Your notes

GCSE Drama: revision notes

Studying a set play

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Studying the set play

- (AQA) In Section B of the Understanding drama paper, you answer questions on one **set play** from AQA's list (check which one your school studies).
- (Eduqas) Section A of Component 3, Interpreting theatre, is on one set text (45 marks): a series of questions on an extract printed in the paper (30 marks), then one question on the whole play (15 marks).
- (Eduqas) The set texts are Macbeth, An Inspector Calls, Find Me, Noughts & Crosses, Refugee Boy, I Love You Mum – I Promise I Won't Die and The IT. Your school chooses one.
- (Eduqas) You take a clean copy of the play into the exam, with no notes written in it, to help with the question on the whole play.
- Questions ask how you would perform a character, how you would design for the play, and how the **context** affects a production.
- (Eduqas) You can also be asked how you would direct a scene: the style, the use of the stage space and the relationship with the audience.

What to know

- The plot, characters and relationships, **themes** and **key moments**.
- The **context**: when and where it is set, when it was written, and the social, cultural and historical background.
- The playwright's **stage directions** and what they suggest about staging.
- The genre and style, and how the play could be staged.

Answering questions well

- As a performer, name specific vocal and physical skills, apply them to specific lines or moments, and explain the effect on the audience.
- As a designer, describe exact choices (colours, materials, lantern types, sound effects) and explain how they support the action and **context**.

- Use drama vocabulary accurately, and keep linking back to the play and the audience.

Key terms

Set play	The play studied for the written exam.
Context	The social, cultural and historical background of a play.
Stage directions	The playwright's instructions about staging and performance.
Theme	A central idea explored in a play.
Key moment	An important point in the play's action.
Interpretation	A particular way of performing or staging a play.

Quick questions

Cover the answers and test yourself: remembering is what makes it stick.

1. (AQA) Which section of the exam is on the set play?
2. (Eduqas) Which part of the Interpreting theatre exam is on your set text?
3. (Eduqas) What can you take into the Interpreting theatre exam?
4. (Eduqas) How many marks is Section A, on the set text, worth?
5. (Eduqas) Which of these is one of the Eduqas set texts?
6. What does context mean?
7. What are stage directions?
8. How should you answer a performance question on the set play?

Answers

1. Section B
2. Section A
3. A clean copy of your set text, with no notes in it
4. 45
5. An Inspector Calls
6. The social, cultural and historical background of a play
7. The playwright's instructions about staging and performance
8. Name specific skills, apply them to lines, and explain the effect

What to do next

Practise 14 questions on this topic

Try 5 exam questions, with mark schemes

Read the lesson, one step at a time

Free revision for GCSE and KS3 at lycolearn.co.uk. Some notes are for one exam board only, and say so in brackets.

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