

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# AQA

# GCSE Drama





## 2015 Written Exam Paper Breakdown

### General Tips from Chief Examiner

- ✓ **Context** – it is useful to state briefly the situation of the scene as you describe your acting and justification but avoid slipping simply into a description of the plot
- ✓ **Link explicitly to the question**
- ✓ **Write about what you did** (write in first person)
- ✓ **Time management is crucial** -Section A answers should be shorter than section B
- ✓ Section A: The questions will ask you for **two examples**
- ✓ Section B: The questions will ask you for **up to three examples**

# Section A

## Section A: Question 1 (2015 Past Paper)

Choose one piece of practical work that you have completed during the course, working as an actor or designer or technician. All of your answers must be about the same piece of practical work. You need to focus specifically on your individual contribution to the piece of practical work and the same selected skill.

Describe your piece of practical work; include reference to all of the following:

- whether you were involved as an actor or designer or technician
- the genre of the piece
- the style of the piece
- the period of the piece
- the performance space used and how it was configured
- your target audience
- any technical/design elements used in the piece (if applicable). [10 marks]

### Examiner Tips

- ✓ Should be a **short, concise but clear answer**
- ✓ Stating space **configuration** is essential
- ✓ Stylised is not specific enough for style
- ✓ Drama is not specific enough for genre
- ✓ Modern day not specific enough for period

### Mark Scheme

### Mark the Student Answers

I contributed to my final piece “Hannah’s story” as an actor. The piece was based on a real life story about cyber bullying, where I played Hannah, the girl who was being bullied. The piece was a documentary drama, set in the modern days because it is a modern issue, in Brechtian style. My target audience was teenagers as I felt this was a prime age for bullying. I used an end on stage, but not higher staging, so I was on performance level with the audience on 3 sides to connect the emotion more with them. I wore black as a costume to show death and changed to white at the end when I died to show my worries were gone. I used the harsh lighting, eg, no blackouts to link with the Brechtian style and dramatic silences to build tension. The set was very simple and a lack of props to keep it minimalistic and keep the emotion.

**What mark would you give this? Why?**

### Section A: Question 2 (2015 Past Paper)

Explain how you prepared for your piece of practical work with reference to your chosen skill, giving two specific examples from the rehearsal process. [10 marks]

#### Examiner’s Tips

- ✓ Explain **your research and development of character** in the **early stages of rehearsal**
- ✓ Making use of the wealth of **online material available to aid research**, specifically in footage on YouTube, national theatre websites etc.
- ✓ Give a **clear indication of how rehearsal techniques were used clearly and effectively**, and what you **hoped the overall effect** would be when realised in performance
- ✓ Crucial – what **you learned through the rehearsal** process

#### Mark Scheme

This question requires candidates to explain how they prepared for their piece of practical work, with reference to their chosen skill, during the rehearsal process.

Examiners should expect candidates’ answers to:

- focus on their own contribution to the piece of practical work
- explain the preparation of their chosen skill, as identified in 01
- give two specific examples from the rehearsal process

Mark Bands	
<b>Band 1</b> 9-10 marks	The candidate will give a <b>very clear</b> explanation of their preparation for their practical work, and will provide <b>full</b> exemplification from the rehearsal process.
<b>Band 2</b> 7-8 marks	The candidate will give a <b>clear</b> explanation of their preparation for their practical work, and will provide exemplification from the rehearsal process.
<b>Band 3</b> 5-6 marks	The candidate will give a <b>reasonably clear</b> explanation of their preparation for their practical work, and will provide <b>some</b> exemplification from the rehearsal process.
<b>Band 4</b> 3-4 marks	The candidate will give a <b>slightly unclear</b> explanation of their preparation for their practical work, and will provide <b>limited</b> exemplification from the rehearsal process.
<b>Band 5</b> 1-2 marks	The candidate will give an <b>unclear</b> explanation of their preparation for their practical work, and will provide <b>little or no</b> exemplification from the rehearsal process.

#### Example Answer 10/10

I played Hannah Smith, the girl who was getting bullied, as an actor in my final piece “Hannah’s Story”. My aim of this piece was to really show the emotion of the piece and communicate this clearly through my character to the audience. In the rehearsal process I did improvisation to help me practice being a victim of bullying and get into role. To do this, I used my research that I did in the rehearsal process of how victims of bullying behave. I found out that they’re very shy and don’t like communicating and so I showed this by acting very 24 timid, avoiding eye contact, looking down at the ground twiddling with my fingers to show I was nervous and stumbling on my words whilst I was improvising. I used the catwalk method of walking up and down in my character to practice being in role, while other characters shouted names at me and I had to respond. During rehearsal process I worked on the first scene where I got circled whilst people shouted names so I wanted to show my character becoming weaker. I showed this by at the start I would be really happy with the enthusiasm and wide eyes and then I would slowly lose eye contact throughout the scene and twiddle my fingers and end up crouching on the floor, rocking back and forth. In the rehearsal process to do this, I used hot seating as well to practice immediate reactions, which I wanted to use in the scene. I got the other characters to ask me questions, such as, ‘how do you feel when someone calls you names?’ and then I put all my feelings of humiliation into my response. For example, if my best friend in the play asked something, I would answer really enthusiastically, with a bright tone and energy. However, if the bullies asked me something, I would look down and hunch my shoulder and twiddle with my fingers. This exercise really helped me react more truthfully in rehearsal and then in the final performance.

### Section A: Question 3 (2015 Past Paper)

Analyse how your practical skills improved during the rehearsal process, giving two specific examples of when you showed improvement as an actor or designer or technician. [10 marks]

#### Examiner’s Tips

- ✓ Clear **links between the techniques you applied and the skills you improved**
- ✓ focus on the word **‘improve’** in the question
- ✓ analyse **how** you improved in relation to your skill (in other words, how did forum theatre for example, actually help you with your characterisation)
- ✓ The best responses **establish a ‘benchmark’** for their skills and **demonstrate improvement** from this point. For example, one person wrote about a performance of Cinderella for primary age children, and successfully included details of the first performance to an audience, the problems faced and how practical skills improved following this
- ✓ Specific **detail** needed – avoid being vague
- ✓ **Your skill is acting** (not line-learning, friendship issues etc.)

#### Mark Scheme

This question requires candidates to analyse how they improved during the rehearsal process and preparation period.

Examiners should expect candidates’ answers to:

- analyse how they personally improved their practical skills
- give two specific examples from the rehearsal process where they showed improvement

Candidates may choose two separate examples, one from the beginning and one from the end of the rehearsal process and preparation period, highlighting their improvement. Or, instead, candidates may choose two separate ‘light bulb’ moments from points in the rehearsal process and preparation period where they felt they had a greater understanding of their work due to their improvement. **Candidates can, therefore, choose any two examples.**

### Example Answer 10/10

In Scene 1, my father, Egeus, drags me before Theseus to get him to force me to marry Demetrius or to put me to death. In early rehearsals, I was just standing there blankly. I wasn't sure what to do with my hands or where to look. But I had a break-through moment when I began using Stanislavski's 'emotion memory'. I remembered a time when my own father was ranting on at my aunt and uncle about how I had come home late and hadn't phoned. I felt powerless, red in the face and fiddling. I remembered that I was picking at my sleeves, in frustration, and I kept looking at my aunt for sympathy and she was smiling at me, so I felt better and began to stick up for myself and interrupted Dad to say 'I was only half an hour late'. Then I applied my emotion memory in rehearsal. I looked down in embarrassment when Egeus was talking about Lysander bewitching me, then I stole a glance at Hippolyta, who smiled back at me. Then, after Theseus asked me to speak and he praised Demetrius as a 'worthy gentleman', I raised my head, glanced at Egeus quickly and then looked straight at him while I said to Theseus, in quite an assertive tone, 'So is Lysander'. Then I folded my arms defiantly, as I had in my own family situation. I felt the emotion of humiliation, I felt encouraged by Hippolyta's kindness and I felt ready to speak out for myself. Applying emotion memory really improved my acting skill. Another improvement was picking up my cues, quickly, when Lysander and I are discussing 'the course of true love'. Previously, I had been useless in this section, too slow and lacking in energy. Then in one rehearsal, instead of speaking Shakespeare's lines, we just improvised with lines like: 'Old people! What do they know?' and 'Why follow their orders?!' and that helped us to get into the rhythm of the lines and convey the frustration the two lovers feel. It really improved my confidence and my skill in delivering the stichomythic lines, helping me to give a truthful performance as Hermia.

### Section A: Question 4 (2015 Past Paper)

Evaluate how successful your contribution was to the final performance for your target audience, giving two specific examples where you felt you achieved your aims. [10 marks]

#### Examiner's Tips

- ✓ **Enthusiasm**
- ✓ The strongest responses demonstrate a **clear evaluation** of the work in performance, with direct reference to both the **target audience** and student's intended **aims**
- ✓ The best responses identify **two moments from the performance** and offered an evaluation of their **success**, with **direct reference to the intended aim or effect**
- ✓ Consider **audience response** thoughtfully – e.g. moved to tears, roars of laughter, gasps of surprise, shocked or awed silence, or a spontaneous standing ovation
- ✓ Weaker answers enter into lengthy discussion about what they could/should/might have done, had things gone differently (**avoid the negatives** where possible)
- ✓ **Be specific**

#### Mark Scheme

This question requires candidates to evaluate how successful their contribution was to the performance. Candidates should include their aims. Examiners should expect candidates' answers to:

- evaluate how successful their personal contribution was to the final performance
- include their aims for the target audience
- give two specific examples from the performance

Mark Bands	
<b>Band 1</b> 9-10 marks	The candidate will give a <b>very clear</b> evaluation of the success of their contribution to the final performance, and will provide <b>full</b> exemplification of where they achieved their aims.
<b>Band 2</b> 7-8 marks	The candidate will give a <b>clear</b> evaluation of the success of their contribution to the final performance, and will provide exemplification of where they achieved their aims.
<b>Band 3</b> 5-6 marks	The candidate will give a <b>reasonably clear</b> evaluation of the success of their contribution to the final performance, and will provide <b>some</b> exemplification of where they achieved their aims.
<b>Band 4</b> 3-4 marks	The candidate will give a <b>slightly unclear</b> evaluation of the success of their contribution to the final performance, and will provide <b>limited</b> exemplification of where they achieved their aims.
<b>Band 5</b> 1-2 marks	The candidate will give an <b>unclear</b> evaluation of the success of their contribution to the final performance, and will provide <b>little or no</b> exemplification of where they achieved their aims.
<b>A score of 0 (zero marks) is awarded only if there is nothing worthy of any credit in the response</b>	

### Example Answer 10/10

In the final performance of 'Wonderland' we wanted to get across the struggles of mental illness and how it should (or shouldn't) be dealt with. To get this across the target audience of 15+ I played Alice's teenage friend who was suicidal. I feel this moment was successful as I created a character the audience was sympathetic with and could see how to deal with the problem. I feel the moment when I said 'help me, Alice. I'm scared' was very successful. It's hard for people to ask for help when they need it sometimes so I said this line with my head in my hands and knees to my chest while sitting on the floor. My back was to Alice and I spoke quietly in a timid tone while shaking, as if crying. I had my eyes squeezed shut and my shoulders hunched, to show I didn't want to deal with the problem. But when Alice put her head on my shoulder I visibly relaxed. I feel this moment was very successful for our target audience as they saw that sometimes people just need a friend and they watched this moment in intent silence. However, I also wanted to thrill my target audience by scaring them. Therefore, when I said the line 'you're not afraid of the dark, you are afraid of what's in it' I broke the fourth wall and entered the audience. I moved fluidly and slyly amongst the audience and looked at each person directly while hissing my lines in a hushed, evil tone. I reached out with clawed hands and hunched shoulders to 26 intimidate with a creepy smile on my face. I feel this moment was very successful in my final performance to my target audience as I could see they were scared as none of them kept eye contact with me and some people jumped.

# Section B

## **Section B: Question 5 (2015 Past Paper)**

Choose one extract from a play you have studied and performed during your course. Explain how you developed your acting skills, giving three specific examples from the rehearsal process that helped you to create the character(s) you played.

You should discuss your research, rehearsal techniques, and any work that you did with the script.  
[20 marks]

### **Examiner's Tips**

- ✓ Use the opportunity to write about **three examples** as a way of **documenting your development in rehearsal or a demonstration of skills and achievement in performance**
- ✓ Focus on a **particular extract** from the play, and the **exploration of character** within the confines of this extract
- ✓ Discussed the **application and development of skills** through the use of exploratory strategies, workshops, live productions seen, YouTube, role reversal and the close reading of the text
- ✓ Illustrate a **'before' and 'after'** to demonstrate the development of the acting skills
- ✓ Include **detail and thorough knowledge of the text and its characters**
- ✓ Strong answers would discuss **three examples** with one being voice, another being gesture, and a third being physicality, all within the same (self-defined) extract.
- ✓ Use **quotations** from *Lord of the Flies*

### Mark Scheme

This question requires candidates to focus on the development of their skills in rehearsal. Examiners should expect candidates' answers to include:

- identification of the play, playwright, and extract chosen
- reference to research, rehearsal techniques, and any work done using the script
- the development of their own acting skills in rehearsal to create the character(s) played
- three specific examples from the rehearsal process where they developed their acting skills

Mark Bands	
<b>Band 1</b> 17-20 marks	The candidate will give a <b>very clear</b> explanation of the development of their acting skills during rehearsals to create the character(s) they played. They will provide <b>full</b> exemplification, and make <b>purposeful</b> reference to their rehearsal and other preparation work.
<b>Band 2</b> 13-16 marks	The candidate will give a <b>clear</b> explanation of the development of their acting skills during rehearsals to create the character(s) they play. They will provide exemplification and make <b>useful</b> reference to their rehearsal and other preparation work.
<b>Band 3</b> 8-12 marks	The candidate will give a <b>reasonably clear</b> explanation of the development of their acting skills during rehearsals to create the character(s) they play. They will provide <b>some</b> exemplification, and make <b>some</b> reference to their rehearsal and other preparation work.
<b>Band 4</b> 4-7 marks	The candidate will give a <b>slightly unclear</b> explanation of the development of their acting skills during rehearsals to create the character(s) they play. They will provide <b>limited</b> exemplification, and <b>might make</b> reference to aspects of their rehearsal and other preparation work.
<b>Band 5</b> 1-3 marks	The candidate will give an <b>unclear</b> explanation of the development of their acting skills during rehearsals to create the character(s) they play. They will provide <b>little or no</b> exemplification. Reference may be made to some aspects of their rehearsal and other preparation work, although this is <b>unlikely to be clear</b> .

### Example Answer 20/20

I played Mary Adams, a "19-year-old girl and 7 months pregnant", in the scripted piece 'Be my Baby'. My character was very naïve and innocent and so my aims were to clearly communicate this, through my character, to the audience. In the script it says, "picked up the suitcase

awkwardly” due to how pregnant I was; therefore one of the ways in the rehearsal process that I developed my character was to practice being pregnant.

I did research in the rehearsal process, watching how pregnant women act and behave in their everyday lives. I found out that they get tired very easily and so when I picked up the suitcase, I always had one hand on my stomach to show I was thinking about the baby, then clenched my fists to show that I was in pain. I grimaced my face and let out little screams to create a pregnant woman. I used this in my improvisation, and made sure I wore a pillow to always remind myself I was pregnant to help get in to the role. It also says in the script “Mary breathed heavily” and from my research I knew that this was because I was tired.

Another thing I did in the rehearsal process was look closely at the script and whenever I got to a line about how to behave as a pregnant woman, like that line then I would use my research and remember this in my acting. I used the catwalk method to help me with line, as I wanted to portray an accurate account of my character. Therefore, I walked up and down in my character to help me get used to being accurate. Due to my character naivety, I didn’t understand it would be this bad, e.g., I said about giving birth “they don’t cut you, do they?!” When I walked up and down, I would use “Mary breathed heavily” to help me. I would stumble at my words, and take breaks when I walked. I had to take big deep breaths clenching my fists and hunching my back to show my pain. I knew this was good because I decided to get feedback from my teacher, as it was only the rehearsal stage to check that I was portraying my character accurately. She said it was really good but possibly goes even more over the top, to develop my character’s naivety, and the extremeness of being pregnant. Therefore, I looked at a part of the script in the final scene where I was giving birth. It said “oh mother.... it’s fine.... It’s nature.... mother did it...oh mother!” Originally I said this line screaming, but I didn’t think it was effective and didn’t show off my acting skills.

Therefore, in the rehearsal process, my third thing I did was hot seating to help me react immediately and develop my skills. I got the other characters to do multiple roles and play out situations, and I had to respond being in role. For example, I had to show my naivety, for instance saying “bursts” with my mouth wide open sounding very shocked. I turned my whole body to the other character to show how surprised I was, showing my character naivety. Then another situation I had to be in pain “something hurts” and use my research of being out of breath, clenching my fists and putting my hand near my stomach to show the pain. This really helped me get into my role more and enabled me to feel more confident in when I gave birth. Therefore, when I said my line, “Oh mother etc.!” I used what I did in the rehearsal process to help me. I clenched my fists, had one hand on my stomach and sat with a hunched back to show how much it was painful. I furrowed my eyebrows and took deep breaths within the ellipses in the line to show how much it was affecting me. I spoke in a rush but did take deep breaths and stumbled on my lines to show how painful it was. I knew this was effective because I felt as an actor much more confident; I looked and acted like a young pregnant girl would be and showed both my naiveté and my fear of the unknown in my performance.

## **Section B: Question 6 (2015 Past Paper)**

Evaluate how successful you were in using your physical and vocal skills to communicate your character(s) to the audience in the final performance, giving three specific examples where you were particularly effective. [20 marks]

### Examiner's Tips

- ✓ Focus on your personal success and referring to three moments in performance
- ✓ Detailed evaluations of both physical and vocal skills
- ✓ The best responses often link to Question 5, and develop the ideas for characterisation from rehearsal into moments in performance, using audience response as justification for success
- ✓ Focus on the intended effect of your skills in relation to an audience in a live performance

### Mark Scheme

This question requires candidates to focus on communicating their character(s) in performance.

Examiners should expect candidates' answers to include:

- discussion of physical and vocal skills used
- an evaluation of how successfully they communicated their character(s)
- three specific examples from the performance where they were particularly effective

Mark Bands	
<b>Band 1</b> 17-20 marks	The candidate will give a <b>very clear</b> evaluation of how successfully they used their physical <b>and</b> vocal skills to communicate their character(s). They will provide <b>full</b> exemplification and make <b>purposeful</b> reference to where they were effective.
<b>Band 2</b> 13-16 marks	The candidate will give a <b>clear</b> evaluation of how successfully they used their physical <b>and</b> vocal skills. They will provide exemplification and make <b>useful</b> reference to where they were effective.
<b>Band 3</b> 8-12 marks	The candidate will give a <b>reasonably clear</b> evaluation of how successfully they used their physical <b>and</b> vocal skills. They will provide <b>some</b> exemplification and make <b>some</b> reference to where they were effective.
<b>Band 4</b> 4-7 marks	The candidate will give a <b>slightly unclear</b> evaluation of how successfully they used the physical <b>or</b> vocal skills. They will provide <b>limited</b> exemplification, and <b>might make</b> reference to where they were effective.
<b>Band 5</b> 1-3 marks	The candidate will give an <b>unclear</b> evaluation of how successfully they used their physical <b>or</b> vocal skills. They will provide <b>little or no</b> exemplification. Reference may be made to some aspects of where they were effective, although this is <b>unlikely to be clear</b> .

## Example Answer 20/20

I played Mary Adams in the scripted piece of "Be my Baby". My character was very naïve and innocent and went through a lot of pain and emotion and my aims were to clearly show this in my performance, communicating it to the audience.

One time I felt I was particularly effective was in the scene with Queenie, played by Cerys in the performance, where I was talking about my upcoming baby that was going to be born. It says in the script "I'm scared I'm going to love it" talking to the baby. This line was the first time my character showed my real emotion towards the baby and showed the full extent of her innocence. When I said this, I spoke softly to show that I was worried and looked and looked down at my bump, stroking my belly with one hand and twiddling my other hand to show how much a big thing it was. I put emphasis on the word "love" looking up at Queenie at this point. My shoulders were slouched over and I choked up on my words a tiny bit to show the emotion to the audience. I really think this scene was particularly effective because I heard sympathetic noises from the audience.

Another moment in the final performance which went particularly well was when I actually gave birth. It built up in the script when I said "something really hurts" and "Mary breathed heavily". I showed this line by breathing deeply but rushing the line to show that I was scared. I had both hands on my stomach and was looking down at it, was screaming whilst trying to compose myself but failing. I clenched my fists to show how I hadn't thought it would hurt as much due to my character's naivety. Then when I was actually giving birth I said, "Oh mother.... it's fine.... it's nature...mother did it....it hurts...." In the ellipses of this line I took deep breaths, saying the line higher pitched than normal to show the pain I was in. I had both hands on my stomach, hunching my shoulders by leaning forwards. I furrowed my eyebrows and clenched my face to show the extremeness of the pain. I felt this was very successful because I heard some of the audience members gasp. Also, I really felt as an actor that it had gone well, I was completely focused and felt tired myself.

Another moment I felt was successful, was when I handed my baby over and the pure emotions of this scene. It said in the script "reluctant to hand baby over" and so I turned my body away from the matron to almost protect myself and the baby. I looked down at the baby, unable to take my eyes off her, looking lovingly. It also said in the script a couple of lines later "matron reached for the baby but Mary shielded her". The words 'shielded her' was a very protective action. I held tightly on to the baby to show how nervous I was about the situation, showing my character's innocence. I adapted the script slightly by rolling back and forth to show that I was slightly hysterical. I said "she's safe with me" when I was doing all these actions, speaking in a very soft tone and speaking quietly. I said this whilst looking at the baby to show that she was the only thing I cared about. I managed to get a few tears as well, which I felt as an actor, was very effective. The audience all looked completely taken into it, some even crying showing the full emotion of the scene. I also felt as an actor very emotional and that it had gone very well, so showing that my performance in my final piece had gone very well and my aims were successfully achieved.

