



NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION
NOVEMBER 2017

DRAMATIC ARTS
MARKING GUIDELINES

Time: 3 hours

150 marks

These marking guidelines are prepared for use by examiners and sub-examiners, all of whom are required to attend a standardisation meeting to ensure that the guidelines are consistently interpreted and applied in the marking of learners' scripts.

The IEB will not enter into any discussions or correspondence about any marking guidelines. It is acknowledged that there may be different views about some matters of emphasis or detail in the guidelines. It is also recognised that, without the benefit of attendance at a standardisation meeting, there may be different interpretations of the application of the marking guidelines.

SECTION A PLAYS AND PERFORMANCE IN CONTEXT

QUESTION 1 THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE – BERTOLT BRECHT

1.1 HISTORIFICATION, VERFREMDUNG/ALIENATION AND STAGING

1.1.1 Define:

HISTORIFICATION – The setting of a play in a past time and distant/unfamiliar place. Setting the play in the 'there and then' as opposed to the 'here and now'.

VERFREMDUNG/ALIENATION – the 'making strange' of familiar occurrences and events. Defamiliarising the familiar.

Learner has correctly and fully defined the term, 'historification'.	
Learner has correctly and fully defined the term, 'verfremdung'/ 'alienation'.	

1.1.2 Brecht's reasons for using the two techniques:

Overarching reason – to distance the audience from emotional empathy, because a predominantly emotional response sways the audience and disallows objectivity. To encourage intellectual engagement over emotional engagement.

Specific reasons:

Historification – Brecht wanted to remove the audience from their immediate socio-political context as he felt that they would not be able to exercise objectivity in their assessment of the events that unfold in the plays if these were positioned in a setting that was familiar to them.

Verfremdung/Alienation – to remind the audience at all times that they are watching a play. To present the action in ant-illusionistic manner. A deliberate sequence of events or story is being presented for a specific reason, rooted in Brecht's Marxist agenda. Realism is to be avoided as it encourages emotional empathy and detracts from objective engagement.

Learner has understood the overarching reason for the use of these two techniques and has explained this clearly.	
Learner has explained clearly why Brecht used the technique of historification.	
Learner has explained clearly why Brecht used the technique of verfremdung/alienation.	

1.1.3 How is historicification made evident in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*?

The prologue is placed in a post-war setting in a village in the Caucasus. In some translations, there is not even a specification of place or the suggestion of a post World War II context, although it is possible that Brecht's audiences would have made this connection.

The parable/story of the Chalk Circle (the play within a play) is set in the province of Grusinia in a fictional country in the Caucasus. The localities vary, from the city of Nukha, across the Northern Mountains and a valley in the northern Mountains. We are taken as an audience into the distant past and the Parable becomes a means to illustrate the land issue defined in the Prologue.

Learner has identified and explained specifically the setting of the prologue.	
Learner has identified and explained specifically the setting of the parable.	

1.1.4 (a) Examine the image and identify and state TWO ways in which verfremdung/alienation is achieved in the set design:

- Scaffolding
- The revolve
- Projections
- Non-realistic set
- Costumes to indicate social status
- Multiple localities in one space
- Bright white stage lighting which is unhidden
- The mechanics of theatre are exposed

Learner has identified two ways in which verfremdung/alienation is achieved in the set design.	

(b) How do these create verfremdung/alienation?

Treat each response on its individual merits, dependent on which ways were selected in (a). The candidate must be able to express their understanding in terms of the two ways identified.

Learner has successfully explained why the two ways identified in (a) create verfremdung/alienation.	

1.1.5 Imagine you are directing a production of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*.

- (a) **The use of levels in your production to emphasise character dynamics and status.**

Treat each response on its individual merits. The moment selected must be linked to the explanation and should be accurate, clear and erudite in order to achieve top marks.

Example: *In the final court case, between Grusha and Natella, use of levels would be appropriate to emphasise that Azdak has power in the scene as he is the judge who decides who is the rightful mother of Michael. Azdak will therefore be on a higher level than all others. Perhaps, initially, Natella will be on a higher level than Grusha as she seems to have the upper hand. However, as the case progresses, she would move to the same level as Grusha, as it becomes clear that she is losing the higher ground.*

Learner has explained how multiple levels will be used to reflect character dynamics and status.	
Learner has explained accurately and clearly.	

- (b) **The use of music to reinforce verfremdung/alienation.**

This question requires candidates to apply their understanding of how music was used by Brecht to assist with alienation. The questions assesses their capacity to explore the specific reasons for the use of music in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* and to apply this understanding to their sense as to what music would work for their production.

There are a number of operations to this question, which makes it higher order. It is expected that the average candidate will find this question quite challenging. Specific detail and relevant examples are asked for and expected.

- **The Role of Music in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*** – music is always used in Brecht's plays to create 'Spas'/entertainment, and it is no different in this play. However, Brecht makes music more significant than usual, by making the narrator a singer. The content of the singer's lyrics is used to take the audience through space and time and to present commentary, often ironic and satirical, on the events unfolding on stage. In order to create verfremdung/alienation, Brecht used music to counterpoint the content and so, for example, if the content was fairly emotional, the music would be used to undercut the emotion and would probably be joyful.

- **The types of music to be used and why** – these must be specified and explained in terms of the above. At least one example must be provided.

Learner has shown a clear understanding of the use of music to create <i>verfremdung/alienation</i> .	
Learner has shown a clear understanding of the role of music in <i>The Caucasian Chalk Circle</i> .	
Learner has specified the types of music he/she would use and explained these choices, using suitable examples to support the explanation.	
Knowledgeable and creative grappling with the question.	

1.2 INTERPRETATION

1.2.1 Briefly explain your understanding of how Brecht uses Azdak to explore this relationship.

Azdak is a deliberate construction/device. He embraces paradox, but is also used to convey the core paradox related to justice and the law. Brecht presents the society in the parable as corrupt, brutal and inhumane – this is a society that serves the privileged and oppresses the underdog, whether in war or in peace time. And so Brecht uses the paradoxical nature and behaviour of Azdak to reflect the lack of synergy between justice and the law and his consequent desire for a society in which the law serves the needs of all in society and creates true justice. This is why Azdak is presented as both caring and self-serving, intelligent and crude; he disregards the laws of the time and, as the judge, and in an inversion of the prevailing system, he rules in favour of the underdog as opposed to those in power. This does not stop him from taking bribes from those who can afford to pay him. He is a complete contradiction, but it is through the contradictory behaviour of Azdak that we as an audience are encouraged to engage with the debate about the relationship between justice and the law. Traditionally, justice and the law are perceived as one and the same thing. Brecht shows that the law has been corrupted and has come to serve those with power or money or the best lawyers. He thus uses Azdak to show that the law sometimes needs to be undermined or exploited or ignored altogether if justice is to prevail, e.g. The bandit who steals from the wealthy is not punished, but rather the farmers who failed to recognise the old woman's need of charity. Azdak's decisions, although illegal, are most often just and fair.

"The Judge has always been a rascal. Why not make the rascal a judge?"

Learner has explained and demonstrated a general understanding.	
The explanation is clear and specific.	

- 1.2.2 **This is an interpretation question, reliant on the candidate's understanding of the Brechtian acting style the candidate's sense as to how this can be used to assist the audience in understanding Azdak's function in the play.**

The marking of this essay will be guided by the accuracy and insight displayed by the candidate.

Brechtian acting style – **Non-naturalistic and presentational.** Brecht's characters are constructed as types – they represent the characters' social and political function in society. The relationships between characters serve to highlight their social and political positions and also the differences.

Explanation

The actor demonstrates the social function of the character. The actor builds his/her role from a social perspective, asking what am I, not who am I (the latter would encourage an emotional engagement with character).

The Actor: Brecht required his actors to demonstrate what happened, what words were said, and demonstrate the actions of the character. They must not try and become any of the characters they betray. At no time should the actor or the audience identify with the character. Brecht encourages his actors to show their characters rather than being wholly transformed into their parts.

Voice: Brecht made enormous vocal demands on his actors: they were required to sing, chant, use mechanical and strange sounding voices, produce disconnected and non-human sounds and speak in a range of dialects and class accents. These techniques are used to produce alienation.

Gesture: Brecht was influenced by Japanese and Chinese Theatre. He admired the way they used movement to tell a story in a stylised, unemotional way. He encouraged his actors to learn the formal gestures of Chinese Theatre and to use them in a completely detached way as though they were doing exercises or watching themselves in a mirror. In Chinese theatre a gesture that shows that character is crying is moving the finger up and down in front of the eyes. Brecht encouraged his actors to use this gesture instead of actually weeping tears.

[Source: <http://artsonline2.tki.org.nz/resources/units/drama_units/brecht/appx_c.php>]

Acting and Characterisation

- Actor was never to fully become the character, as in the realistic/naturalistic theatre.
- Actor was asked to demonstrate the character at arm's length with a sense of detachment.
- Often characters tended to be somewhat oversimplified and stereotyped yet other characters were sometimes complex historical, real life characters in some Brecht plays.

[Source: *Epic Theatre Conventions* – Justin Cash]

Structure:	
Introduction that is focused on the question.	
Use of paragraphs to sustain logic.	
Conclusion that distils the essence of the discussion within the body of the essay.	
Content:	
Learner demonstrates a clear understanding of the Brechtian acting style.	
Learner has explored this understanding in terms of showing Azdak's function in the play.	
Learner has supported the discussion with specific explanation and clear and relevant references to the text.	

Note: the division of marks awarded to the content expressed above is a guide only. The essay should be marked holistically on its quality, and the ability of the candidate to grapple successfully with the question in terms of insight, erudite explanation and support.

QUESTION 2 ATHOL FUGARD

In this question, you have to refer to **ONE** of the following plays:

People are Living There OR Hello and Goodbye OR The Road to Mecca OR Victory

Note: Learners must select ONE of the above texts only and all answers for this question must be based on their selected text.

2.1 STRUCTURE

2.1.1 Define the structure.

The structure of each of the plays is essentially linear in nature, but there is also a sense of circularity as a consequence of the existential quality of each play.

Learner has correctly defined the structure of the Fugard play studied.	

2.1.2 How the structure reflects the style in terms of time and dramatic action.

Note that the question asks for specific examples. An example for each concept is expected.

The style of Realism applies to all four plays. The underpinning principle is the idea of unity of time, place and action (dramatic action) so as not to disrupt the believability of the play.

Time – is presented as unfolding chronologically and there is no disruption of the plausibility of the play through the use of a narrator or flashbacks. Reference can be made in the dialogue to memories of past events, which remains plausible.

Dramatic Action – the plot unfolds logically and plausibly through cause and effect. The events that take place on stage through the world of the play could plausibly take place in the 'real world'.

Learner has understood the style and the concept of the unities.	
Learner has explained how the structure reflects the style in terms of time. The explanation is accurate, clear and specific.	
Learner has explained how the structure reflects the style in terms of dramatic action. The explanation is accurate, clear and specific.	
Appropriate examples have been cited.	

2.1.3 The open-ended structure.

- **Describe the closing moments:**

People Are Living There – The birthday party has ended badly. An existential conversation ensues with Don and Milly, but Milly achieves some sense of perspective and the play closes with Milly laughing openly at the absurdity of life and Don watching her.

Hello and Goodbye – Johnnie has finally revealed to Hester that their father is dead. Hester readies herself to return to her life in Johannesburg and leaves. Johnnie is left behind, contemplating his world on his father's crutches.

The Road to Mecca – Helen has rejected Marius' attempt to get her to move into a home, with Elsa's assistance. Elsa expresses her loneliness and despair to Helen and talks about her abortion and her inability to get the picture of Patience and her baby out of her head. There is a touching moment between the two women linked to love and trust, despite their respective despair.

Victory – Lionel is dead and Freddie has run away from the scene of the crime. Vicky is seated in a foetal position against the armchair singing a hymn. The sun is rising.

- **Explain why these reflect the open-ended structure.**

This question invites an opinion from the candidate to some extent, so treat each response on its individual merits. The prevailing sense across all four plays is the idea that we are left wondering about the futures of the characters.

- **Why has Fugard ended the plays in the manner he has?**

Each play ends in such a way that the possibility of hope, redemption, forgiveness and healing exists. Candidates need to engage with the specifics of the text studied.

Treat each response on its individual merits. The more superior response is likely to be one where the candidate has engaged with the ending in an interesting and 'fresh' way, but this does not mean that a 'conventional', even pedestrian response, could not achieve full marks.

Learner has accurately and clearly described the closing moments of the Fugard play studied.	
Learner has explained their sense as to why the ending is unresolved.	
Learner has adopted a view as to why they believe Fugard has ended their selected play as described and explained it.	
Learner has explained his/her view clearly and logically.	

2.2 INTERPRETATION

2.2.1 External/Internal Conflict. Describe a moment from your selected play and explain what kind of conflict it expresses.

Treat each response on its individual merits. The type of conflict identified is based on the moment selected. This is a fairly straightforward question.

Learner has identified a moment of conflict and described it clearly and accurately.	
Learner has correctly explained what kind of conflict is reflected.	

2.2.2 Imagine you are directing the moment described in Question 2.2.1.

Explain how you would direct this moment to make the conflict clear. Explain your directing strategies clearly and discuss why you believe these will make the conflict of your selected moment clear.

This question relies on the candidate's ability to visualise the performance of the selected moment and to select and explain strategies they would use were they to direct the piece. This could include advice to the actor/s as to how to work effectively with the role/s.

Treat each response on its individual merits.

This is a 12 mark question that requires rigorous investigation and explanation.

Learner has identified appropriate strategies and explained these.	
Learner has explained why the strategies would assist in revealing conflict.	
Creative and knowledgeable grappling with the question.	

2.3.1 FUGARD'S WOMEN

Does the Fugard play you have studied reveal women as resilient/ mentally strong?

Treat each response on its individual merits. The candidate is asked to adopt a view and to explain and justify it. The view should be specific to the Fugard play studied.

Structure:	
Introduction that is focused on the question.	
Use of paragraphs to sustain logic.	
Conclusion that distils the essence of the discussion within the body of the essay.	
Content:	
Learner has adopted a view.	
Learner has explained this view.	
The explanation is accurate, clear and specific.	
Learner has justified the explanation with relevant and appropriate examples from the Fugard play studied.	

Note: the division of marks awarded to the content expressed above is a guide only. The essay should be marked holistically on its quality, and the ability of the candidate to grapple successfully with the question in terms of erudite explanation and support.

SECTION B ESSAY**QUESTION 3**

This question interrogates the candidate's connections between the worlds of the plays and their current contexts as individuals and citizens of their communities, South Africa and the world. The quotation is provided for them to hook into these contexts in respect of the plays studied and the respective playwrights' intentions. Candidates are asked to engage specifically with Theme and Character in terms of these connections.

It is critical that candidates use the texts as the primary impulse for their discussions in order for their discussion to be erudite and critically framed. It is stated in the question and thus expected that specific, clear explanation and relevant examples are provided, where appropriate.

INTENTION

The Caucasian Chalk Circle

Brecht was a Marxist who believed in the idea of equality between the classes. His plays focus on presenting a socio-political situation [in this case, Capitalism] that is unequal and undesirable because it causes class division, oppression and corruption. Power is used by those who have wealth [the upper class] to oppress and cause harm to those who do not [the lower class]. He encourages the audience to engage critically with the notion that such situations need to be altered.

Paradox is deliberately used by Brecht to point out the corrupt and evil nature of the society presented at the beginning of the play, wherein the notion of doing good deeds is seen as dangerous and subversive. Brecht wishes this situation to change, in order that a society can be constructed where doing good can be both something wonderful and desirable.

He uses his play to forward his belief that a communist system is preferable to a capitalist ideology as it allows for equality and fairness and a dissolution of the class system.

His intention is to present plays as simply as possible, so that they are both accessible and entertaining to the man on the street – the very audience he is attempting to connect with. He wishes to focus his audiences in on the moral and social implications of the issues he presents and he does so by encouraging a critical engagement with these issues. He ultimately wishes his audiences to go out and act for desirable social and political reform.

Brecht defines human beings in terms of their socio-economic identity and creates a new purpose for theatre – a political ethic based on Marxism. His plays reflect on the social conditions 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 the society.

Brecht wants to present society and human nature as changeable. He sees scepticism as the essence of science and this refusal to take anything for granted is what needs to be applied to our social surroundings, if we are ever to learn to control them.

Nothing must be taken for granted, in order that nothing may seem unalterable. He is concerned with man's conduct and shows that it is hard for any man to behave decently when they have not been seen to.

Brecht's Epic Theatre encompasses the idea of the audience watching a story that is being told for a reason. Specific moments in the narrative are focused on which initially establish and then reinforce the message of the play.

FUGARD'S CENTRAL INTENTIONS [OVER-ARCHING]

Fugard has long acknowledged his debt to Albert Camus and Samuel Beckett. In Camus, he found a kindred spirit for his world view and his role as an artist; in Beckett, he found a dramaturgy of maximum import with minimum theatrical outlay. Confined to one room or space, two or three characters recollect, recriminate, role-play, and resign themselves to their existence in a world without meaning and with little hope for change. They delude themselves with false hopes and dreams, amuse themselves with games to pass the time; such nobility as they possess comes in the fleeting, lucid moments when they acknowledge their condition—and their dependence on each other.

As does Camus, Fugard opts for a "courageous pessimism" born of the clear-sighted recognition of modern human beings' plight.

In 1976, Fugard wrote: 'The only truth any man can tell is his own.' Through the plays, Fugard externalises his own inner truths. For decades, his theatre of defiance consistently aroused the national conscience. His audiences accepting moral responsibility for the deplorable conditions he defined. With every performance, Fugard sowed a seed that germinated amid the depravity of a moral wasteland created by apartheid. Yet woven into the poetic imagery of his plays were observations and truths for all men. As the quintessential actor/director/playwright, the stage is his arena for life's battles, where conflicts are resolved and philosophical perspectives established.

[Source: <http://www.enotes.com/topics/athol-fugard/critical-essays>]

"My real territory as a dramatist is the world of secrets with their powerful effect on human behaviour and the trauma of their revelation. Whether it is the radiant secret in Miss Helen's heart or the withering one in Boesman's or the dark and destructive one in Gladys', they are the dynamos that generate all the significant action in my plays". (Fugard, 1994).

People are Living There

The play is another South African *Godot*, filled with the same humour that Beckett gave his play. Fugard's Characters are trapped in meaningless repetitions and hopes, but, instead of waiting for Godot, they are waiting for a laugh. In his *Notebooks*, Fugard says of Beckett's humour, "Smile and then wipe the blood off your mouth." Fugard's humour has a bittersweet quality that shows the repetitive maze in which his characters wander with little hope of escape.

Hello and Goodbye

Fugard invests much of his own identity into this play and there are strong autobiographical elements. Just like the fictional Johnnie's father, Fugard's own father used crutches. Fugard also adored his mother, just as Johnnie and Hester adored theirs. Fugard's mother was also a hoarder and there were numerous boxes for Fugard and his siblings to rummage through when no one was looking. The memories Johnnie has of his father crying out at night are Fugard's own memories. Like Johnnie, Fugard called his father 'chum'. The railroad theme is another parallel as Fugard had direct experience working on the railways.

Fugard initially decided to include the father as an onstage character, but later changed his mind: "Even if not see[n], his 'presence' must be felt – a hate, bigotry, resentment, meanness – as twisted and blind as the physical reality." [*Notebooks*]

The play is firmly rooted in the context of apartheid South Africa. Hester and Johnnie use their racism in such a way as to allow them to cope with their own misery; it allows them to feel superior to others less fortunate than they are. Apartheid is something they accept.

The Road to Mecca

Fugard in his walks around the village of Nieu Bethesda had once or twice glimpsed the bird-like figure of Miss Helen Martins. After her suicide, Fugard wrote *The Road to Mecca*, once again infusing his own meanings into the external structure suggested by her life. For many years, Mecca came closest to laying bare his secret fear of the sterility that could potentially stifle creativity, the nemesis of writer's block so dreaded by all writers. Fugard's career had been a painful exploration of milestones along his route to a personal Mecca, and through the play and the confrontations at its core, he and we achieve self-knowledge and move forward to a greater understanding of concepts such as mutual trust and acceptance.

Victory

'I'm no longer blinkered by my obsession with the apartheid years, and I have a feeling that one of the consequences of that might be that I address myself to a broader canvas.'

Fugard wrote: "What does this play say if anything, about the state of the country today?' Even a superficial acquaintance with the new coming out of South Africa must however make you realize that your answer would depend on whether you were an embattled white living in a maximum security enclave in one of our cities, or a destitute black trying to survive the squalor of one of our many slums ... our euphemistically called 'informal settlements'. Speaking for myself, I only want to say that I did not write this play, or any of the others that lie behind my fifty years of playwriting, in order to make a 'political statement'. I am a storyteller and the particular story of ***Victory*** has its origins in personal experience."

THEME***The Caucasian Chalk Circle*****JUSTICE VERSUS THE LAW:**

Traditionally, justice and the law are perceived as one and the same thing. Brecht shows that the law has been corrupted and has come to serve those with power or money or the best lawyers. He thus uses Azdak to show that the law sometimes needs to be undermined or exploited or ignored altogether if justice is to prevail, e.g. the bandit who steals from the wealthy is not punished, but rather the farmers who failed to recognise the old woman's need of charity. Azdak's decisions, although illegal, are most often just and fair.

"The Judge has always been a rascal. Why not make the rascal a judge?"

MOTHERHOOD:

Brecht inverts the traditional roles to reinforce his theme that those who 'inherit' are not necessarily the best custodians of what has been placed in their care. Natella is the biological mother, yet cares more for personal possessions than for her child. Grusha is not the legal mother, yet sacrifices a great deal in caring for the child. Brecht shows that the best mother is the one who best serves the interests of the child. This is a metaphor for post-war Germany. Natella represents capitalism, Grusha, communism, and Michael stands for Germany. Thus this theme links to the very end of the play, as well as to the prologue.

This also ties up with the idea of justice vs the law, as it concerns the rightful ownership as opposed to what serves the best interests of all.

RELIGION:

Brecht condemns religion for its hypocritical values. He inverts the traditional role of the monk, and here presents a man who should be a symbol of chastity and virtue, as a drunken debauched, money-grabbing scoundrel who takes bribes to ignore the principles of religion. Aniko is also presented as religious and pious, yet her judgemental manner and unkind treatment of Grusha show her up as hypocritical and self-righteous, rather than a good representative of religion.

CORRUPTION OF AUTHORITY:

Brecht believes that the capitalist system lends itself to corruption because too much power is in the hands of too few. It also lends itself to the exploitation of the weak and poor. This corruption of authority is shown in the dismissive manner in which the Governor treats the peasants when they petition him outside the church. It is also seen in the manner in which the corporal treats the soldier. It is reinforced in Natella's response to the peasants in the courtroom, and her assumption that she has more right to 'justice' than Grusha does.

"Terrible is the temptation to do good":

Brecht questioned the traditional perception that self-sacrifice and martyrdom were to be valued. Especially in light of the fact that so many sacrificed their lives in a war which benefited few and destroyed many, he believed his audiences should look again at our automatic assumption that the sacrifices Grusha had to make in order to keep Michael were praise-worthy rather than fool-hardy.

CAPITALISM VERSUS MARXISM:

Brecht believed passionately that capitalism had not served Germany well, and that many of its inherent problems were due to the failure of the capitalist system. He proposed that Germany adopt Marxism after the war. Although this is not obvious unless seen against the framework of the prologue and often ignored epilogue, the play continually promotes the need for a new political and social order.

FUGARD***People are Living There***

Fugard shows us throughout the play what happens to us when we sit around and wait for life to come to us instead of attacking it. Many of the core themes are those that exist in *Waiting for Godot*, some of the core concepts around which existential themes are built being time, mortality, silence, persistence.

Hello and Goodbye

A major theme is centred around the notion of the difference in the choices Hester and Johnnie have made in response to their conditions. So, if Hester tries to get Johnnie to admit his hate because for her it is a form of survival. She says, "I hate, therefore I am", but Johnnie replies, "I don't love, I don't hate, I play it safe. I come when called, I go when chased, I laugh when laughed at".

Fugard wrote in his notebooks that in this play he was searching for "the moment when Hester "wakes up" and finds herself prostrate on earth. Three experiences: loss of hope; knowledge of death; the only certainty – the flesh." He affirms its existential significance: "Hester gives me the chance for the ruthless honesty I so admire in Faulkner's *Wild Palms* –Statements of Camus' "courageous pessimism".

The Road to Mecca

Fugard is most known for distilling into intimate personal stories the physical and spiritual struggles against apartheid in South Africa. In this engrossing multi-level play, he plies the same theme, but this time it's not as much about blacks and coloureds, as about women and non-conformists. A society that keeps the former in thrall will without too much difficulty stomp on the latter. And Fugard asserts that they have to fight back as much as the racial victims.

The individual in society

A touching statement on the roles which faith and creativity play in the endurance of the human spirit. The story of one woman's search for enlightenment (Mecca) through her art.

Social action and Prejudice

Political Issues in the Play:

- Miss Helen's friendship with Katrina (a coloured teenage mother who is the housekeeper)
- Elsa offering a ride to a young black mother
- Marius' use of Nonna (his coloured housekeeper)
- References to alcoholism in the coloured community and; the community's approach to solving the alcoholism problems for the coloured people
- Elsa asking her students to question the country's political system – the inquiry from the Cape Town School board over her conduct
- Elsa's questioning of Marius at the start of Act 2 on whether the coloured people of the Karoo feel as contented with life as the white people

What would Afrikaners do about a real scourge for coloureds? Young Katrina, a coloured woman who helps Helen, is being threatened by her drunken husband. "Why doesn't she leave him?" Elsa says. "She can't do that," says Helen. "They're married." Elsa replies, "There's the Afrikaner in you speaking. There is nothing sacred about a marriage that abuses the woman!"

Friendship and trust and trust as a greater thing than love

In an unusual sisterhood, in which they sometimes seem more like mother and daughter, Elsa appears the intense one and Helen is calm, yet those surface characteristics cover up Elsa's fortitude and Helen's distress. You get the feeling that Helen has lost the strength to control her own destiny. These two very unlikely friends appear as curious but natural allies. The culture of their country weighs on both.

Victory

The play is a warning to all South Africans about a generation of destitute children who live without hope. In 2006, government corruption, high unemployment rates, poverty and the lack of housing for the poor, an inadequate education system for the majority of young South Africans, the alarming rise in HIV infection and poor health care, amongst others, all undercut the hope and vision of the South African democracy that never really came to light after 1994. The legacy of apartheid is still very present and has been exacerbated by the spiralling crime rate as well as the descent into a gang and drug culture by the disadvantaged youth of South Africa. While the constitution is a model of equality, it has not translated into the reality that most people hoped their new free country would be. The play, with its ironic title, shows its disappointment with the very victory it was meant to celebrate: the new South Africa.

CHARACTER

THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE

Brecht's characters are constructed as types – they represent the characters' social and political function in society. The relationships between characters serve to highlight their social and political positions and also the differences.

Characters are over-simplified and represent a social group rather than having individual importance. Brecht is concerned with social relationships and the actions of characters in a given situation, not with personal, psychological motivation. Action does not exist to display character, but characters exist to demonstrate social action.

Characters are also representative of a social group and not important as individuals. Many thus have names which highlight their social position, e.g. 'Beggars and Petitioners', 'Soldier', 'Monk', 'Corporal', 'Grand Duke'.

This ties up with the Marxist concept of the group being more important than the individual.

The behaviour of a character is presented as a result of, and determined by their social, political and economic situations and not as a result of psychological motivation, e.g. Grusha who starts sweeping in the caravansary.

Brecht sympathised with the underdog; he felt an allegiance with the workers, his leading characters tend to be shabby and down-to-earth. They are flawed, yet human and essentially 'good'.

Those characters who come from a slightly higher social grade or who have been given a position of power by a corrupt system are vulgar, arrogant, self-serving, inhumane and objectionable. He aligns his audience with the underdog and detracts from engaging with

any degree of sympathy with those characters who represent the ills of society associated with capitalism and fascism.

Candidates must discuss specific characters from the play in connection with the above.

FUGARD'S CHARACTERS [OVER-ARCHING]

Athol Fugard's plays satisfy a major criterion of good drama: the creation of vivid, lifelike characters. His characterisation is immature in his early plays, *No-Good Friday* and *Nongogo*—with their black-ghetto gangsters, hustlers, musicians, whores, pimps, dreamers, and even a white priest—but these stereotypes foreshadow such fully developed characters in the 1960's plays as the half-brothers in *The Blood Knot*, the landlady in *People Are Living There*, the siblings in *Hello and Goodbye*, and the destitute couple, Boesman and Lena, in the play of that title. In the 1970's, Fugard created such powerful characters as the miscegenational lovers in *Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act*, the urban and country blacks in *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead*, the prisoners in *The Island*, and the isolated Anglo-Afrikaner couple and their "coloured" friend in *A Lesson from Aloes*. In his later plays, Fugard presents two black waiters and a teenage schoolboy ("*MASTER HAROLD*" ... *and the Boys*) and an elderly, reclusive sculptor, her young friend, and a local pastor (*The Road to Mecca*). Fugard's characters, who seem so specific and concrete as to personify South Africa, are at the same time universal in their humanity.

Most of these characters do little or nothing except validate their existence through words that cry out to be heard. Their language ranges from the harshly naturalistic to the eloquently poetic; their rhythms are acutely South African, yet they cross linguistic barriers. Fugard's *Notebooks, 1960-1977* records the South African images from which his plays come: two brothers in a shack; a landlady who stays in her nightclothes for a whole day; a woman arriving with a suitcase and a man on crutches; a couple with their worldly possessions on their backs; six police photographs of two naked lovers; a self-confident black man with a cigarette in one hand, a pipe in the other; two prisoners putting sand into wheelbarrows; and a lonely man studying an aloe plant. Programme notes for "*MASTER HAROLD*" ... *and the Boys* and *The Road to Mecca* provide images of ballroom dancing and a magical room of light and colour. From such images, Fugard has crafted works of art as solid as steel, as fragile as china. Sturdy yet delicate, his plays wear well—the ultimate tribute to a master artist.

People are Living There

The characters end where they began after having been forced to reveal and face their secrets. Don, Shorty and especially Milly achieve greater awareness, but fail to find any path to happiness. Milly's party is an exercise in futility – an attempt at constructing a forced happiness. Yet all three characters have potential: Milly has passion and spunk; Don is young and bright; Shorty has an innate goodness of heart.

Milly – Desperately wants there to a raging party going on, complete with roaring laughter and cheap paper party hats, when her ex-lover returns but instead she begins to reflect on her fifty years of life and truths about her become apparent. She asks existential questions: "Why? Why me? Why this?" She must accept her fate, but she at least can control her attitude.

Don – Is a victim of his own ineptitude; a cynical intellectual who can only validate himself by quoting other people's wisdom and can't seem to do anything to become the intellectual giant he wants to be. Don is terrified of being happy. He even refuses to admit that he can enjoy a singalong even though we see him tapping his toe. He withholds hope. He is a self-styled intellectual.

Shorty – Is also a victim of his own ineptitude; a gentle simpleton who is training to be a boxer yet can't seem to stand up to his wife Sissy or anyone else for that matter. Shorty is in search of happiness in all the wrong places—the boxing ring, his mean-spirited wife, and friends who don't respect him—but he's too dim to realise it. He is slow, but generous and good-hearted and sees the good in others. He is the most generous of all the characters – the one thing that binds these three characters together is their fear of being alone.

Sissy – Selfish, self-obsessed and cruel. Insecure [she cannot confront Milly], yet she dominates Shorty.

Hello and Goodbye

Hester – She is childless, which allows Fugard to focus on the essentials of her life and her consciousness. She absurdly pursues a struggle for non-existent treasure. Although she is South African, Hester is typical of most battered women, who spend their whole lives being emotionally and physically battered. Fugard has her reveal the barrenness of her life when she unpacks her suitcase and has very few worldly possessions; she is a displaced person who has nowhere to call home. She thrives on hate. She is really seeking the love her father never gave her. She is looking for her past and clues that could help her re-write it the way she wanted it to be, but instead she learns truths about herself. Hester's return teaches her that she is strong enough to make her own life from here on. Ultimately, she reveals courage and is accepting of change, including her age. Her attack on Johnnie is a catharsis; it purges her hate and enables her to feel pity, but also allows the realisation that ultimately, she is responsible for the outcome of her life. Hester makes an existential choice by refusing Johnnie's cruel dare to kill herself. She does the opposite, embracing life in all its reality and fullness. She will live; she has suffered and that suffering has defined her.

Johnnie – Sacrifices his own life as a human being to a ghost. Retreats into self-made Christian myths, which he invokes throughout the play. He is a liar who depicts himself as easy-going, but he's the soul of passivity in contrast to the active Hester. He has nothing to cling to, but the house and the past. He has always been too frightened to leave, to embrace an alternative life free from the metaphorical crutches that bind him to both. His merging of his identity with that of his father grows throughout the play. The final tragedy comes in his externalising his dependency on his father by taking up his crutches for good. By appropriating his father, Johnnie lets his father appropriate him. He articulates his own personal existential problem: "Why not? It solves problems. Let's face it – a man on his own two legs is a shaky proposition"; he is afraid to be himself as nothing might be there. He affirms this fact finally by taking on another identity.

The Road to Mecca

The story of the play is the story of the friendship and the differences in the characters of Elsa and Helen. It is the nature of this friendship that drives the plot forward. The almost aggressively active Elsa provokes a seemingly passive Helen to explain why she feels as she does. Through trying to explain their motivations to each other they achieve a greater understanding of their own actions as well as those of their friend.

Helen's friend, Marius, is an added catalyst introduced at the very end of the first act to give another perspective. Elsa and Helen are both oppressed by their environments. They are both white South Africans: Elsa from the liberal city, and Helen from the conservative Afrikaner society. The working title for "The Road to Mecca" was "My English Name is Patience".

The character of Patience is a black African woman who is only referred to and never

appears. Neither does Katrina, Helen's young coloured friend from the village. Although all three onstage characters are white, the oppression of a society divided along lines of race is one of the pressures on the characters. The subject of a play is the supporting frame of the ideas. By emotionally involving us in well-drawn characters we are interested in the dilemmas the playwright imposes on them.

Marius - He is full of ideas of how to help people. For example, Helen recalls that after someone applied to open a bottle store, he gave a sermon "all about the evils of alcohol and how it's ruining the health and lives of our colored folk." Elsa inquires, "Has anybody bothered to ask the colored people what they think about it all?" Fugard acknowledged that his Calvinist psyche drove the creation of many of his plays and surfaced consistently in such characters as the dominie, the Afrikaans minister, a character so crucial to the development of *The Road to Mecca*. Those dominie characters are truly the personification of the Calvinist element in Fugard's persona. But the rigorous fundamentalism of Bible punchers has always been offset by the lyrical and visionary components of his plays. Fugard knows how to dream properly.

Helen – Her art and her struggle to make it is a metaphor for women's struggle for self-expression and self-fulfilment in a society that sanctions conformity as well as control by the powerful of the powerless.

Elsa – Practical and modern. She calls Helen a "reactionary-revolutionary", but she herself is a revolutionary who is about to lose her job because she teaches her students that they have a right to equality and fairness. She risked her job, she risked an abortion. She cares deeply for Helen, enough to drive a considerable distance to respond to her existential call for help. But ultimately she is dedicated to what she believes is right. She reacts quickly to things, is volatile and impulsive, and needs to learn patience. Her major crisis in the play, apart from her temporary loss of trust in Helen, is coming to terms with her abortion.

Victory

Both Vicky and Freddie are facing hopeless futures, exacerbated by how young they are. All three characters have given up hope.

Freddie – Seems to be offering Vicky a way out of her situation. He has a criminal record and is headed for a life of crime, seen in his desire to join one of the gangs in Cape Town and his boasts that his record should secure him a place. He abandons Vicky when he sees that she has become a liability. There seems to be little hope for him. He is a victim of the socio-political situation of the time and it is clear that circumstance has both brutalised and dehumanised him.

Vicky – Is a young coloured girl from Pienaarsig who gets in over her head. Her warm and intimate relationship with her mother has been replaced with the drunken and abusive relationship with her father since her mother's death. Her home life has become intolerable and her future bleak. Her relationship with Freddie is her attempt to break free from this situation, but inevitably, it leads her to a state of despair. Perhaps she can gain something from the truths she is forced to face by the end of the play, which could possibly result in reconciliation.

Lionel – Fugard describes him as "living what is left of his life on automatic pilot". He has lost his wife, but instead of drinking like Vicky's father, he sinks into despair. He withdraws into depression. That may be the reason he never answered the door when Vicky was knocking; something he regrets, but tries to redeem by the end of the play when he offers her a way out. His death is a dreadful accident, but perhaps there is a semblance of self-realisation before he dies.

[30 MARKS: CONTENT OF ESSAY + 10 MARKS: STRUCTURE OF ESSAY]**CONTENT RUBRIC**

MARK	/40	/30	
A+ 90%+	36	27	Brilliant, shows clear insight. Uses appropriate academic register. Argument/discussion leads to a conclusion (not loose/unrelated statements). Justifies answer with appropriate reference to the text with examples from the play(s) (relations among the dramatic principles are recognised). Relates answer to the given argument (answer is purpose-driven and not regurgitation). Clear understanding of the work.
A 80%+	32	24	Excellent but not brilliant. Uses appropriate academic register. Argument/discussion leads to a conclusion but not as tightly structured as an A+. Justifies answer with appropriate reference to the text with examples from the plays. Relates answer to the given argument/discussion (answer is purpose-driven and not regurgitation). Clear understanding of the work.
B 70%+	28	21	A good essay. Uses appropriate academic register. Relates answer to the given argument/discussion (answer is purpose-driven and not regurgitation). Unbalanced focus in discussing the aspects/elements of the essay (some aspects get more focus than others). Justifies answer with appropriate reference to the text with examples from the plays. Understands the work.
C 60%+	24	18	An average essay. Relates answer to the given argument/discussion, but does not develop this. Unbalanced focus in discussing the aspects/elements of the essay (some aspects get more focus than others). Justifies answer with reference to the plot. Understands the work.
D 50%+	20	15	Relates answer to the given argument/discussion, but is flawed and/or unsubstantiated. Unbalanced focus in discussing the aspects/elements of the essay (some aspects get more focus than others). Justifies answer with reference to the plot. Fairly good knowledge of the work.
E 40+	16	12	Understands and attempts the topic, but argument/discussion is flawed and/or unsubstantiated. Waffle, generalisations and regurgitation of knowledge without relating it to the question. Justifies answer with reference to the plot.
F 30+	12	9	Focus only on one play or one aspect of the question. Discussion of elements is very thin. Expression poor, little structure. Knowledge weak.
FF 20+	8	6	Weak. Poor understanding of plays and content. Focus only on one play or one aspect of the question. Expression poor, little structure.
G 10+	4	3	Worse than FF. Little knowledge, no argument. Expression poor, no structure. No attempt to answer the question.
H 0+	0	0	Hopeless. Answer does not relate to the question. No or very little attempt to answer the question.

STRUCTURE RUBRIC

CRITERIA	10–9	8–7	6–5	4–3	2–0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction and Conclusion 	<p>Erudite introduction that shows the learner understands the topic/question, focuses on the topic/question, sets up the argument/discussion clearly and specifically, and adopts a clear stance/position relative to the topic/question. The conclusion is excellent, reflecting a clear distillation of the argument/discussion within the body of the essay.</p>	<p>A competent introduction. There is evidence that the topic/question is understood and an argument/discussion focused on the topic/question has been stated. The conclusion is clearly stated and shows a good understanding of the central argument/discussion within the body of the essay.</p>	<p>The introduction attempts to focus on the topic/question and set up an argument/discussion. The conclusion attempts to distil the argument/discussion within the body of the essay, but is fairly woolly and vague.</p>	<p>The introduction is simply a repetition of the topic/question. There is no attempt to establish the focus of the argument/discussion. The conclusion does not really accurately distil the argument/discussion within the body of the essay.</p>	<p>The introduction is absent or vague, unfocused and/or inaccurate. The conclusion is absent or vague, unfocused and/or inaccurate OR it is simply a repetition of the introduction.</p> <p>THE CANDIDATE HAS FAILED TO WRITE AN ESSAY.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of argument and/or discussion 	<p>Linking is solid. The argument/discussion is developed fully.</p>	<p>The argument/discussion is well-developed and there is an attempt at linking.</p>	<p>No linking evident. The argument/discussion is fairly well-developed.</p>	<p>No linking. There is a fragmented argument/discussion presented.</p>	<p>The arrangement of the essay is not cohesive and there is thus very little to no development of an argument/discussion.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paragraphing 	<p>Paragraphing is outstanding. A clear analytical statement, linked to the topic/question, is followed by solid analysis and support.</p>	<p>Paragraphing is pleasing. Most paragraphs are initiated with an analytical statement, which is explained and supported quite well.</p>	<p>Paragraphing is adequate only. Opening statements are not always clear and focused on one idea. There is an attempt to explain and support, but it is often quite vague.</p>	<p>Paragraphing is poor. Often, statements are made that are either vague/unfocused. There is very little analysis and clear, pertinent explanation and support.</p>	<p>Paragraphing is very weak. Inability to focus on a single idea and explain and support it. Jumbled statements are presented with little or no explanation.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referencing of the two plays 	<p>Excellent referencing – pertinent and accurate.</p>	<p>Referencing is competent, but not always present.</p>	<p>Referencing is fairly sporadic.</p>	<p>Referencing is sporadic and is not always accurate or relevant.</p>	<p>Very little referencing to the two plays. Inaccuracies.</p>

Total: 150 marks