

**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 essay must address **acting style from the perspective of the actor**.
- A discussion of dialogue, characterisation and space in close reference to the text should still show some awareness of the socio-political background.
- The rubrics for characterisation, dialogue and space show the breakdown for the mark allocation:
  - An introduction that introduces the perspective on acting style/actor's perspective: 5
  - Characterisation: 10 + 5 marks for reference to physical aspects of acting style
  - Dialogue: 10+5 marks for reference to vocal aspects of acting style
  - Space 10 + 5 marks for reference to the influence of space on acting style

**ABSURD CHARACTERISATION ACTING STYLE 3 marks**

**EXAMPLES FROM TEXT 4 marks**

**SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND 3 marks**

A representation of mankind in general. Character as an abstraction of human attitudes. They demonstrate or symbolise human properties. Exaggerated characters Interchangeable: double act. No background information on characters. Social puppet. Acting style – BECKETT.

Movement will be circular and repetitious, invested with urgency as if they might achieve something. Movement is executed with great precision and energy. When the actor stops the movement is over, reinforcing the stillness. Posture represents the image of pain but the decrepitude is not exaggerated. When characters look into space it's not a vacant look but an intense stare at nothing. Bursts of activity are often followed by complete collapse. Business consists of children's games performed with innocent enthusiasm. Actors perform gags and comic routines with ritualistic seriousness.



Actors display clownlike behaviour Heightened energy; super reality Mechanical qualities; automatism Hyper-concentration Acting style – IONESCO It adheres to the French farce tradition. The actor's movements should display an element of conscious automatism. It borders on the mechanical with a puppet-like over-precision. Physical business tends to be secondary and is used to reinforce the linguistic games.

Verbal rhythms demand supporting patterns of gesture. Repetitious gestures reinforce the gibberish of his speech. Ionesco uses many farce techniques, but places them within an atmosphere of conscious futility. The above remarks only indicate those aspects where Ionesco differs slightly from the accepted absurd acting style. Mention at least three examples. People isolated by society from a true experience of life. Life as a tedious, meaningless activity. Awareness of a hostile universe. Characters suggest larger truths about the human condition – truths that have to be experience.

**ABSURD DIALOGUE** 3 marks

**EXAMPLES FROM TEXT** 4 marks

**SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND** 2 marks

Language reinforces the circular repetitious form. Language is not equipped to express knowledge. Language cannot define the sense of meaninglessness IONESCO: Words become interchangeable objects. Language is depersonalising and automatic. Ionesco derides language. Vacuous discussion of unimportant matters. Nonsense phrases. Meaningless association of words. Automatic responses to match automatic behaviour. Total destruction – climactic paroxysm. Gestural language creates comic business. Verbal techniques: repetitions, circularities, redundancies. Language undermines itself BECKETT: He used strong rhythmic progressions or canters. Frequent use of pause isolates words. Speech when silence becomes unbearable. Beckett relied on an imagistic impact rather than on logical structure. Created a poetic dialogue with melodic, rhythmic and associative potential. Comic effect created by the disparity between ability to communicate and lack of real meaning. Acting style: Verbal rhythms demand supporting patterns of gesture. Language should not be approached as if it were naturalistic speech. Language must be approached as a poetic structure. In the vocal delivery, actors will not search the lines for subtext. Mention at least SIX examples.

The mid-twentieth century saw rational language come to a dead end in logical positivism. Language no longer differentiates between man and other animals – Darwin. Language cannot express a fixed truth – everything is relative according to Einstein. Language, like logic, was irrelevant to existential problems as it could express nothing outside itself.



**ABSURD SPACE AND TIME** 3 marks

**EXAMPLES FROM TEXT** 4 marks

**SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND** 3 marks

Space is the place where actors perform. Setting is what fills the space to create an environment. Cluttered space – Impenetrable wall created by things. Men live through objects. The stage, which had been reduced by Realism to represent a small slice-of-life, returned to its earlier image as a metaphor for the world itself in Absurd Theatre. The stage is stripped to its minimum – symbolic of a void, simple and stark. The theatrical image conveys the experience of absurdity. The world/room are contained spaces, devoid of meaning. Space is either infinite or totally confining. Beckett's space conveys a sense of oppressive emptiness filled with inexpressible meaning. Mention at least three examples. Space is a metaphor for the world itself – the world perceived as an empty void or a hostile force WW1 and WW2: the nuclear bomb manifests man's ability to destroy the universe.

## **QUESTION 2 BRECHTIAN THEATRE**

### **MARK ALLOCATION**

- Why? - 5 marks
- What? - 5 marks
- How? - 5 marks
- What? - 5 marks
- Episodic structure - 10
- Gestic characterisation - 10 marks
- Treatment of space - 10 marks

Total: 50 marks

### **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 play's 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 as 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 targets 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 the 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 at 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.

### **QUESTION 6.1**

#### **MARK ALLOCATION – PAPER V (6.1)**

- Discussion of the concept – 5 marks
  - How does the actor improve projection – 5 marks
- Total marks: 10

#### **PROJECTION**

The actor must always be heard, regardless of the space in which he is working.

The actor must always be heard regardless of the length of the phrases he must utter.

He must, however, not shout, hurt or strain the voice.

The actor needs sufficient, controlled, supported breath.

Air must be exhaled under controlled pressure so that vocal folds vibrate without disturbances.



Central diaphragmatic breathing is the ideal to achieve the most efficient amount of air for good projection.

Lungs can be filled to full capacity.

Breath can be controlled by action of diaphragm, stomach and back muscles.

### **Volume**

Volume is created by bringing the vocal folds together, keeping them closed for longer.

Pressure from the breath stream builds up; the vocal folds open, greater energy is released.

Avoid breathiness; ensure firm glottal closure, without a harsh attack.

### **Resonance**

Resonance is created by the amplification and modification of tone by means of vibrations in body.

Good resonance is achieved when different resonators resonate at the same frequency.

This occurs on vowel sounds, which carry emotion, and on continuant consonants.

### **Clear articulation**

The actor must articulate actively.

The mouth must be open (jaw released) and sound must be projected to the front of the mouth (hard palate, alveolar ridge = sounding board)

The performer should not over-articulate as it produces unnatural, affected speech.

## **QUESTION 6.2**

### **MARK ALLOCATION PAPER V**

- Discuss any three (3x3) of the following:
- Refer to examples – 1

Total marks: 10

### **VOCAL CHARACTERISATION**

**Accent:** e.g. harsh, staccato, broken up quality as result of Cockney accent

**Age:** e.g. older person, therefore slower, more thoughtful

**Personality:** e.g. strong, dynamic person, therefore confident rhythms, and medium pace



**Background:** e.g. no education, therefore broken up rhythms, unsure of self

**Use of pace:** slow, medium-paced or fast

**Pause:** many/few pauses, grammatical pauses, use of dramatic and emotional pauses, length of pauses, frequency of pauses, placement of pauses

**Emphasis:** stress, gesture, volume, use of pitch, etc. (e.g. punctuate with gesture for Italian character)

**Climax:** e.g. thoughtful character, therefore climax one of slowing down, allowing tone to create sense of profundity OR excitable character, therefore becoming faster and louder as nearer climax.

## **SECTION C STAGING**

### **QUESTION 7**

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

**TOTAL MARKS FOR THIS PAPER:**

**200**