

Interpreting Theatre – UNIT 3 – WJEC GCSE DRAMA SECTION B - 15 marks

Question Focus on Design



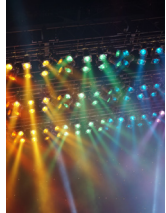
! Remember you are:

- evaluating and analysing a live theatre production
- spending about 25 minutes answering this section
- choosing one of the two options
- naming the performance, the company and the location.

Remember: Questions can vary and can focus on the following: LIGHT, SOUND, SET and PROPS, COSTUME, MAKE-UP and HAIR, ATMOSPHERE and MOOD, and USE OF SPACE.

Important Things!

! Remember: Please read the question carefully, use the bullet points to help you. Give your personal OPINION as a member of the audience.



LIGHT:

You will need to start by discussing the style of the production, e.g. Musical, Naturalistic or Symbolic Play, then the type of set and stage shape. The designer will have selected the types of light in order to reinforce this style. Choose a particular scene or scenes (depending on the question), which will be effective examples of lighting. You can discuss the types of lamps used, e.g. wash, fresnel, beams, profile and strength; and also the angles and how the set and actors were lit. Discuss the colours and gels and how this created an atmosphere. Gobos, cyclorama, a video screen or specific images might have been used. Lighting from the back can cast shadows and create a more sinister mood. The lighting for your production may be more simple but effective for different reasons, e.g. to emphasize themes or symbolize emotion.



SOUND:

You will need to start by mentioning the style of the production and then discuss how the sound enriched the show. The designer may have chosen the sound to match the period, social background of the play or specific themes. However, the designer may want to create a more vague or suggestive sound. Once again, the sound will have to be discussed in one scene or scenes. Sound can be a piece of music that's already been recorded or live music. It may also be a recorded sound effect or a live sound effect, e.g. a gun firing on or off stage, sounds off stage. Explain how the sound created a mood and atmosphere in this piece and helped the production to flow smoothly, or created a blanket in the background. You will need to mention the sound levels and volume and its impact, e.g. sinister or peaceful sound, classical or contemporary music; appropriate instruments to create a mood e.g. saxophone.



SET AND PROPS:

Comment on the style of the production and the design of the set. You will need to mention the shape of the stage, the drama period and the general appearance of the set, e.g. naturalistic, minimalistic, symbolic, bare. You can also discuss where the audience is situated in relation to the show, e.g. theatre in the round, traverse or proscenium theatre. Then proceed to explain the type of set used and how effective that was, e.g. painted flats, the colours and patterns; they may have been covered by material. The mobile platforms and rostrum that created a specific shape and location on the stage floor. Different levels that represented the status of particular characters or areas in the plays, e.g. scaffolding, the use of stage furniture and equipment, curtains and gauze. Consider the back of the stage as well and what was used to cover the walls, and also the ceiling and floor. You can discuss the materials, e.g. metal, wood or plastics, and also the colours used.

PROPS - Don't forget to discuss the props in terms of their period, colour, quality and condition and how they created impact and reinforced the production.