conflict is seen through the women conflicting against the norms in society by taking control over themselves rather than a man having that control.'

Or

Performer to accompaniment and choreography

'In Hamilton one of the main themes is the conflict experienced throughout the American Revolutionary War. We, as an audience, see this throughout but mainly in the song 'The Battle of York Town.' Within this song is a large dance section in which the ensemble are dressed in army uniforms to represent the soldiers. The dancing in this section is in direct correlation to the musical accompaniment, e.g., when the music is fast and the beat is heavy the action in the movement is big, sharp and explosive. However in the bridge of the song the music completely slows down and becomes almost a capella with the occasional drum beat. At this point the fast paced movements stop and the ensemble start to move in slow motion, lifting staging and props over their heads and back down in an arc like pathway. They do this whilst singing 'The world turned upside down,' which is used to reflect the end of the war and conflict and with them reflecting on the damage that has been done.'

Or

Performer to accompaniment

'The performer to accompaniment relationship shows clearly the theme of conflict in this scene (Into the Woods) ... the singing is quick paced showing the stress and confusion that each of the characters are feeling whilst trying to explain their innocence to the other. At certain points that means they sing very quickly one after the other making it hard to distinguish who is talking to who, increasing the growing conflict between them. "See it's your fault, No! Yes, it's your fault. No! Yes it is! It's not! It's true." At the same time the accompaniment is following through a repeated motif of sound almost like teasing or bickering of children, whilst stopping for short periods of time when it is announced 'it's your fault,' to make the announcement more profound for the audience. The music comes to a climax at the end of 'Your fault!' along with most of the characters shouting 'you are responsible, you're the one to blame.' At this point the accompaniment changes drastically as the Witch responds, it slows down and becomes darker in tone showing the conflict between the witch and the other characters.'

Activity 3

This activity requires learners to recommend one of their chosen practitioners' work to headline a performing arts festival in response to the statement 'No conflict, no drama.' In order to do this they have to compare and analyse both practitioners' performance and production repertoire.

There was a wide range of responses to this activity. Most learners discussed both practitioners and offered a suggestion as to who should headline the festival, with some sense of investigation and comparison of the practitioners' work.

The response to the motto 'No conflict, no drama' was varied. Some learners ignored it completely or continued to discuss their practitioners' work in relation to the theme of Conflict generally. A few learners offered their own interpretation of the motto, while many focused their response on a clear understanding and interpretation of the motto.

The most effective responses often gave, at the start of the response, their own definition of the motto and justified their ideas relating to the work of the practitioners from this starting point providing a balanced response on how the practitioners' repertoire related to the statement.

'When understanding the concept of 'no conflict, no drama' I believe that it conveys the idea that without a problem there is no substance to a theatrical performance. A hurdle that is included within a storyline acts as a catalyst for the plot to unfold and for the audience to be left feeling apprehensive and on the edge of their seat. I want to watch a performance that leaves me thinking of a possible outcome for a problem rather than knowing what to expect. Despite people wanting to avoid conflict in reality, conflict in the theatrical world can always get a theatre lover's clogs turning and our minds imagining. Because of this I believe that both practitioners Andrew Lloyd Webber and Jonathan Larson are excellent candidates for headlining this festival as they demonstrate features within their work that link to the motto. However I strongly believe you should consider Larson's production of the rock opera Rent as this musical is built on the foundations of problems and drama.'

And

'No conflict, no drama is a realisation of the traditional narrative that without conflict no plot can unfold and no stakes can be set to keep a story interesting – conflict is essential to any plot in order to present drama and social ideas and there are no better practitioners to present this than Brecht and Berkoff. Both cultivate their work around the impressions of and the emotional impact

to, conflict as in Metamorphosis and Ui. Here both provide the basic framework of drama to convey social ideas which carry conflict within them ... '

Some learners interpreted the motto literally and discussed how within the repertoire there were moments where nothing 'dramatic' happened.

'If there wasn't any conflict then there wouldn't be much drama around for the performance to be as long as it is, as well as to keep us watching throughout because we want to find out what's going to happen to them and if anyone's secrets are going to be found out ... it helped because the lighting was dark and it shows there are secrets in the dark that could come out if we keep watching all of it.'

While other more effective responses discussed how drama is created through psychological or physical conflict experienced or displayed by the performers through their relationships externally or internally within the performances. The repertoire for these learners was often detailed and the examples showed the build of drama through the exploration of conflict, these examples often made use of reference to tension, emotional development of characters and specific reference to climactic scenes or moments.

'To me the statement means that without conflict both inner and outer events would seem less vivid, intense and thrilling. This is why DV8's Enter Achilles would work so well. In this piece we see examples of inner conflict within individuals as well as physical conflict in the forms of violence and aggression ... The music in this scene is employed for added drama. The music mirrors the flamenco style of the movements being a rapid, passionate tango-like sound. Furthermore, the music contrasts with the violence of the scene adding an element of comedy in the way the pace builds up and the dance gets faster with it ... the scene possess drama and conflict that comes from the physicality of the movement and the music that accompanies it...'

And:

'Othello would be a more successful choice because of the more subtle moments of conflict and drama within the performance. Moments like Iago's soliloquy near the start of the play ... Iago is standing on the snooker table, instantly drawing attention to himself and what he will say. Othello and Desdemona enter sitting on either side of the snooker table looking at each other, with Iago between them he represents a physical barrier between them but also foreshadows the distance he will create because of his jealousy. Othello spins the table ... and Iago looks over Desdemona, he stands behind her with her unable to see him, showing how his focus has changed to her and implying how he can use her against Othello... This subtle conflict is as dramatic as the physical image of Iago stood over and between Othello and

Desdemona as it is a powerful image of dominance, power and divide. This play would work better with the motto than DV8 as even though their piece has conflict there are also moments without physical conflict that are just as dramatic. During one scene the men in the pub move around as an ensemble in unison. The movements are very exaggerated and manly as they smoke and drink, they are also hunched over making them look almost Neanderthal. The scene creates no conflict as in conformity there is little room for problems or divides. However the powerful image of the man's attempt to fit in, even if it strips them of their identity is deeply dramatic and intense . . .'

In some instances learners developed a strong interpretation and argument in relation to the motto and their practitioners' work but failed to relate it to specific moments of repertoire instead only discussing narrative or comparisons about the logistical planning of the festival through budgeting/lighting requirements, portability of staging etc which was not helpful.

It was particularly evident this series that many learners produced work that had been pre - prepared for this task. Often there was little or only cursory reference to the motto while repeated biographical detail and general contexts which may have been researched for Activity 1 were discussed in detail. This disadvantaged learners.

There was also an increase in responses which did not discuss any repertoire in relation to this task, instead comparing biographical, cultural or stylistic approaches to the practitioners rather than of the work itself. These responses were self limiting.

Some learners wrote a fairly brief response to this activity, possibly because of too long spent on the other two activities leaving less time to respond to Activity 3.

However, the majority of learners gave clear, coherent and independent judgements in response to the motto and it was clear that these learners had completed a thorough investigation process, which supported them when answering this activity.

'Overall, both Brecht and Berkoff present their characters in dramatic situations very well utilising conflict as the key narrative device to accentuate the drama. However out of these practitioners I believe Brecht would be unsuitable for the festival due to the unconventional, anti - narrative approach to his performances, which could prevent much of the drama coming through - he never intends to focus on the stories but uses it as a component for his social ideas: drama would only distract the audience from this. Berkoff is better for the festival, as his performances are focused around aggression and

conflict and share more of a narrative understanding of the motto, with his use of physical skills and plots of abrasive relationships and hostile hatred defines his work as suitable for a dramatic piece of work for the festival.'

And

'Kneehigh, on the other hand, use lighting to exaggerate the actions within a scene to overload the audiences' senses and create drama visually. For example in the scene when Mac is being chased by the police officer the lighting changes to blue and red flashing lights. This is effective as it ensures the audience acknowledges that the police are present which is important due to the chaotic nature of Kneehigh's performance and style of scene changes, however this does not involve the audience within the emotions of the play, as Frantic Assembly does, but rather creates an excessive, yet comedic approach to creating conflict through visual drama.'

And:

'On the other hand Alvin Ailey also fits the statement of 'no conflict, no drama' however he takes a more subtle approach when conveying the struggle of people. Ailey uses more symbolic movements of conflict, eg, the triangle formation to show they are fighting a battle of oppression and racism like a flock of birds when they are trying to hunt. . . There is a moment in Revelations when a woman is repeatedly falling back using suspension and the man catches her under her arms with his arms open as if a response to the hardship and battle she faces . . . Ailey presents this drama and conflict in gestures and symbols so the audience can fully engage and understand the African American journey of struggle and conflict.'

Summary

Based on the performance seen during this series the following should be considered:

In preparation for the assessment

- Learners should be supported to achieve in this external assessment by developing their ability to critically analyse the performance and production repertoire of at least two chosen practitioners. Learners should be encouraged to watch, discuss and analyse the practitioners' performance and production work.
- Centres should guide learners to discuss the contextual factors, listed in the unit specification, which have influenced the performance and production repertoire being analysed by learners.
- If this work is completed during the 'teaching and learning' period before the Part A Pre-release task is available, then once the Part A task is published, learners should have a wealth of knowledge and understanding of practitioners' performance and production repertoire and the cultural influences on this work.
- In preparation for this assessment learners should be encouraged to formulate their own opinions and make their own judgments on the performance and production repertoire work of their chosen practitioners. Developing this approach in preparation for the assessment will support learners to communicate independent judgments in response to each activity on the Part B task paper.
- The bibliography should be completed during the teaching and learning period and refined during the research period. This will allow learners to be selective in the use of relevant sources if they choose to reference or cite a source in their response.
- A wide variety of resources should be used when conducting research.

Learner responses

- Learners should provide an individual response to each activity headed with the relevant activity number.
- Learners need to respond to the specific focus of each activity.
- All activities require discussion and/or analysis of practitioners' performance

and production repertoire in relation to the theme.

- The discussion and analysis of the performance and production repertoire should be practical in detail and relevant to the theme. Simple plot narratives are highly unlikely to support learners to achieve very highly.
- As in previous years, learners should be careful to ensure that if they are using practitioners with a number of acting or other techniques, for example in the case of Stanislavski or Brecht, that the response does not focus on this aspect of the practitioner's work. No activity requires learners to analyse the theories or techniques of practitioners; rather they should analyse their practitioners' own performance and production repertoire, or work which accurately reflects the practitioner's own work.
- In their response to Activities 1 and 3, learners should be encouraged to give equal consideration to two appropriately chosen practitioners.
- Learners need to see live/recordings of live productions that fully reflect the working practices of their chosen practitioners.
- In responding to the specific focus of each activity, learners must not simply copy and paste content: for example, the same piece of repertoire may be described or analysed in the response to more than one activity but this must be a discrete response and not simply copied exactly from another activity.

Administration

- Ensure learners are responding to the correct task paper for the series.
- There are two opportunities for learners to be externally assessed in this unit each year and each series will have a different theme and a different specific focus for each activity. Learners must respond to the set task for the relevant series in which they are being assessed.
- Ensure learners respond to each activity separately and if they are not using the published Part B response template for Unit 1, which has clear headings for each of the three activities, then ensure learners write Activity 1, Activity 2 and Activity 3 at the start of their response to each activity.
- Learners should list the performance and production elements they are responding to within Activity 2.
- Centres are reminded that they must complete the essential documents relating to each learner and the centre itself (the Learner Record and Authentication Sheet and the Centre Register). The examiner requires these for marking. It is essential that this paperwork is printed out and provided as a hard copy which the examiner can write on, and not sent digitally.

- Each learner's work needs to be clearly identifiable and each page of their response should have the centre name and number and the learner's name and registration number on it.
- Each learner's response to each activity, their bibliography and accompanying mark sheet should be kept together, ideally by stapling it together.
- If a learner is absent or does not complete all the tasks this should be noted on the exam paper or centre register so it is clear that the work was not completed as opposed to missing.
- A hard copy of learner work is to be submitted, not in a digital format eg on USB or CD.

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