

National 5



Drama Revision

Contents	Page
Introduction	4
Exam Breakdown	5-7
Developing Drama	8
The Drama Process	9-10
Form	11
Structure	11
Style	11-12
Genre	12
Target Audience	12-13
Purpose	13
Themes/ Issues	14
Conventions	14-16
Key moments/ scenes	16
Staging	17-19
Stage Areas	20
Venue	21
Acting	22
Movement	23
Voice	24-25
Characterisation techniques	26
Theatre Production Skills	27-28
Acting	28
Lighting	29-30
Sound	31-32
Costume	32-33
Set	33-34
Props	34-35
Hair and Makeup	35

Other things	36
Mood and atmosphere	37
Building tension	37-38
Resolving issues in a group	39
Evaluating self/ others	40

Introduction

The aim of this Revision Guide is to make you realise that you can do well with the Drama written paper. You can.

Drama is such a practical subject and a lot of this information will have been covered as you were working through your units so far. As you read this you will hopefully be surprised about how much you already know.

As well as helping you to recap on some important vocabulary, there is a focus in this Revision Guide on *how* you answer the questions in your exam.

Not every section is dealt with in great detail. If you realise that there is something you really don't know about/ do not fully understand, then ask your Drama teacher(s). They will be more than happy to help you.



Exam Breakdown

The National 5 Drama Exam is:

60% Practical

40% Written question paper

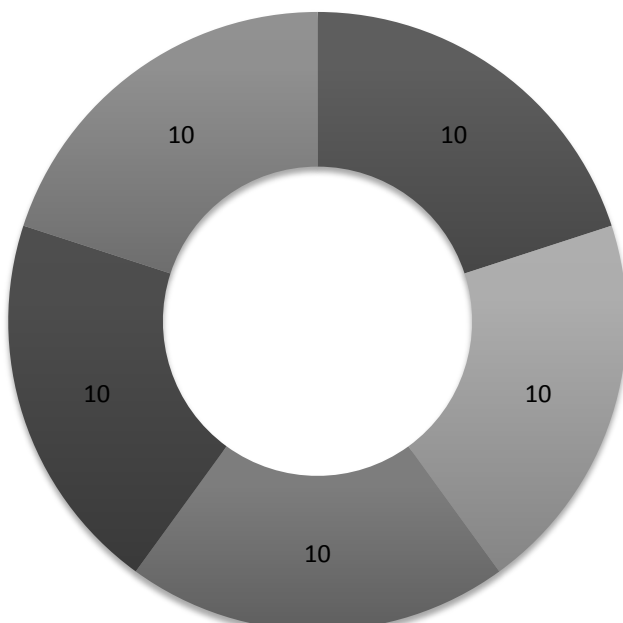
Practical Exam (60%)

50% for acting OR sharing your designs – depending what you have decided on and agreed with your teacher. Below is the marking scheme for an actor. If you are fulfilling a design role, please ask your teacher for the specific criteria or see the SQA website.

Acting

If you have chosen acting, you will share your acting piece in front of the examiner. There are 50 possible marks available, up to 10 for each of the sections detailed below.

Where the magic marks come from:



- Communicating character as stated in PFP (10)
- Remembering lines and cues and staying in character (10)
- Effective and appropriate use of voice (10)
- Effective and appropriate use of movement (10)
- Communicating well with audience (10)

Preparation for Performance

As an actor or designer, ten marks come from your Preparation for Performance Essay (PFP). This essay details your research, how you understand the role, how you developed your character/ designs and what your final performance concepts are. This essay is written in class ahead of time and can receive a maximum of ten marks.

Written Question Paper (40%)

Section 1 – Evaluating your own work – 20 marks

In this section you will be asked about a drama you have been involved in during your time in class.

You select the role you were involved in; e.g. Acting/ Lighting/ Costume, etc.

You then answer **all** questions, reflecting on the process.

Example question:

“Think about a drama you were involved in as an actor or in a production role. Who would be the ideal target audience for this drama? Justify your answer.(2 Marks)”

Section 1 Top Tip:

If you remember only one piece of advice for this section, remember this: lie and be selfish. For example, if the paper asks about a problem that came up doing rehearsals and you had a blissful problem-free rehearsal then you have got to lie because “there were no problems” will get you no marks. The SQA are not going to fact check you in this section. Also, if the paper asks about something that you did, they only want to hear about you. Use “I” rather than

“we” unless you are specifically asked about group work. This seems insignificant but marks have been lost for this is the past.

Section 2 – Responding to a stimulus – 40 marks

You choose a stimulus from the ones provided, make up a drama that could come from it and then answer questions about what this drama would be like. Choose **one stimulus** and then answer **all questions**.

Example question:

“Name the type of staging that would best suit your drama. Justify your answer. (2 Marks)”

Section 2 Top Tip(s):

Read all of the questions and plan a drama that can answer all of them. For example, if there is a question that asks about two characters of different statuses, make sure your drama has them. You are provided a space for planning; note down what all of the questions are asking about and make sure your drama can answer all the questions. Another thing: remember this is a drama for a stage. Recently there was a stimulus showing a beach and so many candidates lost marks for writing about shark attacks without properly justifying how this could be shown on stage.

Overall Written Paper Tip:

This whole paper is one big opportunity to show off your Drama vocabulary. Use the Drama words and justify everything based on what impact it would have on your audience.

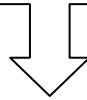
Developing Drama

The Drama Process

The Drama process is exactly what you did during your Drama Skills unit. If you think back, it probably went a lot like this:

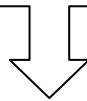
Responding to stimuli:

You were given multiple stimuli. These may have been quotes, pictures, music, props, etc. For each stimulus you came up with ideas for a drama before choosing one and developing that idea.



Developing ideas:

Lots of work went in to get your idea up on its feet. This may have included research, storyboarding, script writing, improvisation etc.



Rehearsals:

Once you had the idea you would have practiced a lot with your group. This probably included learning your lines and cues and adding voice and movement to bring your character to life.



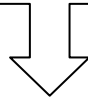
Characterisation/ Rehearsal techniques:

These are the activities you complete to help you know your character. These can include: a character card, hotseating, role on the wall, etc. (more details on all of these will follow).



Adding Theatre Production Skills (TPS):

You probably added in some TPS if you needed them for the drama. For example: costume, set, props, sound effects, lighting, hair and makeup.



Dress rehearsal

This is the run right before the performance with all acting and TPS in place.



Performance

The drama is shared for an audience, in character, using voice and movement. For designers this is applying your work to the acting piece.



Evaluation

Thinking back over the process and performance, you would have made comments about your work and that of others. This should be in terms of effectiveness for audience.

Form

Form is the shape a drama takes, i.e. the way it looks on stage.

Some examples: scripted play, musical, mime, pantomime, docudrama, physical theatre.

Imagine how the same content (for example, a breakup) could be shown through many different forms.

Structure

Structure is the order the story is told in. This is either linear or non-linear.

Linear = beginning → middle → end.

Non-linear = anything else. This can include flashbacks or flash-forwards, or circular dramas which start at the end and then circle back around to that point.

Style

Style is the way the actors act. Does it look exactly like real life? If so it is naturalistic. If it is not absolutely something that could be seen in

real life then the style is non-naturalistic, for example; mime, singing instead of speaking, etc.

Some forms determine the style such as pantomime, with its over the top acting, has to be non-naturalistic.

Note: non-naturalistic is sometimes called “stylised”.

Genre

Genre is the category that the drama fits into, often based on how it makes the audience feel.

Some examples: comedy, tragedy, dark-comedy, horror, drama, romance.

Target Audience

Who exactly is the drama aimed at? When answering these questions you have to be specific – it is never aimed at everyone because then it is literally aimed at nobody!

Some examples of target audiences: Toddlers, primary school children, teenagers, young adults, adults, elderly people, mothers, people affected by the themes, people from the area that it is set in.

When justifying a target audience you must state why that group would like it and not why it is not suitable for other groups, the marking criteria specifically says so.

E.g. "The target audience are teenagers because the themes are too mature for children but the content would not be interesting to adults" WOULD GET NO MARKS.

CORRECT ANSWER: "The target audience is teenagers because the mature themes would be suitable and interesting to them and the content is specifically aimed at young people who are likely to go through similar experiences..."

Purpose

What is the point in this drama? What do you hope to achieve from sharing it with the target audience?

Often the answer is either to educate or entertain.

Within these you will be trying to educate about something (such as a theme or issue) or entertain in a specific way (to make the audience laugh, to shock them or scare them).

Scenes and characters can have specific purposes too. Ask yourself "why is it so important that this scene/ character is included?" It may be to educate or entertain, because a theme is highlighted, or because it is essential to drive the plot.

If you are asked about purpose **and** target audience make sure that the answers link.

Themes/ Issues

This is the exact same as the themes/ issues that are dealt with in English. What does the drama deal with? What does it make you think about?

Some examples: love, jealousy, war, poverty, childhood, growing up, bullying, smoking, family, friendship.

Conventions:

Conventions are the things that are put into a drama to make it fancy.

Name of Convention	What is it?	Why use it?
Flashback	The actors show something that has previously happened	Gives more information
Flashforward	The actors show something that has not yet happened	Creates a sense of dramatic irony
Freeze frame	Actors freeze briefly during the action	Allows the audience time to take in all the details
Frozen picture/ tableau	Actors use their bodies to make a picture and hold it	Can be a good way to start a scene or to really emphasise character relationships

Mime	The acting becomes silent	Audience can focus on someone who is speaking or it could highlight an important action
Monologue	One actor speaks for an extended amount of time	Lots of information can be revealed/ get to know the character better
Movement	Part of the action is almost danced	Can show things that are difficult to show on stage, e.g. car crash. With music it can create a dramatic moment
Slow motion	A section is slowed down dramatically	Can be very dramatic, can allow audience to focus on the action
Narration	A person is on stage telling the story as it happens	This can help the audience to understand everything, especially useful for younger audiences
Voice over	A voice from offstage is heard	Can be narration/ a character offstage/ the other half of a phonecall
Aside	A character says something to his/ herself and the rest of the characters do not hear it	This can give insight into what this character is thinking/ feeling
Soliloquy	A character takes a step away from the	Brings the audience into the action, keeps

	action and speaks directly to the audience	them connected
Split stage	The stage is divided into two or more section representing different areas	It is possible to show action that is happening in different places at the same time

Key moment/

Key scene:

A key moment or a key scene is a point in the drama that is particularly important.

It might be important because of one of the following reasons:

- Something changes
- We learn something new about a character
- A tension reaches its highest point
- A theme/ issue is really highlighted in the scene

If answering about a key moment or scene make sure you describe what happens in the scene, DO NOT SAY “In Scene 2”, SAY “in the second scene where the knife is revealed...”

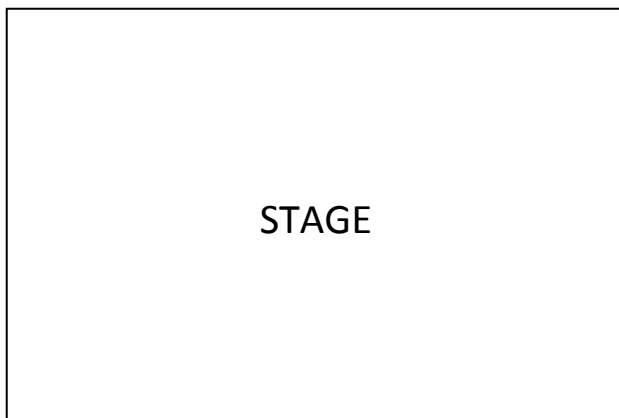
Remember, when answering should always think about the impact on the audience.

Staging

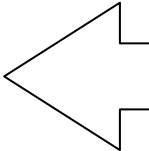
Staging is the way the performers and audience are positioned in relation to each other.

Below are some examples. These are from a bird's eye view.

END ON



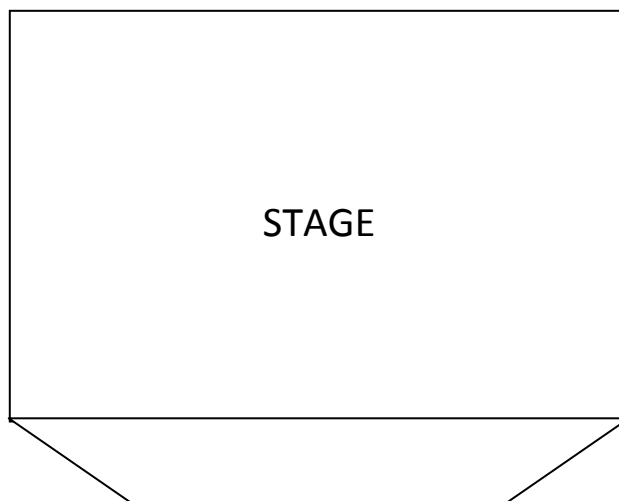
Audience, audience, audience



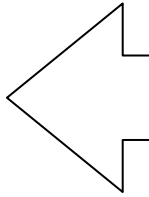
This type of staging is called "end on". The audience sit in front of the performers

POSCEIUM ARCH is end on staging with a big arch over the stage that the audience look through.

APRON

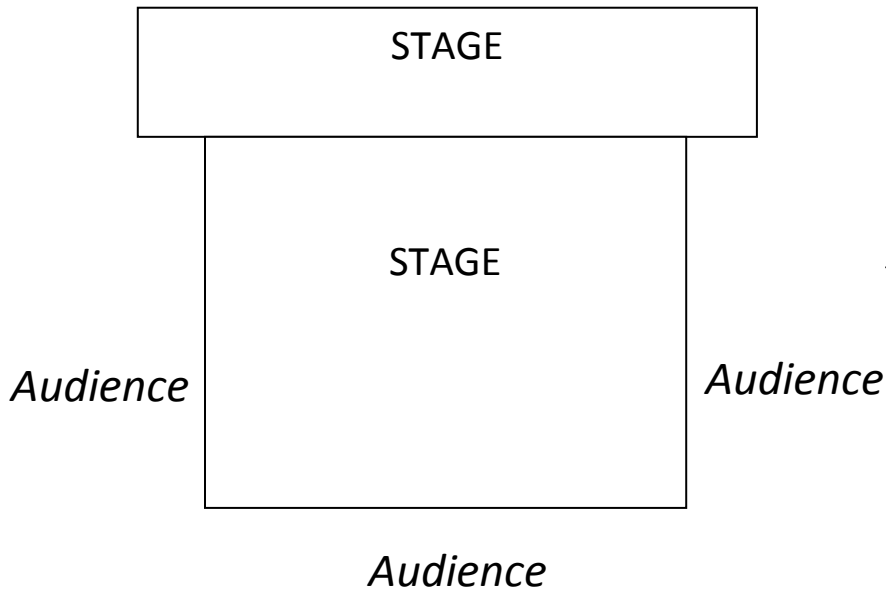


Audience, audience, audience



A small area is added to the front of the stage to create an "apron stage" bringing performers closer to audience

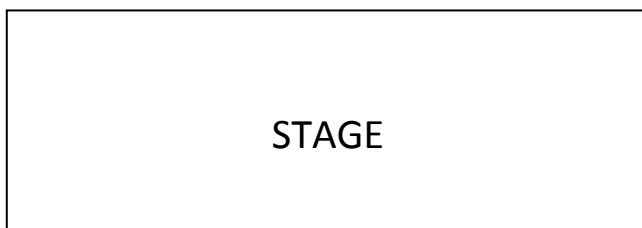
THRUST



In “thrust staging” the stage extends into the audience so that the audience are on three sides of the performers

TRAVERSE

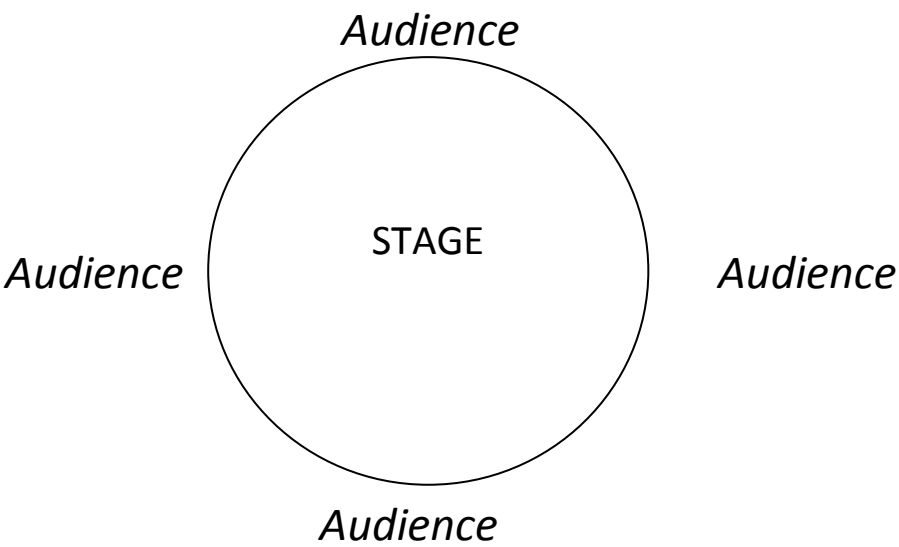
Audience, audience, audience



Audience, audience, audience

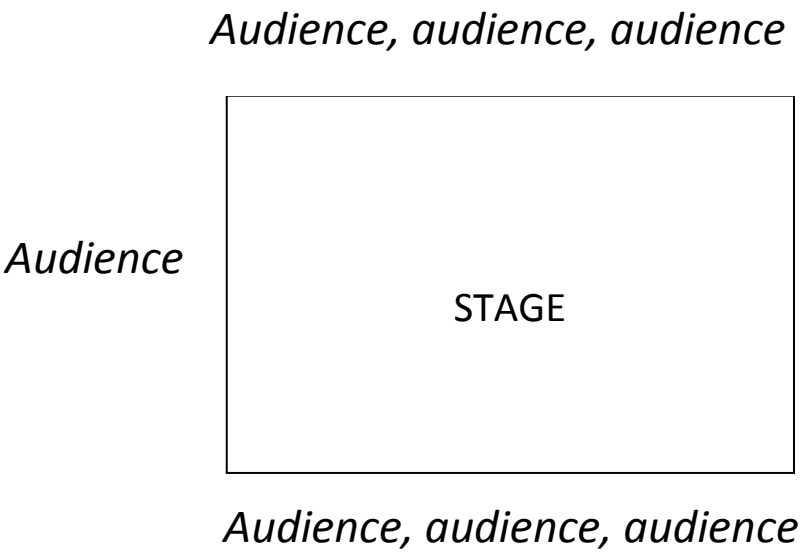
Audience sit at both sides of the performers and the performance space is narrower in “traverse staging”

IN THE ROUND



This is theatre “in the round”. There is a round performance area and the audience sit on all sides.

ARENA



“Arena staging” is very similar to theatre in the round as the audience sit on all sides. The stage here is not round.

PROMENADE

“Promenade theatre” is when both performers and audience move around the space.

Stage Areas

Up Stage Right (USR)	Up Stage Centre (USC)	Up Stage Left (USL)
Centre Stage Right (CSR)	Centre Stage (CS)	Centre Stage Left (CSL)
Down Stage Right (DSR)	Down Stage Centre (DSC)	Down Stage Left (DSL)

Audience, audience, audience

It is important to know the stage areas shown above and use them when describing where actors/ objects are on stage.

A handy way to remember your upstage from your downstage and stage left from stage right:

- In the olden days stages used to be “raked” which meant that they were on a hill with the highest point being at the back. This made it easier for the audience to see everything happening. So, walking to the back of the stage (upstage) was literally up a hill.
- Stage Left and Stage Right are always from the actor’s point of view when facing the audience... easy!

Venue

Venue is where the performance is being shown. Where would you tell the audience to come to?

Some examples: Dundee Rep, Perth Theatre, Perth Academy Assembly Hall, the Drama Room, a field, a graveyard, the high street.

The venue can be anywhere as long as you can justify why it is appropriate for the drama.

There was a question on venue a few years ago and lots of candidates lost marks for answering on staging rather than venue.

Acting

Acting is (obviously) the way an actor changes their movement and voice to portray a character. This is also sometimes called “characterisation”.

For all acting questions always use movement/ voice vocabulary as appropriate and always explain how this helps the audience to understand the character.

To be on the safe side, try to mention one piece of vocabulary for each available mark.

If you are asked about your “acting concept” or “performance concept” this is the big decision you made about how to play your character. All decisions about voice and movement then fit into this.

Movement

Movement is the way an actor uses their body to help portray the character.

You can use the acronym “**BUGPEF**” to help you remember movement terminology.

B	Body Language	Emotion shown with the body E.g. a happy body language
U	Use of Space	Using lots or little space/ Being close or far from someone/ something
G	Gesture	Using hands or arms to express something
P	Posture	The way that you stand: either straight or slouched
E	Eye Contact	Looking directly or indirectly at someone/ something
F	Facial Expressions	Emotion shown with the face E.g. a happy facial expression

Other things you may want to mention:

Levels – who is higher or lower on stage can indicate who has the most power/ status

Gait – this is how the actor walks, think about pace/ balance and use in conjunction with other BUGPEF vocabulary

Voice

Voice is the way an actor says their lines to help portray the character.

You can use the acronym “**TRAFICPPAVE**” to help you remember voice terminology.

T	Tone	Emotion shown with the voice E.g. a happy tone
R	Register	How you speak depending on the situation – formal or informal
A	Accent	Shows where a person comes from - must be a place. (DO NOT WRITE “A POSH ACCENT”)
F	Fluency	The flow of the voice. E.g. stuttering is non-fluent
I	Intonation	The rise and fall of the voice, E.g. intonation rises when asking a question
C	Clarity	Speaking clearly to be understood or mumbling
P	Pace	Speaking fast or slow (DO NOT WRITE “NORMAL PACE”)
P	Pitch	How high or low a person speaks, can show age/ authority

P	Pause	A break in speech, can be used to show nerves, or create tension
A	Articulation	Pronouncing all letters and words properly, or not
V	Volume	Loud or quiet (NOT HIGH OR LOW)
E	Emphasis	Stressing a word to show that it is important.

Characterisation Techniques

Characterisation techniques or “rehearsal techniques” are activities that you do to help you learn about the character and in turn portray them even better.

Some examples: character card, hot seating, role on the wall, a day in the life, writing in role, role swap, improvisation.

When answering questions on these you are likely to get one mark for briefly naming and explaining the technique:

Example: *I used writing in role and wrote a diary entry as my character.*

When explaining how this helped you have got to be specific and link to your acting decisions.

Example: *I learned that my character doesn't sleep very well so I used a slouched posture and slow pace to show that she is tired.*

Theatre Production Skills

Theatre production skills are **all** of the things happening on stage: acting, lighting, sound, costume, set, props, makeup and hair. Without acting these are sometimes called “design roles”.

What are they good for?

- Showing the time a drama is set (either the era or the time of day)
- Showing where the drama is set
- Showing things about the characters such as their age, status and wealth
- Building tension

You are normally given some choice over which Theatre Production Skill you are going to answer about. To be safe, familiarise yourself

with how to answer questions on all of them, but answer on the one(s) you feel most comfortable with.

REMEMBER: it's okay to lie. If you have never really been a costume designer but it would be easiest to answer the question as if you had been then LIE, LIE, LIE!

The following are tips on how to answer the questions, if you need a recap on a specific skill then please ask your teacher.

Acting

The majority of acting marks come from comments on movement, voice and (when asked about them/ the process) comments on characterisation techniques.

Please check the previous page about acting and don't forget: GO MAD WITH VOCAB!

Lighting

When answering questions on lighting, be very specific.

Questions to ask yourself:

What lantern did it come from?

Fresnel = a wash of light to cover large areas of the stage.

You can add barn doors to a Fresnel to direct the light to a certain area

You can add gels to make the light a certain colour.

Spot = a more focussed light on a certain area. This beam can be soft edged or hard edged.

You can add gels to make the light a certain colour.

You can add a gobo – which is like a stencil – to create certain images within the light.

With a follow spot, a certain actor can be followed and constantly lit as they move around the stage.

Flood = this is a rectangular light that can fill the whole stage evenly with the same light. (We don't have any at P.A.)

You can add gels to make the light a certain colour.

How strong is the light?

This is measured in percentages. If it is as strong as it can be it is 100%. Dimly lit is around 20%. Stick to tens, nobody would notice a light going up by a few percent. 0% is a blackout.

How long is it on for?

Answer in seconds where applicable but if it is on for the whole scene then just say that.

How does it come on and go off?

In this case “up” = “on” and “down” = “off”

Slow fade up = it gradually comes on over a set time

Slow fade down = it gradually goes off over a set time

Snap up = it comes on instantly

Snap down = it goes off instantly

Crossfade = changing between two effects by putting one down and the other up at the same time

Strobe = a light coming on and off very quickly

Even with blackouts, how did you get here? Fade or snap?

Why is it on?

For this, you really have to link to the question and tailor your answer.

Sound

Sound is extremely similar to lighting, in terms of vocabulary.

Ask yourself the same questions:

Where does the sound come from?

It will either be a live sound effect made by you, an actor, or another member of the crew

OR

It is a pre-recorded sound effect played by you from the soundboard – even if you normally used a laptop, say “soundboard” in your exam.

How loud is the sound?

Volume is also measured in percentages. If it is as loud as it can be it is 100%. Quiet background noise is around 20%. Stick to tens, nobody would notice a sound going up by a few percent.

How long is it on for?

Answer in seconds where applicable but if it is on for the whole scene then just say that.

How does it come on and go off?

In this case “up” = “on” and “down” = “off”

Slow fade up = it gradually comes on over a set time

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Crossfade = changing between two effects by putting one down and the other up at the same time

Why is it on?

For this, you really have to link to the question and tailor your answer.

Costume

It is extremely important that you describe every item of costume, answering the following questions:

What is the item of costume?

What colour(s) is it? Any markings/ patterns/ details?

What material is it made from?

Does it fit the character properly?

Is it clean?

It is in a good condition?

Does it tell us anything about the character?

There is not a lot of specific vocabulary for costume so the marks come from the details. You want the examiner to be able to imagine exactly what you are describing. You must describe all items worn.

Example (for one item): *She wore a dress which was mint coloured with small pink flowers and white lace around the neck and cuffs. It was made from cotton and the lace was sewn on. It fit her well and it was long; down to just below her knees. It was clean and in a very good condition. This shows that the character takes pride in her appearance and can afford to dress well, in bright summary colours.*

Set

With set it is important that you use the proper set vocabulary and stage areas.

A reminder of some important set vocabulary is below:

Flat = replacement for wall

Rostrum = raised platform (plural is “rostra”)

Treads = stairs

Tabs = curtains

Trucks = wheels

For any item you would be putting on the set, i.e. furniture, remember to describe it thoroughly including comments on size, material, colour, condition, etc.

The position of all items should be explained using stage areas, a reminder of these are over page:

Up Stage Right (USR)	Up Stage Centre (USC)	Up Stage Left (USL)
Centre Stage Right (CSR)	Centre Stage (CS)	Centre Stage Left (CSL)
Down Stage Right (DSR)	Down Stage Centre (DSC)	Down Stage Left (DSL)

Props

It is extremely important that you describe every item of props, answering the following questions:

What is the item?

What material is it made from?

What colour(s) is it? Any markings/ patterns/ details?

What size is it in relation to the character?

Is it clean?

It is in a good condition?

Does it tell us anything about the character?

There is not a lot of specific vocabulary for props so the marks come from the details. You want the examiner to be able to imagine exactly what you are describing.

Example: She used a walking stick. It was metal but had a black plastic handle and a bit of black plastic at the bottom too. The metal stick section had red, yellow, pink and purple flowers painted on it. It

was an appropriate size for the character's height and she could lean on it comfortably. It had a few small splats of dirt on it from her garden and a few scuffs in the black plastic at the bottom through general wear and tear.

Makeup and hair

With makeup you must describe every element of makeup applied to the person's face. Use theatrical makeup terms. Explain what the makeup tells the audience about the character.

With hair there is not a lot of specific vocabulary so marks come from describing the style in detail and explaining what it tells the audience about the character.

Reminder of some makeup vocabulary:

Base = foundation

Highlighting = lightening certain areas to make them stand out

Shading = darkening areas to make them seem sunken

Putty = a material applied to make the nose seem longer or to add spots

Bruise wheel = a palette of colours that create a bruise effect

Other things

Mood and Atmosphere

You may be asked to describe the mood and atmosphere of a scene and/ or how this was created.

All scenes have mood and atmosphere. It can be easiest to link it to the emotion you want the audience to feel.

For example a scene at a haunted house would have a scary mood or a wedding scene would have a romantic atmosphere.

Mood and atmosphere can be created by actors and by all other Theatre Production Skills.

Building Tension

Tension is the “driving force” of the drama. It makes an audience want to know what happens next. Without tension a drama performance would become boring! All dramas have tension but this does not necessarily mean that the drama is tense and serious. For example, Mr Bean is a comedy TV show, but the humour comes from him making mistakes. There is tension when the audience knows Mr Bean is going to get something wrong and we are waiting for it to happen.

Tension can be created through:

Shock or surprise = when something shocking or unexpected happens

Mystery = a drama that needs something to be solved e.g. detective drama

Relationships/status = tension can be created between characters. This can be heightened when one character is of a different status or the status of a character is changing.

Threat/pressure = a drama where a character has to complete a task by a certain time, or feels pressured into doing something e.g. James Bond

Dramatic Irony = when the audience know something that the characters on stage do not e.g. Malcolm enters the stage and announces that he is going to murder Joe. Joe then enters, not knowing he is about to die...but the audience do!

When asked about building tension, work out which one of these things fits with your scene.

Tension can be built by actors and by all other Theatre Production Skills.

Resolving issues in a group

You may be asked about issues that came up during the drama process with you and your group.

This is not the examiner looking for a bit of gossip. Don't be mean about anyone, e.g. *“all of our problems were because Jimmy is useless!”*

Make sure your answer is Drama related and shows off some drama vocabulary if possible.

Examples: *We were struggling with the structure of our drama. To resolve this we drew a storyboard and from this we could see what scenes were missing.*

OR

We were struggling with our American accents but the drama had to be set in America because it dealt with the issue of gun violence. Together we watched some YouTube videos of people from Los Angeles speaking and we found this softer American accent easier to do.

Remember to watch out for who the question is asking about and use “I” or “we” appropriately.

Evaluating self/others

You very likely be asked comment on your own performance or the performance of someone else.

Again, the examiner isn't looking for *“she was really good and she's my best friend and I love her”* or *“I thought he was rubbish, I don't even know why he took Drama.”*

Use Drama vocabulary and consider how this performance impacted the audience, positively or negatively.

Example: *I used a high pitch which was effective because the audience knew I was playing a younger character but my pace could have been slower so that everything I said was understood.*

OR

Linzi used pause really well and it created suspense before she revealed the truth to everyone. She also used emphasis on the word “pregnant” which showed how important this information was to her.

**Ask your teacher for any
further help 😊**