

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!

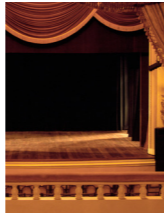
Remember: Please read the question carefully and use the bullet points to help you. Give your personal OPINION as a member of the audience.



COSTUMES MAKE-UP AND HAIR:

You will need to start by discussing the production style, e.g. Musical, Naturalistic or Symbolic Drama; then the period, venue and time. Choose the characters that are a good example of costume, make-up and hair design. You can discuss the costume's fabric, colours and style. The colour might symbolise the character's emotion or motivation and helps the interpretation. You can discuss the costume in detail from head to toe, giving your opinion on the effectiveness of design. Also discuss the costume's condition and quality and also how this lead the audience to judge or sympathise with the character.

Remember - The hair and make-up will need to be discussed and their effect explained, e.g. messy hair, white make-up, a lot of lipstick.



USE OF SPACE:

Explain what was the set's production style and also, was it essential to the shape of the stage? This will give an idea of the size of the space. The stage might be narrow and the set might be bare to give fair attention and a chance for the actors to use as much space as possible. If so, how were the locations created? Was there a change in atmosphere? Did a particular light suggest that? Were simple levels changed from one area of space to another? Was the space meant to be closed in order to create the theme of frustration and boredom? How did the actors make the most of the space they had? If the production was on a wide stage, there would be an opportunity to use several resources, sets, levels and rostra to create locations. Actors' locations could vary frequently and move to create an atmosphere of excitement and vitality. There may be many actors and a chorus coordinating and making effective use of the space in one scene of the production. Remember, when discussing space, you will need to refer to the equipment in the space and characters' locations.



MOOD AND ATMOSPHERE:

Many theatrical resources can create mood and atmosphere in a production. But whilst referring to the designer's role, you could discuss the lighting, sound, costumes and set designer's work. However, one of these may have made more of an impression on you than the others. So, choose the show carefully, and initially, discuss the drama's style and context, e.g. Musical, Theatre Show in Education, production of Shakespeare's work, perhaps. Try to describe a scene (or scenes) that was/were full of tension and built tension amongst the audience, e.g. slowly increasing sound, the light fading or changing colour, the actor adding a piece of costume or using props in a symbolic way. A series of images on screen or a film might add to the mood. Theatre designers have so many possibilities to create mood and atmosphere.