Drama Exam Revision and Support

1. Open the booklet and find the questions relating to the extract on DNA.
2. Scan the whole extract carefully. Highlight stage directions.
3. Read the question. Make a note of the CONTEXT of this extract in the play and as a text.
4. Use QUOTES to support your ideas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time (min)</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Duration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>Find the correct extract and read it carefully. Open the question paper and read the questions relating to DNA.</td>
<td>5 mins</td>
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</table>
| 0.05      | Section A -DNA  
Answer Q (a) (i)  
4 marks          | 5 mins   |
| 0.10      | Answer Q (a) (ii)  
6 marks          | 8 mins   |
| 0.18      | Answer Q (b) (i)  
9 marks          | 12 mins  |
| 0.30      | Answer Q (b) (ii)  
12 marks         | 15 mins  |
| 0.45      | Answer Q (c)  
14 marks         | 20 mins  |
| 1.05      | Section B – live theatre evaluation  
Answer Q (9a)  
6 marks          | 8 mins   |
| 1.13      | Answer Q (9b)  
9 marks          | 12 mins  |
| 1.25      | Check all answers                               | 5 mins   |
| 1.30      | End of exam                                    |          |
Section A (a) (i) –

4 marks – Spend 5 mins answering the question

Q. A (a) (i) It could be about either Vocal Skills or Physical Skills

You are going to play John Tate. Explain two ways you would use vocal skills/physical skills to play this character in this extract. (4 marks)

Sample answer:
I would use a rising tone of voice over the two lines, to indicate my growing frustration with the other characters. Linked to this, I would add a slight pause after the question ‘Honestly’ and before ‘It’s boring’ to show I am asking a rhetorical question and provoking him further into the argument.

TOP TIP
State the two vocal/physical skills – then justify your choices.

To decide which vocal/physical skills would be the most appropriate – consider:

• Context of the scene
• Who the character is
• Where the extract falls within the whole play
• What has already happened

NOW TRY THIS:
Choose one character from your performance text and choose one scene in which that character appears. Explain two ways you could use either vocal or physical skills to play the character in this scene. (4 marks)
Question (a) (ii)

6 marks = Spend 8 mins answering the question.

- Give three suggestions of how you would use performances skills to portray the character the extract given. For each example:
  - Indicate which performance skill you would use
  - JUSTIFY your answers, giving clear reasons.

You are going to play Jan. She is nervous and yet slightly braver and more curious than some of the other characters in this extract. As a performer, give three suggestions of how you would use performance skills to show her growing curiosity from the start of this extract. You must provide a reason for each suggestion.

Model answer

To show that Jan is a little braver that the other girls, I would take a small, hesitant step forward to indicate that I am still unsure but are curious to find out what Mr Banks has planned for us with the bicycle. As I try to get on the bike, I would fail to get my leg over

TOP TIPS

- You must reference physical and vocal skills.
- Include reference to stage directions in the extract.
- Consider the relationship between the characters – how do they behave towards one another....?

NOW TRY THIS:

Choose one character from DNA and one scene that they appear in. As a performer, give three suggestions of how you would use performance skills to convey your chosen character’s intentions to an audience in this extract.

You must provide a reason for each suggestion. (6 marks)

Question (b) (i) Costume/staging/propsstage furniture/set/lightingsound

This question asks you about specific choices in the extract for a director. You need to discuss how you would one particular production element to bring the extract to life. You will be given a choice of three of these production elements: Costume/staging/propsstage furniture/set/lightingsound
Costume: What is the context within the wider play? Are there symbolic aspects within the other production elements that can be reflected in the costume? What practical considerations are there for the actor wearing the costume?

Staging: Refer to entrances and exits – what impact will this have on the action on stage? Show awareness of audience – where are they in relation to the stage? What sightlines are available? Will the audience space be used as part of the performance? Will your production be minimalist i.e. free for actors to work in. Levels – what represent? Blocks to show status/location?

Props/stage furniture: Refer to the time play set. Check props are appropriate to context – i.e. mobile phones, etc. Refer to items that indicate the location – i.e. the woods, the field, crisp packets.

- Set
- Lighting
- Sound

Example question:

As a director, discuss how you would use one of the production elements below to bring this extract to life for your audience. You should make reference to the context in which the text was created and performed. Choose one of the following. (9 marks)

- Costume
- Staging
- Props/Stage furniture

MODEL ANSWER

As a director, I would want my audience to understand there are two different locations in this scene – the field and the wood. I would also use the lighting to symbolise the darkening mood as the characters enter the wood. For the field I would therefore use yellow and orange gels at quite a high light level. In contrast, I would use a combination of dark and light greens for the wood. I would add a pale yellow gobo of a speckled pattern to represent the sun shining through the trees. I would direct a broad wash of greens and blues, mixed with some yellow for the wood, to represent emotions. For example, the fear of some characters could be symbolised with green, and blue could highlight how others are going along with the situation. A narrow, hard edged spotlight on Leah and Phil would symbolise the intense pressure that Leah putting Phil under: For the second part of the scene, I would then use a smooth fade to move the focus to the other part of the stage.

TOP TIPS

- Refer to the audience
- Use drama specific technical vocabulary
- Provide reasons for your decisions
Now try this

Choose a character from an extract from your performance text. As a director, discuss how you would use costume to bring this extract to life for your audience.

You should make reference to the context in which the text was created and performed. (9 marks)
Section B

In Section B of the exam, you will have to answer two questions based on a single performance you have seen. Remember, both answers must be about the same performance.

Navigating the exam paper.

Section B questions will focus on the contributions of performers and designers.

There are two questions in Section B

Section B question A is worth 6 marks and asks you to analyse an aspect of the performance you have seen.

Section B question B is worth 9 marks, and asks you to evaluate a different aspects from the same performance.

You can take live theatre evaluation notes into the exam, up to 500 words.

Analyse and evaluate

The questions in section B will ask you to analyse or evaluate the live performance that you have seen. You need to make sure you understand the difference between analyse and evaluate.

ANALYSIS – picking out key skills or ideas and being able to say how the performer or designers explored these.

EVALUATION: is when you form a judgement about whether an idea or performance element has worked or not, giving effective supporting evidence.

Worked example

Jonny Lee Miller as The Creature successfully use performance skills, including animated facial expressions and a twisted physicality, to show the creature’s animal characteristics. The lighting used at this moment was particularly strong, as it used a powerful LED spotlight above the performers to highlight the struggle between Frankenstein and The Creature effectively.
Section B questions

It is important that you are familiar with the type and style of the questions you will face in Section B, and that you think carefully about to prepare for this part of the exam.

Planning checklist

To prepare well for the exam, make sure that you

Build up a good bank of relevant drama vocabulary and terminology that you can draw on in the exam.

Understand the different between answering an ‘analyse’ questions and answering an ‘evaluate’ question.

Research the play you have seen: (BLOOD BROTHERS) take careful notes of the style of performance or design approach used.

Prepare detailed and relevant notes to take into the exam.

Tackling Section B questions

When answering both Section B questions – provide a balanced answer for both evaluation and analysis

Respond to the elements mentioned in the question (for example in the sample questions below, the elements are stage space and lighting.)

Provide supporting examples that are detailed and well developed (this is when your notes come in handy).

Use the drama vocabulary and terminology that you have learned throughout the course.

Worked example:

Analyse how stage space was use to engage the audience during the closing moments of the performance (6 marks).

Evaluate how lighting was used at different moments of the performance to create impact for the audience. (9 marks)

NOW TRY THIS - Apply one of the questions above to the live performance of Blood Brothers that you have seen.
**Question 9 (a) Performance**

In Section B of the exam, you will have to answer questions about the live performance you have seen. Question 9 (a) will ask you to analyse how an element of the performance or design was used to engage the audience. On this page, the focus is on performance.

**Answering the question**

Question 9 (a) is worth 6 marks, so you aim to spend about 8 minutes on this question. This allows you 12 minutes for Question 9 (b) – which is worth 9 marks.

In your answer to this question, you will to analyse an element of performance. When analysing a performance:

Pick out different elements used by the performer to engage the audience.

Give specific examples of the effect these elements have on the audience.

Use appropriate vocabulary and drama terminology.

**Worked example – QUESTION 9 (a) PERFORMANCE**

Analyse how the movement was use to engage the audience during the opening moments of the performance. (6 marks)

**Sample extract**

The opening scene of the National Theatre’s 2011 production of Frankenstein showed the birth of Frankenstein’s Creature. In his role as The Creature, Jonny Lee Miller used striking body language and large, exaggerated gestures, as he crawled out of the womb-like structure. The movement was uncontrolled and quick, which immediately engaged the audience in the action. Miller’s facial expressions helped to show The Creature’s animal like nature: The Creature’s expressions were larger than life and almost unnatural, which meant that the audience was fully engaged with the character, and keen to see what might happen next. At this point, The Creature’s movements were more focused and more carefully controlled, and required strong physical skills from the performer. When Miller looked out towards the audience, The Creature’s facial expressions were very clear, bringing the character to life for the audience.

**TOP TIPS – EFFECTive TECHNIQUES ENGAGE AUDIENCE**

Focus on the question *specific effects* – movement, effect, audience.

Focus on *audience reaction and engagement*.

Comment on how the performance helped to engage the audience.
NOW TRY THIS

Using a live theatre performance you have seen (Blood Brothers)

Analyse how physical skills were used to engage the audience at a key moment (6 marks).

Question 9 (a) DESIGN

Question 9 (a) will ask you to analyse how an element of the performance or design was used to engage the audience. Here, the focus is on DESIGN.

Answering the question:

Questions 9(a) is worth 6 marks, so you should aim to spend about 8 mins on the question. This allows you 12 minutes for Question 9 (b), which is worth 9 marks.

In your answer to this question, you will need to analyse an element of design. When you are analysing a performance:

Pick out different elements used by the designer to engage the audience.

Give specific examples of the effect these elements have on the audience.

Use appropriate vocabulary and drama terminology.

Worked example

Analyse how lighting was used to engage the audience during a key moment of the performance (6 marks).

Sample answer

A key moment where lighting was used by the designer was when Frankenstein and the Creature came face to face. Here, the designer used various different types of lamp and a range of lighting effects to create atmosphere and engage the attention of the audience. The LED strip lighting effect used at this moment blended with the smoke on the screen to give a sense of depth to the space, making the space seem large than it actually was. Side lighting was used to throw a shadow off both Frankenstein and the Creature. This added to the mystery — combined with the cold way in which Frankenstein examined The Creature’s boy, added another level to the scene.

TOP TIPS — Design effect – techniques – audience – appropriate key moment – engage
Design questions will focus on the following – set, costume, sound and lighting.

Make it clear what moment in the play you are analysing and comment on the range of lighting effects and techniques used at the point in the performance.

Comment on how the stage design has helped to engage the audience. Here, the student gives details of the atmosphere created by the lighting.

NOW TRY THIS:

Referring to Blood Brothers - Analyse how sound was used to engage the audience during a key moment of the performance (6 marks).
You will need to have notes on the following aspects of your live performance.

Exam materials

500 word handwritten notes on the following:

Performer’s use of voice, movement, performance style and space / staging, including notes on performers in specific roles.

Design considerations, including the use of costume, set, lighting and sound

Director’s concept / interpretation and the chosen performance style –

Impact on the audience, including specifically, on the student, and how this was achieved

Use of the theatre space

How ideas were communicated during the performance

Sketches, drawings, and diagrams.

**How to prepare for Section B**

Watch the performance closely –

Start a technical vocabulary book – make notes on different aspects of ‘Performance’ and ‘Design’

**TOP TIPS**

Prepare detailed and well structured notes you can access easily in the exam.

Build up a bank of appropriate vocabulary and drama terminology over the course of the GCSE

Be clear about the difference between analysis and evaluation.