

**GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION**

**SPEECH AND DRAMA HG**

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**SECTION A  
PLAYS AND THEATRE HISTORY**

**QUESTION 1  
ABSURD THEATRE**

**MARK ALLOCATION**

- The overall perspective of this response should address the use of dialogue in reference to the socio-political background and themes that the plays display – 15 marks
  - Structure – 10 marks
  - Characterisation – 10 marks
  - Space – 10 marks
  - Conclusion – 5 marks
- Total: 50 marks

**ABSURD STRUCTURE**

**EXAMPLES FROM THE TEXT OF YOUR CHOICE**

**THE SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND**

Reaction against Realism. Absurd plays are devoid of the structural characteristics of well-made dramas. No vertical or linear plotting towards a climax. No logical development. Formless – absurd experience. Circular, repetitious. No focus or objective. Circular structure communicates lack of progress or resolution. Structure describes a sense of infinity. The flattening out of form indicates that everything is of equal significance. All events are equally meaningless. Some absurd plays display a declining spiral structure moving into futility and dissolution. The situation is full of activity, none of which changes the situation in the least. The many-layered poetic images are to be intuited rather than rationally interpreted. The World Wars – sense of futility and meaninglessness. Darwin – man no longer an aspiring creature; on a par with other mammals. Nietzsche – no awareness of a divine force. Existentialism. It presents individuals within a situation in such a way, as to communicate their Existential experience of existence.

## QUESTION 2 BRECHTIAN THEATRE

### PAPER W – MARK ALLOCATION

- Main perspective expected from this response – Alienation from actor and audience perspective
  - Treatment of space – 10 marks; attention to alienation effect – 5 marks
  - Episodic structure – 10 marks; attention to alienation effects – 5 marks
  - Acting style and gestic characterisation – 10 marks; attention to alienation – 5 marks
  - Introduction + conclusion – 5 marks
- Total marks: 50

#### **Brecht's personal concerns:**

Drafted as a medical orderly during WWI

Witnessed the senseless slaughter of human beings.

He became a fanatical pacifist, violently opposed to those international forces (which he associated with capitalism) that orchestrated war for economic gain.

Brecht's war experience reinforced his sense of despair and cynicism.

He began to study Marxism.

#### **Brecht's Marxist concerns:**

He believed in the inevitability of class struggle and the possibility of an ultimate victory for the proletariat.

He reacted against mindless patriotism and a bourgeois society.

He rejected psychological or emotional explanations of man's behaviour – Expressionism.

Marxism provided Brecht with a strong sense of purpose, an optimistic political faith susceptible to scientific proof.

#### **The Brechtian text and the Marxist Dialectic:**

He was attracted to the dramatic appeal of the Hegelian dialectic:

- the coexistence of opposites,
- the merging of thesis and antithesis,
- the fact that order cannot be conceived without disorder
- Dynamic ambiguity was for Brecht the ironic essence of drama.

He believed that content determined form.

Marxist art must be involved in the creation of a Socialist society – didactic plays.

This provided the basis for his ideas on the objectivity of presentation or the “*verfremdungseffekt*” (alienation).

The function of Brecht’s theatre was political; it has to be viewed with critical objective.

### **Brecht’s ideological concerns:**

Brecht defines man in his socio-economic identity and creates a new purpose – a political ethic based on the religion of Marxism.

It reflects on the social condition of man to be viewed with critical remove by the spectator.

Alienation reinforces the Marxist doctrine. It is the estrangement felt by the worker in a capitalist society who can sell his labour but cannot participate directly in the economic control of society.

Brecht’s theatre wants to present society and human nature as changeable.

The plays have a strong didactic purpose and therefore, a pertinent political intention.

**BRECHTIAN EPISODIC STRUCTURE**                      **3 marks**

**EXAMPLES FROM TEXT**                                      **4 marks**

**SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND**                      **3 marks**

Epic – to present events as narrative. Discontinuous action – a loosely linked series of events. A montage of scenes linked by their illustrative relationship to a central political theme. While making a thematic whole, each episode is complete in itself. Influenced by Shakespeare, morality plays and Expressionism. Marxist dialectic: argument, clash, confrontation. A running sequence of action in which each issue is clear. The achievement of alienation underlies the whole theory of epic theatre. Calculated to break the audience’s emotional continuity, empathy – alienation. Enables audience to consider the action at own pace. Thesis-antithesis structure.

Each episode is complete in itself, as well as forming part of the nuclear whole. This gives each scene a well-defined action and purpose that Brecht called a *gest* or *gestus*. Refer to examples that illustrate: Juxtaposition. Variety in pace Variety in moods. Comment on structure of each episode. Role of the singer and/or narrator. Influence of Bauhaus and *Neue Sachlichkeit*. Expressionism – multiple scenes having no rational connection. Age of scientific utilitarianism. Audience in a critical frame of mind to be able to contemplate the possibility of a classless society Hegel: the nature of a country’s economic structure determines the form of its social, political and cultural identity. Reaction against Realism with linear plot-centred structure. The episodic structure is an alienation factor, disrupting the creation of a build of emotional empathy in the audience. The particular chain of events presents a body of evidence, from which a socio-political lesson might be drawn in a detached and lucid manner.

**BRECHTIAN CHARACTERISATION AND ACTING STYLE** 3 marks

**EXAMPLES FROM THE TEXT** 4 marks

**SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND** 3 marks

Characters intended to represent a political stance Gestus – a refined and firmly outlined physical representation of an idea. Scenic and character gestus must reinforce each other. The didactic purpose provides actors with a basis for performance. Actor must work against emotional display even if inherent in the text. Create the character from an external point of view, generalised aspects of human behaviour. Stylised and stereotypical characterisation. Underdog – leading characters are down-to-earth and unheroic. Cast against type. Actors think of role in third person; make comments on role. Characters are alterable (e.g. Grusha becomes a good mother). Presentation of the total statement of the play more important than one character – ensemble acting. The actor must build his part from a social perspective – actor must play the action and not the emotion. The purpose of epic acting is to entertain and arouse the critical consciousness of the audience. Emphasis on correct detail of costuming and props to enhance social function of his theatre. Make-up as a mask to reinforce gestus. **GESTUS**

**EXAMPLES:** The basis for physical characterisation is gestus. A gestus may be the physical (including costume) attributes of a character that projects the socio-economic function of the role, or it may be a particular gesture that embodies thematic meaning therefore, both EXTERNAL and PHYSICAL. Marxism posed that emotions have a class basis: the form they take is historical and specific, not universal. Human behaviour is shown as alterable. Marxist ideology places emphasis on social engineering. Marxist stance reinforced by Alienation technique. Marxist art must be involved in the creation of a Socialist society. The actor must examine his part to discover the political dialectics of the play.

**BRECHTIAN SPACE AND TIME** 3 marks

**EXAMPLES IN THE TEXT** 4 marks

**SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND** 3 marks

Unlocalised stage to allow for episodic changes. Unspecific space – like medieval and Elizabethan theatre. No attempt to create realistic illusion. Conscious undermining of illusion:

- House lights remain on at start of show
- No attempt to disguise theatrical apparatus
- Lights were ungelled
- Scaffolding rather than solid scenery
- Stagehands work in full view. Spatial dynamics of theatre reinforced with use of placards, slides, projections, teaching aids. Space is a classroom, set is a teaching aid. Extreme simplicity and utilitarian quality of space emphasise the plays narrative. Space was not regarded as background only; it presented and reinforced the thematic concerns of the play. Historification – setting the events in the past to alienate.

Reaction against Realism Bauhaus – functional architecture. Reaction against the growing influence of the cinema. Technological developments impact on theatre. Theatre is in arena where dialectical action is fought out for the education of the audience.

## **BRECHTIAN THEMATIC CONCERNS**

### **EXAMPLES FROM THE TEXT**

### **SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND**

Pacifism Capitalism versus Marxism Corruption. Criticism of the judicial system. An exposé of the Marxist ideology. Reaction against influence of World Wars Brecht's own traumatic experiences a medical orderly. The rise of Socialism and Communism as answer to the problems of the Post War world.

### **QUESTION 3 SOUTH AFRICAN THEATRE**

- Introduction and conclusion that address typically South African aspects relevant to the play – 10 marks
- Structure – 10 marks
- Characterisation – 10 marks
- Dialogue – 10 marks
- Space – 10 marks

Total marks: 50

#### **Background information:**

Historical events that are addressed by some South African plays (workshop, Protest) written especially after 1976 until the dismantling of the Apartheid System. This background information also applies to most of Athol Fugard's plays.

#### **1. Apartheid**

Some of the issues dealt with in plays that directly address the atrocities of Apartheid:

- The separation and isolation of people with laws that enforce inequality.
- Unjust laws: Group Areas Act, homelands policy separates and isolates
- Historical events: Sharpeville (1960), Soweto massacres (1976), the Crossroads conflict and Steve Biko's death
- Pass book system: a black person needs a permit in order to work
- Section 29 – police detention
- Detention without trial
- Appalling conditions in prisons
- Poor treatment of workers: no increases; no proper lunch breaks; exploitation with the threat of having their salary reduced, being laid off or being sent back to the homelands if they disobey, which leads to strikes
- Police attacks on Soweto at night with dogs, stray bullets, roadblocks and tear gas
- Lack of equal opportunities for all South Africans

- Education denied to blacks
- Freedom of speech and association denied to blacks
- Fear of terrorism and communism
- Huge discrepancies in wealth between the rich and the poor
- Freedom fighters/resistance struggle put people on opposite sides

## 2. South African Protest Theatre

Theatre is used as a communication channel, to give oppressed people a voice. It attempts to bridge the barriers between people. (Apartheid)

**Protest:** shows the oppressor what has been happening to the oppressed.

**Advocates resistance:** asks oppressed to rise up and fight back. (Black Consciousness Movement)

**Appeals to the conscience of the audience:** makes them aware of rights/wrongs.

**Entertains:** very funny, satirical – while laughing, realise a point.

**Satirises:** criticises, exposes, protests against and makes fun of the Apartheid regime.

**Attacks the Apartheid regime:** a general indictment of the society that sustains it rather than blaming specific individuals.

**Comments** on divided society in a society with a Black/White awareness.

**Evokes an emotional response:** makes us angry, sad, ready to participate in action.

**Enlightens and informs:** provides information on unknown events.

This form of theatre emerged in S.A. in the 1970s.

It was first criticised by the Black Consciousness movement but after the '76 riots it became the dominant form of theatre by those opposed to Apartheid.

Protest theatre was synonymous with "Black Theatre".

It is essentially theatre against Apartheid and the evils thereof.

For fifteen years (1976 – 1990) Black theatre was concerned almost exclusively with a cultural call to arms.

It makes use of a repeated formula: people's recognition of their oppression through a clear assertion of how to emerge from this oppression.

Play deals with essentially South African issues. It uses South African settings, South African characters, names and South African languages.

It aims at South African audiences.

It gave rise to Workshop Theatre. It is essentially participatory and communal by nature and deals with socio-political issues.

It is based on democratic methods and was, therefore, a most suitable method to be used in the struggle against the Apartheid regime.

One rubric (Woza Albert) provides an example of the basic assessment strategy to be applied in this question. This rubric has been devised for a workshopped Protest play and does not provide a model for all the plays that might be selected. It is, however, the play taught by most schools.

## **RUBRICS FOR WOZA ALBERT (AS AN EXAMPLE)**

### **WOZA ALBERT EPISODIC STRUCTURE**

#### **REFERENCE TO EXAMPLES IN THE TEXT**

#### **SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND**

Episodic structure consists of a series of scenes linked together to present a thematic whole. Each episode displays linear structure – beginning, middle and end. Each episode addresses a particular topic. Scenes are of equal importance. Uses a repeated formula. Audience can focus on many different aspects of the theme as addressed in each episode. Uses links to join episodes – these may include music, songs, slogans, dances, mime, narrative dialogue, etc.

Black South Africans are suppressed by the Apartheid system. Protest theatre develops from an urgent need to express

- suffering and discontent
- criticism of the government
- protestation on behalf of fellow oppressed citizens. Created by using workshop techniques:
- Observation
- Improvisation
- Selection – scripting
- The Episodic nature of the plays shows an influence by Brecht on the structure of traditional oral tradition of storytelling e.g. Izinganekwane Zulu tradition.
- Scenes in the play are like stories, linked together.

**CHARACTERISATION WOZA ALBERT** **3 marks**

**EXAMPLES IN THE TEXT** **4 marks**

**SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND** **3 marks**

Stylised, stereotypical, superficial. Relies on external and physical characterisation. Focus on voice and body of the actor. Actors play many parts in the course of the play. Emphasis on comic skills. It requires excellent performance skills, vocal dynamism and demanding physicality. **Performance demands or acting style:** Grotowski abandoned the concept of Rich (Realistic) Theatre as a reaction against the influence of television and related media. He felt the theatre had violated its own essence. Poor theatre focuses on the actor and his art – physicality and vocal range. It reacts against the use of elaborate costumes and make-up. Influenced by the experimental work of Jerzy Grotowski.

- Actor the essential element of theatre
- Trained and flexible body
- Wide range of vocal skills
- Capable of tremendous emotional involvement in role. Concerned with the interaction between oppressors and the oppressed as embodied in the Apartheid System

**SOUTH AFRICAN DIALOGUE** **3 marks**

**REFERENCE TO EXAMPLES IN THE TEXT** **4 marks**

**SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND** **3 marks**

Style of speech reflects a history of

- violence
- oppression
- poverty
- protest

Multi-lingual elements, crude slang and South African expressions. Dialogue bears evidence of storytelling techniques (narration). Creation of oral sound effects and musical instruments demands vocal skills. Black humour is created with

- Irony
- Satire
- Incongruity
- Colloquial phrases
- Mistaken identity. Scenes are hard hitting and make use of strong visual images and symbolism.

Multi-lingual society speaking a great variety of languages. African oral tradition – story telling. Protest against pass and other unjust laws. Emphasis on vocal skills as advocated by Grotowski. Community-based theatre will tend to use the dominant language of the community, while more professional-based theatre will need to make the dialogue more accessible to a wide range of people. Often characters will speak different languages as an outward sign of their cultural differences. Plays are made by the people for the people. Audience is involved as a necessary part of the process.



**SOUTH AFRICAN THEMES** 3 marks

**EXAMPLES FROM THE TEXT** 4 marks

**SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND** 3 marks

Protest theatre set out to effect a change. Attempt to create solidarity amongst black people. Awareness of the injustices of the Apartheid system. Seeks to promote action through an emotional response. Protest against the violation of human rights. Outcry against social injustices promoted by Apartheid. Comments on poor education. Ironic parallel treatment of Jesus' and Morena's life experience. After 1976 it became an instrument of the **Black Consciousness Movement**. Marxist element – theatre can effect social and political change. Pass and other unjust laws passed by the Apartheid regime. Protest against the Apartheid system. Plays are made by the people for the people. Audience is involved as a necessary part of the process. Workshop Theatre's two-fold function: participation in the creative process by the actors and by the people who view the play. It makes use of a repeated formula: people's recognition of their oppression through a clear assertion of how to emerge from this oppression. Play deals with essentially South African issues.

**SPACE AND SETTING (WOZA ALBERT)** 3 marks

**REFER THE TEXT** 4 marks

**SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND** 3 marks

Found space. Unlocalised space to accommodate episodic structure. Rudimentary setting – influence of Grotowski. Rudimentary set is inexpensive and flexible. It constitutes quick scene changes and blackouts. Like Shakespearean Theatre it prompts the audience members to use their imagination. Minimal financial support. No theatre facilities available in black townships. Group Areas Act – no mixed audience. Not allowed to use theatres in White areas.

#### **QUESTION 4 OWN CHOICE**

#### **MARK ALLOCATION**

- Learners must address the way in which their own choice may prompt an audience towards a mind-shift – 10 marks.
- They must also show how the dramatist used the dramatic principles to achieve this effect – 4x10.

Total marks: 50

## **SECTION B SPEECH**

### **QUESTION 5 RESONANCE**

#### **MARK ALLOCATION**

- Learners must name the resonators and discuss their function – 10 marks
- Discuss the way resonance contributes to vocal quality, projection and characterisation – 10 marks

Total marks: 20

Resonance: (sympathetic vibrations) creates full, vibrant tones=good voice. Amplification and modification of the basic laryngeal tone, caused by the vibration of sound in the cavities and the sounding boards of the body

Weak sound waves created in the larynx pass into the pharynx and into the cavities of the mouth and nose, where the sound waves are lengthened and the voice is amplified and resonated. The vibrations then pass into the bones of the face and the skull, travel down the spine and into the rest of the body.

Different size cavities create different resonating sounds. The vocal tract (pharynx, mouth, nasal passages, and sinuses) can be envisaged as a cavity, which will produce different resonating sounds when the size and shape of the cavity are varied.

Learning to adjust your tract = essential in achieving a strong, rich resonant voice and in characterising

Each of the resonators is said to have a different quality therefore can be used for characterisation and/or different tonal qualities.

The chest and pharynx resonate mellow, rich, warm tones.

The mouth is the most important, most adaptable resonating cavity. It changes size and shape to form individual speech sounds with different qualities. The sides of the mouth are soft and fleshy, creating mellow tones.

The nasal cavities add brightness and clarity; create nasal sounds when speaking with a French or American accent; assists with projection.

The skull and bony mask of the face add brilliance of tone to very high notes and assist with projection.

Must learn to shape the resonator, vary size of opening and vary surface texture of the resonator to characterise.

Explore a variety of vocal tract shapes in order to develop variety.

Projection relies on open channel for the sound, good breath support and a relaxed body.

Humming = good, gentle

Lessac y-buzz = good for bone conduction

Give examples from character that learner was working on.

### **MARK ALLOCATION PAPER W**

- Discuss at least THREE of the following – 3x2
- Examples – 4

Total: 10

### **CLARITY OF SPEECH**

#### **Articulation:**

Clarity of speech is dependent on the care and precision with which the speech organs change position from one sound to the next.

A tight jaw interferes with the movement of the articulatory organs contributing to nasality and flatness of tone in the voice.

Immobile lips, inactive soft palate, sluggish, inactive tongue should be corrected.

Correct organs of articulation should be used.

Difference between voiced and unvoiced consonants must be clear.

No slackness or exaggeration must occur in speech.

Neat transitions between consonants

Comfortable rate of delivery

#### **Structuring/shaping of vowel sounds:**

Vowel sounds depend on accurate positioning of the speech organs (1) the placement of the tongue and (2) the degree of lip rounding; steadily held position; steady air-stream.

**Pace of delivery:** must be comfortable, to ensure that clarity is possible.

**Use of pause:** allow time to take a breath; emphasise a word; allow our eyes to move ahead of the voice, when reading aloud, therefore no stumbling;

Allow listeners to comprehend what we are saying; makes the sense of speech clear; helps articulation

**Projection:**

Must always be heard, not shout, hurt/strain voice  
Need supported breath – central diaphragmatic breathing  
Volume  
Resonance  
Clear articulation

**Energy through the line:**

Sustain energy to end of sentence  
  
E.g. tongue twisters; consonant marathon;  
  
Lessac structural or consonant NRG; or any other relevant exercise

**MARK ALLOCATION PAPER W**

- Voice, body, mind – 2x3
  - Examples – 4
- Total: 10

**NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF TENSION**

**Influence on the body:**

Need to feel free, ready for action – alert, without any unnecessary tension.

Most efficient application of all muscles of the body to the task at hand – NOT floppy, heavy, dull, sleepy or lethargic

Constant harmony between the muscles

Action and rest cannot be separated.

Wasted energy, being kept in the body and not being used for communication will affect posture, breathing and proper use of organs of articulation (tense jaw/tongue etc.)

Tension in the torso constricts the lungs, not allowing them to expand and thus preventing good breath support.

Tension in neck, shoulders causes serious problems in terms of voice.

**Influence on the voice:**

The voice is extremely sensitive to any feeling of unease.

Shoulder tension leads to tension in the neck, which leads to tension in the laryngeal muscles.

Tension in the jaw can also lead to tension in the laryngeal muscles.

When the vocal folds tense it pushes up the pitch of the voice.

Tension causes the voice to take on an unfocussed quality.

Tension in the neck constricts the throat, cuts out the lower tones of the voice.

**Influence on the mind:**

Will find it hard to concentrate

Actors may forget lines

Will find it hard to focus on task at hand

Hard to interact with other actors – listening/reacting

**EXAMPLES OF EXERCISES****Relaxation and posture:**

- Yawns – forwards (AW sound) and backwards (AH) yawns
- Tense and release
- Roll up and down the spine

**SECTION C  
STAGING**

**QUESTION 7**

Discuss any TWO aspects with reference to ONE play 2x10 = 20

**TOTAL MARKS FOR THIS PAPER: 200**