



NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION  
NOVEMBER 2023

**DRAMATIC ARTS**  
**MARKING GUIDELINES**

Time: 3 hours

120 marks

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**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.**

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**SECTION A 20TH CENTURY THEATRE MOVEMENTS – ABSURD THEATRE****QUESTION 1 PLAYS IN CONTEXT**

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

- *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett OR
- *Rhinoceros* by Eugene Ionesco OR
- *The Maids* by Jean Genet

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

**1.1 Candidates should provide 4 valid points. Markers must accept any valid points and award 1 mark per point. Below is a guide of possible answers.**

- The two world wars in the 20th century raised doubts about humankind's ability to react rationally.
- The wars, particularly the Second World War, led to the destruction of people's homes, millions of deaths, the horrors of the concentration camps and the Holocaust.
- WWII also led to the atomic bomb and the bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. These horrors showed people how mankind was out of harmony with the environment, his fellow man and himself.
- There was moral and religious disillusionment as well as disappointment with scientific progress as it brought such devastation. People began to question the validity of reason.
- The wars exposed the insignificance of life. Playwrights wanted to express their sense of incomprehension and despair at the lack of cohesion and meaning in the world. They wished to reflect a world gone wrong and a disintegrating society.
- Their intentions were to reveal the human condition: man's loneliness and search for meaning in a meaningless world.
- During this time, the Existential Philosophy was proposed by a number of philosophers – most notably, Sartre, Camus and Nietzsche.

**1.2 Candidates should provide 4 valid points. Markers must accept any valid points and award 1 mark per point. Below is a guide of possible answers.**

- Existentialism proposes that life is meaningless – mankind is adrift in a hostile world, with no purpose.
- Man's problem is to find his own way in a world of chaos.
- Man is 'out of harmony' with the world and reason itself.
- Man is cut off from his fellow human beings because traditional/conventional communication is ineffective.
- The philosophy of Existentialism questions the nature of our existence and asks: what does it mean 'to exist'?
- Other beliefs include that man is a lonely creature of anxiety and suffers until he makes a critical choice about his future course of action; that life is futile and repetitive and one long wait till death.

- The human condition is represented by the myth of Sisyphus. In his daily life, man performs futile activities, without hope of success. Even though these repetitive tasks seem purposeless, man assigns meaning to them, thereby defiantly meeting his fate.
- Freedom and identity will only be achieved when one recognises one's suffering.

(4)

**1.3 Markers must view responses globally and should accept any valid, justified answer. What follows below is simply a guide.**

**Note: The division of marks awarded to the content expressed must be fluid. Some candidates might give two examples and develop them in much detail OR they might give three examples with a simple explanation for each.**

Candidate provides 3 accurate examples from the play.
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Candidate accurately links each example to an existential concept.
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***Waiting For Godot***

The play portrays life as a meaningless and absurd experience where the characters are trapped in a cycle of waiting without any real purpose. This is exemplified in the opening lines of the play when Vladimir says, 'Nothing to be done.' This phrase is repeated several times throughout the play, emphasising the characters' sense of futility.

The play explores the idea that life has no inherent meaning and that we must create our own meaning through our actions. The characters are constantly searching for meaning and purpose, but they are unable to find it. This can be seen in the character of Pozzo who is obsessed with power and control, but ultimately realises that his life is fleeting and meaningless.

The play also reflects the human condition and the idea that we are alone in the world. The characters in the play are isolated and disconnected from each other, and they are unable to form meaningful relationships. Estragon and Vladimir constantly quibble about whether or not they should part.

***Rhinoceros***

The play reveals life as an absurd and chaotic experience where the characters are confronted with the transformation of people into rhinoceroses. Berenger is the only one who resists the transformation and tries to hold on to his humanity.

The play reveals that the human condition involves mankind feeling isolated and alone. All the characters are disconnected from each other, specifically Berenger who is constantly trying to find a sense of belonging.

The existential idea that we are free to make our own choices is evident in the play where the characters are free to transform into rhinoceroses but they do so without any real understanding of why or what it means. Jean, for instance, chooses to become a rhinoceros in order to conform to societal expectations.

***The Maids***

The play reflects the idea that identity is fluid and that it is constructed through our actions and interactions with others. The characters, Claire and Solange,

are constantly changing their identities as they act out their fantasies of being their mistress, particularly when they dress up in her clothes and play out a scene of domination and submission.

The play also portrays the idea that life has no inherent meaning and that we must create our own meaning through our actions. When Solange says, 'Life is a prison and we are the prisoners', the characters' sense of entrapment is highlighted.

The play also explores the idea that we are free to make our own choices, but that our choices are ultimately meaningless. The characters in the play are free to leave their jobs as maids, but they choose to stay and act out their fantasies. This is exemplified in the scene where they plan to murder their mistress, but ultimately do not follow through with the plan.

**1.4. 1.4.1 Candidates should provide 4 valid conventions. Markers must accept any valid conventions and award 1 mark per convention. Below is a guide of possible answers.**

- **HYPER CONCENTRATION / FOCUS:** actors need to remain intensely focused, reacting immediately to cues, and concentrating on action. This focused energy becomes part of the acting style.
- **INTENSITY IN EACH MOVEMENT:** actors do not sit passively but there is an intensity to every moment on stage.
- **INFLUENCES OF OTHER STYLES:** Absurd Theatre draws on techniques from Music Hall / Vaudeville and Melodrama, which requires enormous energy and a sense of absurdity.
- **PLAYING IN PAIRS:** symbolic in its use of status, and dominance / subservience, as well as interchangeability.
- **ROLE PLAY:** the characters' games represent a 'grotesque pantomime' highlighting the absurdity of the repetition and activities.
- **RITUAL GAMES:** despite a recognisable domesticity (the state of being domestic, home life, everyday actions) the characters use heightened and concentrated gestures to create a sense of role play in the ritualised game.
- **STYLISTED ACTION:** intends to show that characters are manipulated by social convention and, although the action is stylised, the characters seem to remain intensely human.
- **HEIGHTENED MOVEMENT:** refers to non-naturalistic movement, but rather heightened in its precision and clearly defined structure.

**1.4.2 Markers must view responses globally and should accept any valid example. What follows below is simply a guide.**

**Note: The division of marks awarded to the content expressed must be fluid.**

Candidate describes the moment accurately.
Candidate's example accurately reflects the convention.

***Waiting For Godot***

When Vladimir and Estragon engage in a slapstick routine involving their hats, elements of Vaudeville are evident. The scene uses physical comedy and a repetitive, rhythmic structure to create a humorous and absurd effect, similar to the comedy skits in vaudeville shows.

***Rhinoceros***

One example of hyper-concentration occurs when Berenger and Jean are in a heated debate over whether it is better to be a rhinoceros or a human. The action is heightened to an extreme degree to create a sense of intensity and urgency.

***The Maids***

When Solange and Claire clean and dust the room, they engage in a series of ritualistic movements and gestures, emphasising the repetitive and mechanical nature of their work as maids.

- 1.4.3 **Treat each response on its merits. This question is creative and must be marked accordingly. What follows is merely a guide. Examples must show an understanding of the performance convention and should include physical and vocal choices.**

***Waiting For Godot***

Estragon could chase Vladimir, limping around the stage in his attempt to get the hat back from Vladimir. He could also stuff the hat down his trousers in an attempt to prevent Vladimir from getting it back. Vocally, Estragon could grunt while exerting himself to emphasise the effort. He could also pant loudly to show his fatigue as a result of exerting himself.

***Rhinoceros***

As their argument becomes more intense, their movements become more exaggerated, so Berenger could almost fall over as he tries to make his point, losing his balance and attempting to regain it. Vocally, he would need to raise his volume and use an aggressive tone of voice in order to prove his point.

***The Maids***

Solange's movements must be exaggerated and stylised when she crawls on the floor to dust the room. Her gestures can be repeated over and over again to emphasise the ritualistic nature of them and to convey a sense of artificiality of her role as a maid. Vocally, she can express pain and exhaustion by whimpering as she cleans or by sighing loudly each time she finds a speck of dust.

- 1.5 1.5.1 **Markers must view responses globally. Treat each response on its merits. Below are simply some possible ideas.**

***Waiting For Godot***

The title refers to what the two main characters, Vladimir and Estragon, do during their time while waiting for Godot to arrive. The title sets the tone and highlights the main theme of the characters'

waiting and their existential crisis. It suggests a sense of anticipation and hope, but ultimately leads to a feeling of disappointment and futility, reflecting the overall absurdity of human existence.

### ***Rhinoceros***

The title refers to the transformation of the characters and the gradual loss of their humanity. The rhinoceroses represent conformity, brute strength and a loss of individuality. The title also reflects the play's critique of totalitarianism and the dangers of group thinking. The rhinoceroses represent a mass movement and the characters' transformation reflects the dangers of succumbing to group mentality. The rhinoceros is also a powerful and dangerous animal. It reflects the threat posed by the transformation of the characters.

### ***The Maids***

The play revolves around two maids, Claire and Solange, who engage in role-playing games. The title emphasises the subordinate position of the two characters and highlights the power dynamics at play. The term 'maid' is associated with domestic servitude, and the play explores issues of gender, class and power. The characters' position as maids limits their opportunities and places them in a position of subservience.

#### **1.5.2 Treat each response on its merits. This question is creative and must be marked accordingly.**

Candidate provides an appropriate alternative title.
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Candidate appropriately justifies their choice.
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#### **1.5.3 Treat each response on its merits and mark globally. This question is interpretive and must be marked accordingly. What follows is merely a guide.**

### ***Waiting For Godot***

The tree in the image is a symbol for the characters' existence. It is barren, lifeless and futile, much like the lives of Vladimir and Estragon who spend their time doing purposeless activities while waiting for Godot to arrive. The tree is a dominant feature in the poster, similarly it dominates the tramps' existence in the play as it is supposedly the spot at which they are to wait for Godot. The tree represents hope and expectation, but ultimately it is barren and provides no respite from the characters' bleak existence, hence there being no leaves on the tree in the poster. The tree also symbolises death, decay and futility which are recurring themes throughout the play. The fact that in the image the tree is a silhouette reinforces the notions of death and futility with its darkness. Vladimir and Estragon constantly contemplate suicide which would be a welcome end to their existence of meaningless waiting. Their mortality – a theme within the play – is reflected in the silhouette of the man hanging from the bough of the tree.

The vast emptiness of the landscape in the poster, with no clear boundaries or landmarks, represents the characters' sense of disorientation and confusion.

The orange, yellow and red colours represent the sun setting and, therefore, link to the theme of time passing. It is a reminder of the situation in which Vladimir and Estragon find themselves – waiting in a nondescript place until nightfall.

### ***Rhinoceros***

The loss of individuality and the dangers of conformity are themes portrayed through the poster. By emphasising the physical power and dominance of the rhinoceros, a sense of chaos and destruction is created. In the image, the rhinoceros is large and imposing, and appears to be destroying the window and wall through which it is barging. The effect is intimidating and enhances the feeling of being overwhelmed that the characters experience.

The rhinoceros is also a symbol of aggression. The transformation of the characters into rhinoceroses reflects the desire for power and the willingness to use violence to achieve it.

The size of the rhinoceros on the poster is intimidating and creates a nightmarish effect and this adds to the claustrophobic feeling experienced by the characters. The sense of confinement and entrapment created by the image (the rhinoceros is clearly attempting to escape a confined space) symbolises the idea that the characters are trapped in a world that is rapidly changing around them, with little hope of escape. It is also symbolic of the sense of helplessness and powerlessness that the characters experience as they confront the transforming world around them.

### ***The Maids***

*The Maids* explores themes of power, domination and oppression as well as the blurred lines between reality and illusion. One of the most prominent symbols in the image is the mirror, which is used to reflect the distorted reality of Claire and Solange. The mirror in the poster creates a sense of unease and instability, suggesting the maids' reality is not entirely real as the lady reflected in the mirror is not the same as the lady in front of it. The maids' constant role-playing indicates that they are unhappy in their positions and wish for a different life, but they tend to lose sight of what is real and what is not. The use of the mirror in the poster also represents the idea of identity and the way people perceive themselves.

In the poster, the woman is holding a teacup. The teacup is a powerful symbol that represents the class divide between the maids and Madame. The teacup is a symbol of refinement and sophistication and is associated with the world of the wealthy. It is also a recurring motif in the maids' fantasies, representing their desire to overthrow Madame and take her place in the world of refinement and luxury. Furthermore,

it represents power and control as Madame instructs the maids on how to properly serve tea, highlighting the power dynamic between the three characters.

The poster is quite busy. This can be interpreted as reflecting a sense of claustrophobia and imprisonment, highlighting the maids' sense of being trapped in their roles as servants.



**SECTION B SOUTH AFRICAN THEATRE (1960–1994)****QUESTION 2 PLAYS IN CONTEXT**

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

- *The Island* by John Kani, Winston Ntshona and Athol Fugard OR
- *You Strike the Woman, You Strike the Rock* by the Vusisiswe Players OR
- *Woza Albert!* by Percy Mtwa, Mbongeni Ngema and Barney Simon

**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 2.1.1 **Candidates should provide 3 valid intentions with examples to support their points. Markers must accept any valid intentions (general or specific to their selected text) and award 1 mark per intention and 1 mark per example. Below is a guide of possible answers.**

**General**

- The plays aim to create an awareness of sociopolitical problems.
- They highlight topical issues.
- They educate audiences on problems within society.
- They aim to affect some kind of social reform.
- The plays are intended to be hard-hitting.
- The playwrights intended for the audience to be emotionally connected to the characters so that they would be moved by what they witnessed and effect change.

***The Island***

- *The Island* engages us on many levels whilst at the same time confronting us with the horrors of apartheid.
- It aims to celebrate human empathy during cruelty.
- It confronts us with the existential crisis that we must all face, and makes us consider freedom, fate and political values and beliefs.
- It aims at highlighting the injustices of apartheid, but particularly the awful treatment of prisoners on Robben Island.
- It shines a light on the brutality and torture that prisoners experienced simply for standing up for those things that they believed to be morally just.

***You Strike***

- The intention of the play is to articulate the disempowerment of black women during apartheid and to provide a platform through which their stories can be witnessed and voiced.
- By articulating the struggle faced by black women, the playwrights wished to encourage the oppressed to stand up against the injustices of the time.
- The play aims to address gender concerns experienced by black women amid the fight against apartheid. Too often black women were sidelined, and their struggles were largely ignored. The play intended to highlight their plight and tell their stories.

- Through the play, the playwrights wished to celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Women's March to Pretoria and to reveal the strength of black women. They wished to show how women had agency and were capable of resistance if they worked together.

### ***Woza Albert!***

- The playwrights wanted to protest against the apartheid regime and the treatment of people of colour as a result of the National Party's laws.
- They aimed to protest against the pass laws, when we see how the policeman unfairly arrests the musician for not having his passbook up to date.
- They wanted to expose the human rights violations in prisons, which we see when the prisoners are expected to undergo a degrading body inspection.
- They wanted to highlight the poverty in which many people of colour lived – we see Auntie Dudu digging in bins for leftover food in order to feed her family because she is too old to work.
- They intended to protest against the exploitation of workers who were overworked and underpaid, through the Coronation Brickyard scene in which Zuluboy and Bobejaan are expected to make thousands of bricks for very little pay.
- They aimed to raise awareness of the lack of decent education when we see the little street meat vendor selling meat instead of being in school.

#### **2.1.2 (a) *The Island***

Humour provides relief from the intense emotional drama of the play which can be emotionally draining for both the performers and the audience. The themes in the play are heavy and the humour allows for moments of lightness. Humour is also used as a tool of resistance by the characters, John and Winston. They use humour to assert their agency and humanity in the face of the brutal prison regime. By making jokes about the prison authorities, they assert their autonomy and refuse to be dehumanised. Humour also builds empathy between the characters and the audience which allows for greater understanding.

#### ***You Strike***

In this play, humour provides a way of coping with the difficult and painful experiences that women of colour experienced in apartheid. The play deals with sensitive and emotive issues such as domestic violence, sexual harassment and discrimination. Humour provides a moment of relief and lightness, allowing the audience to engage with the issues in a less confronting way. Humour is also used as a tool of empowerment for women. The characters use humour to assert their strength and resilience in the face of adversity. By making jokes and mocking their oppressors, they challenge traditional gender roles and assert their agency.

Furthermore, humour builds solidarity and community among women. The play unites women across different backgrounds and experiences to create a shared sense of identity and purpose.

***Woza Albert!***

Humour is used to criticise the apartheid system and the absurdities and contradictions inherent in it. The play satirises the government's policies and the way they are enforced by the police and military. Through humour, the play exposes the inhumanity and injustice of the regime and challenges the audience to question it.

Humour is also used as a tool for resistance and empowerment. The characters use humour to subvert the system and assert their agency and dignity. By making fun of the authorities and the symbols of power, they show that they are not intimidated and refuse to be dehumanised. Humour becomes a means of protest and a way of expressing their frustration and anger.

- (b) **Markers must view responses globally and should accept any valid moment. What follows below is simply a guide.**

Candidate describes the moment accurately.
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Candidate's example is clearly humorous.
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- (c) **Treat each response on its personal merits. This question is creative and requires personal interpretation and must be marked accordingly.**

**Note: The division of marks awarded to the content expressed must be fluid. The allocation merely serves as a guide.**

Candidate makes appropriate staging choices.
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Candidate's staging choices effectively highlight the humour.
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- 2.1.3 **Markers must view responses globally. Candidates could focus on the play as a whole more than the excerpt. What follows below is simply a guide.**

**Note: The division of marks awarded to the content expressed must be fluid. The allocation merely serves as a guide.**

Candidate accurately references the review excerpt.
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Candidate accurately explains the play's relevance to 2023 using their knowledge of the play as a whole.
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Candidate uses appropriate examples from the play to support their points.
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Candidates should demonstrate their ability to grapple with the message of their play and its importance in our lives today. An

understanding of our current sociopolitical context must be demonstrated and candidates must make the links with the themes, intention and message of their selected play to our current context.

Candidates should reveal their understanding of the need to learn from the past in order not to repeat mistakes and to strive for a better future. They should recognise that the style of their play is such that the message is hard-hitting, evokes strong emotions in an audience and moves them to social reform.

## 2.2 2.2.1 Treat each response on its merits.

**Note: The division of marks awarded to the content expressed must be fluid. The allocation merely serves as a guide.**

Candidate accurately identifies how sound is produced in their selected play.
Candidate provides accurate examples of sound effects from their selected play.

Candidates should acknowledge that Protest Theatre uses Grotowskian Poor Theatre principles, which means that the actors are required to make any necessary sound effects using their own voices as it is an actor-centred approach. Recorded sound effects are not used. Some examples are below.

### ***The Island***

e.g., the sound of the siren, the sound of digging on the beach, Hodoshe's whistle, the sound of the wheelbarrow

### ***You Strike***

e.g., helicopter sounds, chicken sounds, the sound of a police siren, sound of the police van

### ***Woza Albert!***

e.g., the sound of helicopters, the sound of buzzing flies, the sound of the hairclippers, the sound of vehicles, the sound of the brick machine

## 2.2.2 Markers should look at responses holistically and give credit for well-substantiated points. What follows below are simply some suggestions.

### ***The Island***

*The Island* is a poignant play that explores themes of oppression, freedom and the human spirit. To appropriately capture the mood and message, the stage design and setting needs to be simple, stark and oppressive. The play is set in a prison cell on Robben Island, however, other locations such as the scene on the beach and the performance of *Antigone* are also required to be presented in the space, so the space needs to be bare and versatile. The cell is a cramped and sparse square space, with only two thin blankets and meagre belongings for John and Winston. On stage would be two blankets, the bucket and mugs. The limited stage space will indicate the

cramped quarters of the cell. The set pieces are largely also props that are multifunctional. The blankets are used not only as blankets but also as costume items and a backdrop for the performance of *Antigone*.

### ***You Strike***

A minimalist, symbolic and intimate stage design and set is required to capture the mood and message of the play. The play takes place near a taxi rank in a township marketplace. One could have a triangular sheet of black builder's plastic suspended from the ceiling with three hessian panels of different sizes hanging behind it, however, this is not compulsory. Rostra may be used in a U-shape to create levels. They and the floor would be painted brown to give off an earthy effect. Four battered paraffin drums are scattered around the set. Each character has her own drum. In addition, Mampompo has an enamel basin. Mambhele has two drums – one is covered with a wooden plank and the other is used to dip her chickens into.

### ***Woza Albert!***

To appropriately capture the mood and message of the play, a minimal, versatile and symbolic stage design and setting is required. The play has a wide range of settings, from the streets of Johannesburg to the mines, to Sun City. Other locations include Coronation Brickyard, the airport, the graveyard to name a few. Hence, the stage design should reflect this diversity. A simple, minimalist set design that can transform easily to reflect different settings would be appropriate. The moveable set pieces include the two tea chests that are rearranged to create the different locations. These tea chests are also versatile, functioning as train seats in one scene, a helicopter in another scene and gravestones in the final scene. The clothes rail not only holds the costume pieces, but also allows actors to change basic costume as they transition from one character to the next.

## **2.2.3 Markers should look at responses holistically and give credit for valid and accurate points. What follows below are simply some suggestions.**

### ***The Island***

John and Winston wear khaki shorts, have shaved heads and they are barefoot. They are made to look like schoolboys because it is one of the many ways in which the wardens belittle them and strip them of their identity and dignity – they are emasculated by this 'uniform'. When performing the play-within-the-play (*Antigone*), the prisoners make use of bits and pieces they have been collecting on the beach and in the quarry. Antigone's necklace is made of string and nails; she wears false breasts made from tin cans and a wig potentially from string collected at the jetty. Winston wears a blanket around his waist as a skirt. Creon, played by John, uses a blanket as a robe and wears a pendant and a makeshift crown. The costumes are purely functional and are simple, as per the nature of protest plays.

***You Strike***

The costumes are typical of women at a marketplace: an overall or a shweshwe print dress, and an apron. The play is often performed in traditional attire, such as brightly coloured (yet faded) dresses, headscarves and beads. All items need to look worn and a bit shabby. The costumes need to have an air of authenticity – remembering that the play depicts the lives of ordinary women.

The actresses play a variety of roles, they do not change costume; they transform into their role through their bodies and voices. The only additional piece of costume is a large brown hat for the Boer in Scene 7: The Farm.

***Woza Albert!***

Percy and Mbongeni wear grey tracksuit pants with running shoes. They are bare-chested. This basic costume is purely functional, allowing for the actors to change characters with ease. Around their necks is a piece of elastic, tied to which is a half squash ball, painted pink, which they wear as a clown's nose when they portray a white character. The characters have an array of costume articles hanging on the clothes rail which they use throughout the play. These include a policeman's cap, blankets over shoulders, a Cuban army cap (to play Fidel Castro), a dust coat to be used as a shawl for Auntie Dudu then as a barber's sheet for his customer and finally as a coat for Baas Kom, a coat for the old man and sunglasses for Patrick Alexander Smith. These simple and functional costume pieces are typical of Protest Plays.

**SECTION C SOUTH AFRICAN THEATRE/FILM (POST-1994)****QUESTION 3 (A) SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEMPORARY THEATRE (POST-1994)****THE ESSAY**

In this question, you may refer to ANY ONE of the following plays in your answer:

- *Tshepang* by Lara Foot Newton OR
- *Born Naked* by ZikkaZimba Productions and Hijinks Theatre OR
- *Little Red Riding Hood and the Big, Bad Metaphors* by Mike van Graan and the University of Pretoria Drama Department

This question interrogates the power of theatre in terms of addressing difficult societal issues and creating an awareness around those issues so that audiences can no longer claim ignorance about them. A solid understanding of how the sociopolitical context gave rise to the need to create their selected text is required. Specific societal ills directly connected to their selected play will need to be addressed. Candidates are required to identify the ways in which the technical/ staging style of the play they have studied enables the audience to digest the information more easily, thus broadening the audience's mind. Candidates are required to explain the nature of the audience's response and how the audience engages with the content.

The essay must be marked globally on its merits, but candidates must address all three bullet points.

**SOCIOPOLITICAL CONTEXT*****Tshepang***

- *Tshepang* was written in the early 2000s and is set in a small town in South Africa – Louisvaleweg.
- The play is based on the real-life incident of the rape and mutilation of a nine-month old baby girl.
- South Africa is a country in which gender-based violence and rape is rife.
- The sociopolitical context is shaped by the legacy of apartheid, the post-apartheid transition and the issues of violence and sexual abuse in contemporary South Africa.
- The cause and origin of the poverty and devastation of the characters in the play is apartheid, with its disastrous economic and familial consequences. These include:
  - Disadvantaged communities that were segregated by the Group Areas Act.
  - Children receiving second-rate education due to the Bantu Education Act.
  - The *dop* system, created by farmers who exploited their workers for their own economic gain by paying them in *vaa/wyn* as opposed to money – further increasing the dependence on alcohol by the impoverished.
  - No health care, employment opportunities, or housing available to people of colour.
- The repercussions of apartheid are embedded in the post-apartheid context. It is omnipresent; an awareness (or denial) which enveloped all South Africans and became an integral part of our internal psyche as well as our external world.
- The end of apartheid in the early 1990s marked a period of transition and change in South Africa, but the legacy of apartheid continued to shape the social, economic and political landscape of the country

**Reference to the play:**

- '*Nothing much happens here*' is a recurring verbal motif throughout *Tshepang*. It is ironic because the play explores how terrible things, such as infant rape, and women and child abuse, does happen in isolated and seemingly passive communities trapped by poverty, no education/employment prospects and social separation from the outside world.
- Little children experience violent sexual abuse from the earliest ages, and after the revelation in 2001 of what had happened to baby Tshepang, the 'scab was torn off the festering wound' and media story after media story began to reveal the appalling truth.
- The cycle of abuse is one thing Foot suggests is a result of the sociopolitical and economic context.
  - Simon tells us how men, just into puberty (measured by the number of pubic hairs they have), are initiated into sex by a local prostitute managed by her pimp. The charge for her services is small, the main part of which includes a comic book which she reads whilst the young man is having sex with her. If she finishes the comic book before he is satisfied she orders him off. But to satisfy the youths' final moments of desire, her pimp has conveniently placed a loaf of bread in a tree nearby. Simon adds wistfully that he '*preferred the half-loaf*' to the indifferent turning of the comic-book pages.
  - This debased initiation into sex, without a trace of love or reciprocation, quickly became associated with drunkenness and a growing sense of boredom. As Simon's Aunt Thandi says, '*a man, given half the chance, will put it (penis) in anything*'.

**LRRH**

- The current state of our global society is one riddled with poverty, hunger, gender inequality, deforestation, disastrous climate change, pollution, lack of affordable housing and sanitation, poor quality education for those most vulnerable, and immoral, self-serving politicians who uphold the detrimental political structures that prevent change.
- The play was created by Van Graan to educate the public on the relatively unknown 17 SDGs, reflecting the need for improving the standards of living for all, but in particular, the poor, women, and the planet.
- The context of the play is not specific to South Africa, even though its setting is in a distinctly South African society, for example – the reference of Gavin Hood as Redi's father and load shedding.
- The visual language on stage creates a postapocalyptic atmosphere. It speaks of a world that is no longer functioning and that is decomposing, decaying and broken – like our world will be if we don't act now.
- In essence the context is 'a damaged and crumbling world'. This is conveyed by all the scrap metal, junk and refuse on the stage – broken televisions, computer monitors, bins, boxes, and furniture that make up the concept of setting, and also then become the set.
- The rusty, decrepit set pieces like the dustbin, boxes and sheets of plastic point to an environment of neglect and decay. There is no sense of greenery and the whole set design, including the projection of industrial smoke, then also becomes a symbol of how humankind is very far behind its proposed sustainable development goals.
- The 'feel' that is created by this space is also of 'no-where', 'no place', 'no time'... which is a very Brechtian state. It has no specific reference points, geographically speaking, as well as no time-specific moment (refer to relevance and efficacy), which allows for this to become 'anywhere, any place, any time'.



***Born Naked*****APARTHEID ERA (TO PROVIDE UNDERSTANDING TO THE CONTEXT)**

- Under South Africa's ruling National Party from 1948 to 1994, homosexuality was a crime punishable by up to seven years in prison. This law was used to harass and outlaw South African gay community events and political activists.
- Despite state opposition, several South African gay rights organisations formed in the late 1970s.
- However, until the late 1980s, gay organisations were often divided along racial lines and because of the larger political question of apartheid.
- From the 1960s to the late 1980s, the South African Defence Force forced white gay and lesbian soldiers to undergo various medical 'cures' for their sexual orientation, including sex reassignment surgery.
- Organisations such as the Organisation of Lesbian and Gay Activists (OLGA) worked with the African National Congress to include protections for LGBTQIA+ people in the new Constitution of South Africa.

**POST-APARTHEID ERA**

- In 1993, the African National Congress, in the bill of rights, endorsed the legal recognition of same-sex marriages.
- As a result, South Africa became the first nation in the world to explicitly prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation in its constitution.
- Two years later, the Constitutional Court of South Africa ruled in a landmark case that the law prohibiting homosexual conduct between consenting adults in private violated the Constitution.
- The Gay Pride flag of South Africa, designed by Eugene Brockman, is a hybrid of the LGBTQIA+ rainbow flag and the South African national flag launched in 1994 after the end of the apartheid era.
- The stated purposes of the flag include celebrating legal same-sex marriage in South Africa and addressing issues such as discrimination, homophobia, corrective rape and hate crimes.
- The flag is a Gay Pride symbol that aims to reflect the freedom and diversity of the South African nation and build pride in being an LGBTQIA+ South African.
- In 1998, Parliament passed the Employment Equity Act. The law protects South Africans from labour discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, among other categories.
- In 2000, similar protections were extended to public accommodations and services, with the commencement of the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act
- In 2006, the National Assembly voted 229–41 for a bill allowing same-sex civil marriage. However, civil servants and clergy can refuse to solemnise same-sex unions.
- The original play was adapted by Hijinks/ZikkaZimba productions in 2019 and localised against a real event – the murder of Thapelo Makutle in 2012.

**BACKGROUND:**

- Thapelo Makutle, 24, recently won a Miss Gay pageant in the small town of Kuruman, and volunteered for a gay and lesbian rights group that worked in rural communities. He was reportedly killed early Saturday following an argument over his sexuality with two unidentified men.

- The men followed Makutle back to his rented room in Kuruman, broke down the door and attacked him, according to Shaine Griqua, director of the group LEGBO Northern Cape. Makutle's body was 'severely mutilated,' LEGBO said in a statement. 'His throat was so badly slit, and it was near decapitation'. 'Unconfirmed reports from witnesses state that Thapelo's genitalia was severed and inserted into his mouth,' the statement said, adding: 'There are no signs that this was an attempted burglary, rather [it] is evident that [he] was killed because of his sexual orientation'.

## TECHNICAL/STAGING STYLE

### ***Tshepang***

#### **SET**

##### **The miniature village**

It is a miniature version of the village from which Ruth was kicked out, where the rape occurred, the place where Ruth and Simon were brought up. Simon refers to the village when he talks about the rape and tells stories about the villagers. Its presence on stage is a constant reminder of Ruth's isolation and banishment.

##### **Trees with dark glasses & newspapers**

The media's and the world's 'eyes' and attention on the event. They could symbolise the blind prejudice of society; the media sharks who care about the 'what', not the 'who'.

##### **The Nativity figures**

They represent the idyllic family structure (Joseph, Mary and Jesus) in stark contrast/juxtaposition with Ruth and Siesie's context. The baby is looked over lovingly in his crib by his mother and father, or placed delicately in Mary's arms. Unlike the rusty bed where baby Tshepang sleeps and is raped in, or Ruth, who can no longer hold her baby. There is also the presence of the three wise men, bringing gifts to baby Jesus. Again, in contrast with Ruth's reality.

##### **The pile of salt**

There are a number of possible symbolic meanings associated with the pile of salt:

- The salt-of-the-earth – down to earth, real, as Simon interacts with the audience.
- The biblical story of when Lot's wife turned to a pillar of salt – referenced later when Simon says '*We were like Lot's wife. We had been turned into salt*'.
- The salt tears Ruth sheds for her baby.

Salt can painfully cleanse and heal wounds.

##### **Three beds**

###### **Rusted steel bed**

This is the bed Tshepang was raped on – noted when Simon takes out the orange blanket to prepare the bed for Ruth – it is the same orange blanket on the miniature bed Simon directly refers to when narrating the incident. The presence of this bed indicates that they are so poor they cannot buy another bed – *this 'burdened' object is not disposable and is thus emblematic of the couple's poverty-stricken and desperate situation*. The necessity of the bed overrides the painful reminder it carries.

**Bed on Ruth's back**

The second is the smaller replica of this bed carried on Ruth's back. It represents the absent child and is symbolic of what is going on in her mind – it is a reminder and burden which she must carry. It gives presence to baby Tshepang.

**Miniature bed in a house in the village**

The third is the small bed which is removed from the miniature house that belonged to Alfred where Ruth lived as well. It is symbolic of the moment in which Simon found Ruth with her breast cut off and bleeding and he took her to the clinic.

The three beds represent the idyllic family structure (father, mother, child) and three is a number often repeated in the play (nativity figures). The orange blanket on all three beds represents an image of an orange blanket from an actual newspaper clipping following the incident.

**STAGE TYPE**

Thrust stage, ideally suited to an intimate audience size.

**PROPS****Wooden broom**

- The broom is broken when being used to beat Alfred as a child.
- The broken pieces are then cradled by Simon's 'mother', representing his broken bones, and possibly soul.
- It is then crudely used to represent Alfred's penis, to re-enact the rape.

**Bread and wine**

- Symbolises the soft female flesh – the alternative to having sex with Sarah, and it represents baby Tshepang when Simon re-enacts the rape (we make this connection when Ruth cradles the loaf of bread on her back).
- It can also refer to the sacrament (Christ's flesh, or in this case the girl Christ).
- It is a food offering from Simon to Ruth, which binds them.
- The wine bottle makes direct reference to the dop system, but also completes the image of the sacrament as Jesus' blood.

**COSTUME**

The characters wear torn, reasonably dirty clothing that have been overworn. They are everyday, common clothing items. Simon's shirt is ripped and his shoes are broken and full of holes. Ruth wears a tunic/dress that is also well-worn. She is barefoot.

**LIGHTING AND SOUND**

- Poor Theatre techniques are used for both the lighting and sound in this production.
- The play begins in darkness, with the only pre-recorded sound in the production playing – the sound clip of happy children – reflective of what children should sound like. The effect of the clip is different at the beginning than when it is played at the end – it represents hope, we must act now to stop the cycle of violence because our children are the future and they need to be protected.

- A spotlight is used when the sound of Ruth's rubbing comes in over the pre-recorded sound clip. It is also used when Simon tells the story of how baby Tshepang was raped and then found. Very simple, yet effective.
- Other than this lighting effect, a general wash is used for the majority of the performance. The wash is warm in tone, representing the harsh glare and unbearable heat of the Makulu Baas.
- The sound of Ruth rubbing the salt also provides a sense of rhythm to the performance – it punctuates Simon's speech and provides an interesting soundscape. Her pace is affected by what Simon says and when she speeds up in agitation, the tension builds. Ruth uses the rubbing to express her emotions and emphasise Simon's narrative.
- Colour – *monochromatic* (one colour, effectively simple, stark); *complementary* (two complementary colours used together to create a contrast – green and red); *triad* (three colours to create a sense spectacle); *adjacent* (two colours next to each other on the colour wheel to create a faded, natural look); *warm and cool colours* to indicate naturalism or atmosphere (warm – red, yellow & amber = danger or comfort, daylight, sunset and sunrise) (cool – blue, green & magenta = sadness, distance, eeriness, night time). There are NO rainbow colours and please use these colour names (not pink/purple).
- Shape – you can refer to gobos that create specific shapes (can be used as a cut-out shape on a par can – not that popular anymore – or an intel light).
- Position of fixtures – *Backlighting* (fixture is placed upstage shining towards the audience); *Footlight* (fixture is placed on the floor, either downstage or on the sides, shining up towards the actors' faces); *Front lights/FOH Lights* (fixtures appear above auditorium to create a wash across the stage); *Downlighting/Top Lights/Top Side Lights* (fixture is placed above the stage shining down on to the actors' heads or on the side of the stage shining across the actor's head); *spotlight* (singular fixture which isolates the actors on stage).
- Other than a follow spot or an intel light flashing or swirling, lighting cannot 'move' – it can only get brighter (more intense/sharper) or faded (less sharp/softer).
- There is NO DARK LIGHTING. Lighting can only be dimmed.
- Shadows can be created by focusing the beam of different fixtures and avoiding a general wash.

**LRRH****SET**

- The set is fragmented and fractured, making it REPRESENTATIONAL. This is in keeping with Poor Theatre, South African Workshopped Theatre and most especially *Epic Theatre*.
  - It removes the logical idea that a set flows coherently from one area (moment) to another.
  - The concept of a fragmented and fractured set is that any area on stage can become more than one location; simply moving to an area with a prop or piece of set creates a new location.
  - Representationally, it becomes the destroyed forest, the chaotic courtroom. The stage transforms into a polluted ocean, which will later become the dirty city. There is no detailed and functional set for any of these spaces (as seen in Realism).
  - The symbolic nature of this fragmentation and fracturing is to display the chaos that man finds himself in; the disorganised and dismal state he has created for the planet, his own life and the lives of millions. The symbolism of poverty, destruction, loss of hope, greed, corruption and sorrow is seen in the rusted and metal items strewn around the stage.

- To connect the set to the SDGs even further, the 'bits & pieces' scattered around the stage are a reminder of our **neglect of the environment**; how millions of people are living in poverty.
- The set that is used is **minimalistic** (which is at odds with what has just been said as the stage is literally 'littered'). However, the **dressing** of the stage feels like a 'cluttered set', not the set itself, to reflect a **modern barren wasteland**.
- The specific set pieces that are actually used (**blocks, cans, bins**) are minimalistic and representational, in that they create all places/locations needed within the play.
- The **projection screen** conveys the location or content of scenes, adding to the atmosphere. The projection can also be somewhat distracting, yet informative. There are visuals of birds dying in hailstorms, sea life caught in garbage, hurricanes, flood devastation and maps of desertification ... which then become lifeless theatre flats.
- These **flats** covered with brown canvas material, convey the idea of informal settlements and poverty.
- This covering allows them to become a **nondescript backdrop** when necessary. The drab and 'earthy' colours depict filth and a sense of hopelessness, in what must surely be a post- apocalyptic world.

## PROPS

- The props used within this play are multifunctional and multipurpose and are very clearly (and cleverly) being used as per Poor Theatre style and South African Workshop Theatre.
- The costumes can become props, and vice versa; the set is moved around and used as a prop but is still 'the set' ... it is this overlap that allows the play to specifically reflect Poor Theatre, Epic Theatre, Surrealism, Workshop Theatre and Postmodernism.
- The use of overlapping set/props/costume makes the play episodic in structure and yet seamless, at the same time.
- The props are representational and also help to create the character and the location. (Character is 'normally' portrayed by costume only and the location is created by the set, only.)

## COSTUME

- The costumes of the characters are immediately seen as multifunctional, representational and are likened to 'a second skin of the character'.
- As the actors play more than one character (an ensemble cast), it is essential that their character change, via the use of representational/minimalistic costume, is easily understood and visibly available to the audience, who are navigating the play with the actors/characters.
- They are torn, raggedy and patched, texturised and dull in colour – all of this is to continue to create a postapocalyptic feel, while at the same time allowing for the costumes to stand as 'many things'.
- We see Mom Hood, dressed in her plastic apron/dress, *physically* (and in front of the audience: Epic Theatre) turn the costume AROUND on her body to represent the blue whale. The plastic she wears is see-through and so takes on the colour of the lighting and therefore 'becomes' blue and is representational of an underwater character (the whale). This allows the costume to become multifaceted and layered.
- The multifunctionality of these costumes allows for many characters to be played, by one actor with the clever 'wearing' of the costumes in various ways.

- It is essential to note that at specific times more attention is drawn to certain elements of the costume. For example, the Wolf is part of the chorus at the beginning of the play, and his 'hairy-patched pants' are not noticed or even representational (at THAT moment in time). But when he becomes the Wolf, it is immediately noticeable that his pants help highlight the concept of a wolf who is devious and 'patchy' and desperate.
- There is the adding of body work, vocals and some representational props, which would all be seen in Poor Theatre. This working of the actor with whatever is available to create a character is reminiscent of both Poor and South African Workshopped Theatre.
- Each costume worn is intrinsically linked to the character it is portraying or representing. The costumes are mostly made of plastic and recycled materials or torn materials to indicate the decay and decline of the environment. Highlighting the overlap of intention between set, costume and the minimalistic use of props.

## LIGHTING

- Near the beginning of the play, when Little Red and her Mom (and the chorus) are discussing what's in the basket for Granny (paraffin & candles) as she has no electricity, 'like we do', the lights go to B.O (Black Out). There are utterances of 'load shedding', 'Eskom', etc. but the joke works well – because of the effective lighting. The B.O is meshed within the language and purpose of the scene – that it 'creates' even more of an atmosphere than JUST the words do.
- In Postmodernism, the use of lighting can be symbolic and at times paradoxical. In the play, the colouring of the lighting allows us to 'know': location, emotion, and atmosphere. There are no specifications in the play regarding the lighting requirements, therefore, the director and lighting designer are able to make their own creative choices.

## SOUND

- The opening of the play has the sound of many voices creating a choral verse. It is lyrical and harmonious. The performers are creating the imagery of a forest and forest animals with both their voices and bodies for the audience.
- This somewhat 'calm and collected' beginning gives way to a 'loud, funky' rap that immediately 'breaks the silence of the woods'. The rap music/dance is in direct contrast to the spoken Greek performance style that has directly preceded it. This will jar the audience out of a sedentary passive 'watcher' mode and into a far more active and 'invested' role in the play – as the audience has to make up their own minds about facts and opinions given to them, as this is postmodernism, and the author is 'dead'.
- The audience MUST be an active meaning-maker.
- The actors create a variety of sounds from individual spoken vocals, to group choral vocals to sounds made that are representational of animals or the surrounds. These verbal sounds created by the actors instead of an instrument or technology, are known as idiophones. Human voice is the basis of Poor Theatre and South African Workshop Theatre, as opposed to using a technical or electronic device.
- Much of the sound made or songs sung by the performers are used in the background, thus keeping sound as a common thread throughout the production, impacting the emotions of the audience. This may be a feeling of dread, excitement, doom or merely sound, but it is indicative of WHERE the characters are:
  - In the Sea of Poverty Scene, *Somewhere Beyond the Sea* is played, which makes one feel nostalgic, calm, and mellow due the slow and relaxed melody.

- In the Courtroom Scene, the *Law and Order* theme song is played, which makes one feel more energised and nervous because the melody is mysterious and upbeat.
- The sound of thunder and lighting is used to create a dreary atmosphere when we meet Wolf for the first time in his Forest-of-no-More.
- The vocal work of the chorus is evident when the 'Wolves' howl as Redi proceeds through the forest, creating an animalistic feel, with a feeling of fear and anxiety, and a tense atmosphere.
- There is a lot of intertextuality regarding the choices of sound, referring to these plays, movies, songs whether directly or indirectly:
  - Theme song from *Finding Nemo*
  - *We Built this City on Rock and Roll*
  - The theme song from *Rocky*
  - *Cell Block Tango*, from the musical *Chicago*.
  - Nina Hagen's *Star Girl*
- Many of these sounds/songs have specific relevance and the playwright relies upon the audience's feeling about/around these certain songs to create an emotional connection. What is interesting about this, and keeps the audience as a cocreator of meaning, is that each viewer will have a different experience or 'feel' for the song/sound they are being exposed to, because of their personal past experiences.
- Note: the song choices are not fixed, which means that a director can make alternative/more modern choices of songs.

### ***Born Naked***

#### **SET DESIGN and PROPS**

- It is flexible and allows the characters to shift between the past and the present moment. We move between the present moment in the theatre but travel with the characters onto trains, into houses and the 2012 *Miss Gay Jozi* Drag Queen competition.
  - The set design, with all its colourful props and set pieces, mirrors the beauty, colour and escapist feel of the drag world.
  - In the middle of the stage is a small rectangular mobile platform stage on wheels. This small mobile platform is covered with kitsch LED lights.
  - The one black dressing table on wheels with a chair is positioned stage right and it is adorned with props (makeup), feather boas adorning the mirror, and sequined fabric draping the bottom.
  - Another dressing table and chair is hidden backstage. During Scene 2, Blaq Widow fetches it from backstage and positions it stage left. It is dusty, but also adorned with feathers and props.
- There are many props used throughout the play, such as the large old brown suitcase positioned off centre right.
- **Mannequin head:** memory of Queen Bling, foreshadows Thapelo's beheading.
- **Mobile platform:** ideas of travel, escape, transition.
- **Suitcases:** represents a journey, both literal and figurative. Blaq Widow's transformation from Sechaba to Blaq Widow. Queen Bling's transition from male to female. It signifies the journey taken by people of the LGBTQIA+ community or by trans people. It also represents the memories of Thapelo so they are contained and not forgotten.
- **Shoes:** when Queen Bling hands over the shoes to Sechaba, it symbolises Sechaba's induction into the world of drag and her inclusion in the 'House of Bling'. As Blaq becomes more confident in walking in the shoes, she becomes more confident in herself.

- **Makeup ritual, with the sound effects and repetition:** symbolises the identity of the 'House of Bling'; acceptance and induction into the world of drag; a sense of achievement when Blaq gets the routine right.
- **Dressing tables:** linked to the identity of each character; transformation as they are bedazzled (much like the character's bedazzle themselves as they dress up in drag); escape into a new reality.

## LIGHTING

- The colourful lighting employed throughout the duration of the play further adds to the irreverent and theatrical atmosphere of the production and represents the colourful nature of the Pride flag.
- The lighting transports the audience between the 'theatrical' memories of the characters and the naturalistic reality of the present.
- It also assists with the meta-theatre as the house lights are brought up to include the audience and they get the impression that they are attending an actual Drag show.

## COSTUMES

- **South African flag dress:** criticises the violence, ignorance and hatred still prevalent in our supposed Rainbow Nation. South Africa is meant to be home but this society allows something like this to happen.
- **Red Cape:** the red represents the violence experienced by many members of the LGBTQIA+ community. The lifting of the wings could be a symbol of an angel and reference to the Maya Angelou's poem title '*I rise*' from Scene Nine. There is also the element of the phoenix rising from the ashes transition. As Blaq Widow looks up to Queen Bling it becomes a memory. The red cape is also referred to in Scene 5, as the clothes Bling admires on the dress up doll in the shop window (who also wore a gold bodice and black skirt).

## SOUND

- Music is very important in the production.
- Each song represents the emotional landscape of each character and the journey they take together.
- The music explores the theatricality in performance of the drag queens' shows and competitions.
- Preset: *Girls just Wanna Have Fun, LoveGame, Believe, Respect, Heart of Glass, Black Widow, I Wanna Dance With Somebody, I'm Coming Out, What's Love Got To Do With It*
- Show: *Cover Girl, Knocking on Heaven's Door, We Are Growing, Weekend Special, I am A Woman, Don't Stop Believing, Vogue, Sissy That Walk, Poker Face, Run the World, Beautiful build up music 'Glory', Waterloo, Sana Luma, Don't Go Breaking My Heart, Paradise Road*
- Curtain Call/Post-Show: *I Am What I Am, Ashes, Just Dance, Mad as Hell*



## AUDIENCE RESPONSE

### GENERAL:

**In the context of Postmodernism, the audience has a specific role to play:**

- The audience is included as an agent of meaning making.
- Their reception is acknowledged in terms of creating their own meaning from what they view.
- Audience members view the performance from their own frame of reference. Since individual audience members will have individual frames of reference, audience reception will differ.
- The audience is permitted to draw their own conclusions as the artist is no longer the guiding authority of the work.
- These plays use drama to inform, educate and arouse the consciousness of individuals in society with a view of making them aware of their responsibilities as members of society whose duty it is to make the world a better place.

#### ***Tshepang***

- *Tshepang* is a South African text and deals with issues that pertain to South Africa. It is important for audiences to explore issues that are topical in our own society.
- The themes in *Tshepang* – child rape, substance abuse, poverty, and domestic violence – are problems that exist today in South Africa and are therefore extremely relevant. Although the play is chilling and disturbing, audiences need to be made aware of these problems in the hope that they can be a part of healing our society.
- *Tshepang* encourages questioning, specifically the question of who is to blame. This questioning is important if we are to progress as a society. The play promotes objective reasoning as well as self-reflection.
- *Tshepang* broadens the minds of the audience by encouraging them to confront uncomfortable truths and challenge their own biases. The play does not shy away from the harsh realities of child rape and *Tshepang*'s story can be difficult to watch, however, this discomfort is necessary to provoke critical thought and reflection.
- *Tshepang* creates awareness and encourages audiences to engage in discussions about child rape, justice, and societal responsibility. The play sparks important conversations about how individuals and communities can work together to prevent child rape and support victims.
- Audiences' assumptions and stereotypes about victims and perpetrators of child rape are challenged.

#### ***LRRH***

- Issues such as world hunger, equality in education, pollution, deforestation, corruption, climate change are issues that we will be facing for a very long time. They are problems that are not easily or quickly solved, therefore, this play will give the audience the hope that by creating awareness, more people will start making a difference and contribute towards achieving the SDGs.
- The SDGs are long-term goals that will take many years to achieve, therefore, audiences will be reminded of the need to keep working on the goals.
- The play is very informative and future generations will also need to be educated on these large issues. They concern not just South Africa, but the entire world, so audiences are made aware that these are worldwide issues.
- The comedy in the play is important as it enables the audience to listen to the story that will be told with an open mind. The play deals with weighty themes and the audience is more likely to empathise with the experiences of the characters when they are able to laugh.

- The combination of fables and animal characters encourages the audience to find the morals – helped along by the didactic facts, statistics and references to politics and the SDGs.

***Born Naked***

- Sadly, hate crimes persist in South Africa and, more often than not, South Africans forget the names and faces of those who have suffered when media houses move on to the next breaking news headline. *Born Naked* is a celebration of queer communities and it is important that the audience does not forget the names and faces of those who have suffered. This is necessary in order to heal as a nation.
- The play allows audiences to shift their memory from the brutal violence of Thapelo's death to one where the focus is on the contribution that he and other victims of hate crimes have made to the world around them.
- The themes of gender-based violence, queer representation, gender identity, love and friendship, othering, challenging gender binaries, violence against the LGBTQIA+ community, race and toxic heteronormative thought are challenging and require important debate.
- These are topics that are highly relevant today and will continue to be so for a very long time.

**CONTENT RUBRIC – 40 MARKS**

MARK	/40	
A+ 90% +	36	Brilliant, shows clear insight. Uses appropriate academic register. Argument/discussion leads to a conclusion (not loose/unrelated statements). Justifies the answer with appropriate reference to the text with examples from the play (relations among the dramatic principles are recognised). Relates the answer to the given argument (answer is purpose-driven and not regurgitation). Clear understanding of the work. Erudite introduction, excellent conclusion with a clear distillation of argument/discussion, solid links and outstanding paragraphing.
A 80% +	32	Excellent but not brilliant. Uses appropriate academic register. Argument/discussion leads to a conclusion but not as tightly structured as an A+. Justifies the answer with appropriate reference to the text with examples from the play. Relates the answer to the given argument/discussion (argument is purpose-driven and not regurgitation). Clear understanding of the work. Focused introduction and conclusion. Solid paragraphing and an attempt at links.
B 70% +	28	A good essay. Uses appropriate academic register. Relates the 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 the answer with appropriate reference to the text with examples from the play. Understands the work. Good introduction and conclusion. Solid paragraphing and an attempt at links.
C 60% +	24	An average essay. Relates the 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 the answer with reference to the plot. Understands the work. Average introduction and conclusion which attempt to focus on the topic/question. Adequate paragraphing and no attempt at links.
D 50% +	20	Relates the answer to the given argument/discussion but is flawed and/or unsubstantiated. Unbalanced focus in discussing the aspect/elements of the essay (some aspects get more focus than others). Justifies the answer with reference to the plot. Fairly good knowledge of the work. Muddled introduction and conclusion that vaguely attempt to focus on the topic/question. Adequate paragraphing and no attempt at links.
E 40% +	16	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 the answer with reference to the plot. No attempt at a focused introduction and the conclusion merely repeats the question. Poor paragraphing. No attempt at links.
F 30% +	12	Focuses only on one aspect of the question. Discussion of elements is very thin. Expression poor, little structure. Knowledge weak. No introduction or conclusion. Poor paragraphing. No attempt at links.
FF 20% +	8	Weak. Poor understanding of play and content. Focuses only on one aspect of the question. Expression poor, little structure.
G 10% +	4	Worse than FF. Little knowledge, no argument. Expression poor, no structure.
H 0% +	0	Answer does not relate to the question. No attempt to answer the question.

**[40]**

**QUESTION 3 (B) SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEMPORARY FILM (POST-1994)****ESSAY QUESTION**

In this question, you may refer to **ONE** of the following plays in your answer:

- *District 9* directed by Neill Blomkamp OR
- *Tsotsi* directed by Gavin Hood OR
- *Ellen: The Ellen Pakkies Story* directed by Daryne Joshua

This question interrogates the power of film in terms of addressing difficult societal issues and creating an awareness around those issues so that viewers can no longer claim ignorance about them. A solid understanding of how the sociopolitical context gave rise to the need to create their selected film is required. Specific societal ills directly connected to their selected film will need to be addressed. Candidates are required to identify the ways in which the filmic style of the film they have studied enables the viewer to digest the information more easily, thus broadening the viewer's mind. Candidates are required to explain the nature of the viewer's response and how the viewer engages with the content.

The essay must be marked globally on its merits, but candidates must address all three bullet points.

**SOCIOPOLITICAL CONTEXT*****District 9***

*District 9* is designed to deconstruct and satirise apartheid's practices of segregation, exclusion and othering and the violence used to enforce racist policies. The treatment of the prawns acts as a mirror to apartheid policies and practices and draws attention to the parallels.

- The treatment of the aliens is an obvious metaphor for the South African 'apartheid' system that functioned between 1948 and 1991.
- This was a system of racial segregation and discrimination that treated black Africans as a lower class and prevented them from mixing with white South Africans socially or publicly. It also prevented black people from accessing housing, employment or educational opportunities.
- Between 1960 and 1983 over 3.5 million non-white South Africans were forced to leave their homes and were 'resettled' in segregated neighbourhoods where poverty and crime were rife.
- One of the most famous was the 'resettlement' of 60,000 non-white people from the Sophiatown area of Johannesburg (where *District 9* is set). In the early hours of February 9th 1955, heavily armed police began forcibly evicting people, bulldozing their homes and moving their belongings 19km away to what would later become the township of Soweto.
- It is this event that the start of the film is heavily referencing. One of the first legal acts of apartheid was to forbid marriage between black and white South Africans, and sexual contact between them was considered a taboo – this is referenced in the smear campaign accusing Wikus of contracting his infection from sex with the aliens.
- The name *District 9* is also a reference to an area called District 6 near Cape Town that was also the scene of a mass 'resettlement' in the 1960s.

- One of the main languages of those dwelling there was Xhosa, which incorporates many vocal 'clicks', similar to the aliens in the film.
- The 'Humans Only' signs used to promote the film are also a reference to the 'Whites Only' signs from the apartheid era.

The film comments on apartheid/racism and xenophobia in the form of speciesism. An underlying theme in *District 9* is the states' reliance on multinational corporations (whose accountability is unclear and whose interests are not necessarily congruent with democratic principles) as a form of government-funded law enforcement. As MNU represents the type of corporation which partners with governments, the negative portrayal of MNU in the film depicts the dangers of outsourcing militaries and bureaucracies to private contractors.

### ***Tsotsi***

*Tsotsi* maps some of the huge contrasts in modern South Africa – its affluence and grinding poverty, its haves and have-nots, its energy and optimism alongside the disease, addiction and crime that blights so many lives. But, *Tsotsi*'s story is far more than just a South African tale. There are millions of *Tsotsis* growing up all over the world haunted by the damage inflicted on them in childhood and acting out their resentments: the victims of chance but also, the inflictors of impulsive life-changing violence on others.

Hood's film is an updated adaptation of a 1960s novella by eminent South African playwright Athol Fugard, in which the protagonist's first-person account gives the reader insights into the *Tsotsi*'s origins and motivations. At a time when so many in South Africa live in fear of random-seeming violence inflicted by so called 'feral' young people, this film is a compelling attempt to delve beneath the statistics of modern-day crime – to put an unsentimental but human face on actions that otherwise might seem utterly inexplicable and monstrous.

*Tsotsi*'s life is seen as impoverished and with little hope of a better future. He is forced into a life of crime and has no formal education. For this reason, he is representative of many young men and women who lived through the years of apartheid. Due to apartheid being finally and formally abolished in 1993, South Africa looked forward to a more prosperous future, but the devastating toll of apartheid still lingers, and *Tsotsi*'s life is a byproduct of the years of historical abuse by the system of apartheid. As viewers, we learn how much more work needs to be done before we shake the legacy of Apartheid.

Post-apartheid South Africa:

- Over half the population lives below the poverty line – many on just a \$1 a day.
- A quarter of the population is unemployed.
- More than a fifth (21%) of the adult population is infected with HIV-Aids and thousands of children grow up orphaned due to the premature deaths of their parents.
- Despite a rapid house-building programme over the last decade it still has many of its people living in shantytowns and squatter camps in shelters constructed from scavenged scrap.
- Violent crime still costs the lives of over 20,000 people a year – and armed robbery, carjacking, rape and aggravated burglary are the stuff of everyday anecdote. The killing of a man on the train early in the film is exactly the sort of crime that currently terrorises South African society and is carefully captured and recreated in the film.

Some or all of these are the painful legacies of 50 years of racism, discrimination and neglect and also of the miseries in many other parts of Africa – that make South Africa an economic magnet and its townships an incredible melting pot of nationalities and cultures.

Further aspects include:

- Poverty and affluence – we see the desperate social conditions in the squatter camps where the gang members live, in which residents survive on almost nothing, and have daily concerns about having enough food for their families, the safety of their children, or the ever-present danger of becoming swept up by the violence around them.
- Pollution.
- South Africa's capital Johannesburg and its townships are lively, energetic, bustling places.
- The prominence of crime and violence and the response of the police to crime and criminals – however young.
- Disease – particularly HIV-Aids.
- Mixed communities or highly segregated communities.
- Strong cultural/artistic forces at work in the townships.

### ***Ellen: The Ellen Pakkies Story***

In 2007, the death of 20-year-old tik addict Abie Pakkies created a stir in South Africa and the world. The most disturbing part of the case was that the murderer was his mother, Ellen. Based on this true story, the film explores how this loving mother became desperate enough to take her own son's life, and why a judge let her off with a three-year suspended sentence and 280 hours of community service. Ellen Pakkies consulted on the film, which was partly shot in her own home in Lavender Hill.

The film looks at the issues that exist in many South African communities today:

**Failing community structures** – Ellen exhausts all the system's avenues, such as the police station, court, clinic, rehabilitation centre and magistrate in her community, to seek help for her drug-addicted son. Her futile efforts led her to commit murder. We learn how society has failed to adequately protect people living with addicts or even the addicts themselves.

**Drug addiction** – Abie's continued use of tik which leads him to a life of crime and violence. This is a lesson about how drugs continue to devastate the communities in which they are the primary income for many families and a coping mechanism and escape from the harsh reality in which they live.

**Domestic violence** – this is typically associated with men, but in this instance, it is Ellen who commits the murder and who breaks apart the idea of Mother. This shows the desperation that she felt as a result of her situation and forces the audience to evaluate their preconceived notions of what motivates someone to kill their own son.

- The Cape Flats are still mired in gang violence and drug wars, fuelling an atmosphere of violence.
- We will always need a reminder of how certain communities are destitute and left with no other options but to continue the vicious cycle of poverty, abuse and dependency on substances.
- The film acts as a warning to us of what happens when the system fails the people.

## FILMIC STYLE

### ***District 9***

*District 9* creates a city of fear and terror but not just in the 'edgy' CBD but also in the informal settlements. The film makes use of real images of informal settlements, juxtaposed with aerial views of Johannesburg's central business district. The use of actual locations in the city, to set the scene, adds to the sense of reality in the film especially in showing the gritty and uncomfortable spaces of the informal settlements. The township is shown in harsh reality and is not romanticised in any way. The rusty, decrepit scenic design in which the characters of the 'prawns' exist points to an environment of neglect and decay. There is no sense of greenery and the whole scenic design becomes a symbol of how humankind treats the 'prawns'; the analogy between the humans and the prawns echoes the days of apartheid; where discrimination and horrific treatment of people of colour was built into the law of the land. The scenic design is scattered as a stark reminder of our neglect of the environment; how millions of people are still living in poverty with no running water, no electricity and decent sanitation. It suggests a postapocalyptic world where the human race has kept the aliens in prison-like places and, as a result, they are fighting for their lives trapped in a hostile environment with little or no resources.

### **Lighting**

All the scenes shot in the offices have high-key lighting with a soft quality of light, making the shadows softer and allowing the audience to feel unthreatened by the people. However, when the humans are aboard the spaceship, the light is very low key and there are mainly shadows, making it hard to see what is going on and also building the tension as we do not know what to expect aboard the ship.

### **Costume**

- Wikus wears black trousers, a white short-sleeved button up shirt with a tie and a vest jersey.
- Sometimes he wears an MNU branded bulletproof vest and a hooded anorak over these clothes.
- When Wikus' transformation begins, he loses a couple of his fingernails and then he experiences hair loss.
- Later he forms a flipper on his left arm – done with prosthetics.
- Interviewees wear contemporary clothing.
- Private security uniforms are also used by the MNU mercenaries.
- The production ended up going with all-CG aliens, rather than trying to execute a half-prosthetic hybrid.
- The aliens needed to be humanoid with an insect influence. They should be brightly coloured and have a skeletal frame.
- They all have a tentacle moustache that rides on their mouth, so you rely on their eyes. Their eyes are like grasshopper eyes.
- The look of the alien, with its exoskeleton-crustacean hybrid and crab-like shells, was meant to initially evoke a sense of disgust from viewers but as the story progresses, the audience was meant to sympathise with these creatures who had such human-like emotions and characteristics.
- Blomkamp established criteria for the design of the aliens. He wanted the species to be insect-like but also bipedal. The director wanted the audience to relate to the aliens.

## Sound

In broad terms, Shorter's score is a three-way amalgam of a fairly large symphony orchestra, a heavy dose of electronic effects and percussion loops, and a male African vocalist. The idea behind the score is that it is a musical representation of three worlds colliding – the orchestra and live instruments representing humanity, electronics and synthesised elements for the aliens, and the vocals representing the geographical location. The synth tones are for the most part light and soothing, providing a solid, almost dream-like textural base on which the rest of the music is built. The prominent African vocals in cues such as the opening *District 9*, and later in the mysterious *A Lot of Secrets* and the conclusive *Prawnkus* are strong and dignified, echoing the music of the old Soweto townships the film allegorises, and clearly rooting the film. The orchestral textures, which appear forcefully during the end of *District 9* and elsewhere throughout the score make excellent use of strident string runs, throaty brass chords, and occasionally erupting into full-on action rhythms in cues such as *I Want That Arm* and the tremendously exciting *Exosuit*. Some of the action and suspense moments also incorporate tribal drums and some regional ethnic string instruments used percussively, which adds a level of exoticness and mystique to cues like *Back to D9* and the kinetic *Wikus is Still Running*.

## Cinematography

*District 9* utilises cinematography and editing to create a sense of realism which carries the viewer throughout the entire film, making the viewer feel as though the out-of-this-world events depicted were happening in our own reality. It also employs a variety of documentary elements which act to further drive the realism.

The introductory sequence starts with a collage of various documentary styles, including corporate video, news footage, found footage, expert interviews, civilian eyewitness accounts and amateur video. This collection of cinematography techniques and the way they are edited together is a great introduction as far as instilling realism.

An MNU watermark appears on the corner of the interview footage, as well as other shots throughout the movie, implying this is MNU's own version of events, separate from the reality we see later. This editing of adding a watermark acts as another example of a real-world association, as the viewer is already accustomed to seeing logos in the corners of their screen when viewing programs such as the news. The same can be said for the timestamps which appear in footage such as the archival alien landing tapes. Another example is titles and bylines written on screen for the experts being interviewed, creating the illusion that these people are in fact the professionals that they're presented to be, giving their opinion on real-life events.

In an example of cinematography in one of the following scenes, Wikus is seen trying to reason with one of the aliens. Despite the prawn's overbearing size compared to Wikus, the prawn's body language is defensive. The prawn is also seen holding a shovel to use as protection, even though a previous shot had already established that they have very powerful and sophisticated weaponry. This framing illustrates the lack of power the prawns have here on earth compared to back home. In the shot we see Wikus holding a clipboard where his power seems to resonate from and symbolising his apparent authority.

In a later scene in the district, the alien known as 'Christopher Johnson' is seen speaking to his son. The cinematography switches up and becomes the standard narrative style,



showing close-up shots as well as point-of-view shots, encouraging empathy with the prawns. This is in contrast to the shots from the humans' perspective in this scene, which is either hand-held camera footage or security footage with the MNU logo.

As the first part of the movie progresses the shots switch back and forth between documentary and narrative drama styles, showing us the human and alien experience of events. The more Wikus transforms, the less we see the documentary footage, the more the real footage. In doing so, our experience throughout the film is to seamlessly as viewers orient our frame of mind more and more with the aliens, as Wikus changes.

While at the refugee camp, Wikus is sprayed by the alien biological material. The hand-held documentary camera work places the viewer in the shot as if they are the ones filming the events taking place. Another aspect of the cinematography which adds realism is the way in which hands are placed on the lens, and the fact that substances such as spit, blood and dirt splatter onto the lens of the camera.

### ***Tsotsi***

The film looks at two different contexts within South Africa. We see the poverty-stricken black culture of the townships juxtaposed with the more affluent suburbs. The township is red, orange, and brown; the city is grey and blue. Most scenes take place either at night or in what appears to be a rosy glow of early morning or early evening. The warm golden colours of the township show that in the poverty there is also a vibrant community. Because much of the film depicts township life, the scenic design includes shacks/low-cost housing, people queuing for water, smoke rising from houses. The atmosphere can be interpreted as dangerous, violent, and volatile. Cinematically the township space is one reduced to decay and death, informality, and temporality. The houses are built of tin and brick. Cinematic representations of the township are characterised by haphazard architecture and the lack of any formal urban planning. The city spaces, visually constructed as white spaces, are ordered, clean, developed, light, grid-like and positioned as totally urban. Tsotsi's shack shows poverty, Miriam's shack shows warmth, the Dube's home shows wealth, the train station shows cold alienation and lack of personality. Each is created through colour, props, and the overall mise-en-scene. There is a difference between the style of Tsotsi's shack and Miriam's. Tsotsi's shack shows crime and poverty. It is dark, untidy and for baby David it is dangerous and not somewhere he should be. Miriam's shack, however, is bright, clean and the children there are safe. The use of light is key; in Tsotsi's shack there is minimal natural light, making the scene feel dark and unwelcoming. In Miriam's shack the light is bright, warm, and much more even, with little in the way of dark areas of shadows. It represents light and positivity, seen in the use of the mobile made of broken glass hanging from the ceiling. The mobile made of rust is a symbol of Tsotsi's outlook and sadness.

### **Lighting**

Lighting is key, indicating atmosphere as well as theme. Light conveys warmth in Miriam's shack, hope as the sun rises over the township and despair at night, especially when accompanied by rain. At one point, Tsotsi is 'half-lit', suggesting a duality to his character and personality.

### **Costume**

- Boston wears glasses, suggesting that he is more educated than the others.
- Butcher wears a leather jacket, has an earring in his ear and rings on his fingers.
- Aap is a bulkier man in overalls.

- We also see Tsotsi's clothing; a leather jacket and a hoodie; items associated with gang culture and crime. Finally, Tsotsi wears red which is a symbol of danger, suggesting that Tsotsi is not someone to be crossed.
- The pink colour of Miriam's blouse is also notable as it is used in contrast to the darker and more neutral tones in the scene.
- Fela is an example of a successful gangster in terms of money. He is flashy in his costuming – the only character to wear a tailored suit. He has a gold necklace and is well-groomed indicating a higher status in the gangster world.

Costume also indicates Tsotsi's change. At the start of the film, during the crime scene in the train, he wears a black hoodie. An extreme close-up shows his intent – eyes looking for a victim. With his hood up, he looks like a typical gangster as his name suggests he is. The darkness of his clothing is matched by the dullness and gloom of his surroundings. When we meet Miriam, however, we see her dressed in traditional African clothing coloured in earthy, warm tones like orange and red. Her hut is decorated with broken glass mobiles which catch the light and she drapes her furniture with blankets made from coloured patchwork squares. This obviously symbolises a person who celebrates life and can find beauty even in poverty. Miriam's influence softens Tsotsi. She persuades him to take the baby back and when he does he dresses in a white shirt. The way the camera picks up this shirt in the final symbolic shot when he surrenders to the police shows how important this idea of redemption is. Viewers see the white shirt as more significant because it contrasts with the black hoodie of the murder scene.

### **Sound**

The Kwaito soundtrack in the film reflects the lifestyle of the people who live in the townships. Kwaito is a purely South African genre of music and its answer to American hip-hop. Since Kwaito is a very modern and up-to-date kind of music, the listener can assume that the music is used to create authenticity. The music has a narrative function in the film as it comments on the gangster qualities of some of the characters and their stories. The music adds to the atmosphere of danger and violence.

During the stakeout rattling sounds are used to reinforce the idea of Tsotsi hunting. This gives us the idea that he is seeking out his prey. We hear a faint heartbeat as Tsotsi scouts the train station, to build the tension. When they follow him to the train the rattling sounds get louder, connoting something is about to happen. The sound comes to a sudden stop when Butcher's weapon pierces the man's skin and we cut to several close-ups of the groups' faces showing their different reactions. Occasionally, quiet diegetic sounds are accompanied by music, which is the quiet calm of African wind instruments, contrasting with the Kwaito in the opening sequence.

### **Cinematography**

Close-ups of characters' hands feature heavily early on to help establish theme of destiny through use of dice. The audience is often placed within the gang through use of camera angles, shot sizes and movement; the dolly movement is motivated by the gang's movement at the start of the film, a POV during key scene 1, OTS shots of Tsotsi, etc.

Flashbacks are used in the film as a narrative device but are skilfully edited into the film to provide detail. Cross-cutting is also used in a number of scenes to explore the idea of fate and duality, such as Tsotsi looking at baby David and flashing back to Tsotsi looking at his sick mother. Tension is often conveyed through the editing, with pace manipulated to develop reaction.

High angles and wide shots and/or crane shots are often used to show the shantytown where Tsotsi lives – rows of makeshift houses – and when the policemen find Tsotsi's abandoned car on the highway. This emphasises the size of the slum. It is sprawling and we see the magnitude of poverty.

The film uses a lot of wide shots held for a long time, alternated with close-ups on Tsotsi's face: Tsotsi walking on the tracks, Tsotsi and the gang melting into the crowd at the train station, Tsotsi under the bridge with Morris.

### ***Ellen: The Ellen Pakkies Story***

About 90 percent of the actual locations where the tragedy took place, were used to shoot the film. These included the Pakkies' home in Lavender Hill, the police station in Steenberg where she was held, Pollsmoor prison where she was also held for a few weeks, and the Wynberg magistrate's court where her court case took place. The treatment is honest, real and unpretentious giving us the impression of real characters with a great understanding of the neighbourhood and culture. The production design and locations are authentic to the point of blurring the line between reality and illusion – giving the backdrop a hard-hitting documentary realism.

*'Truth, naturalness and authenticity were things I was after. I wanted there to be a realness to the film. My mission as a filmmaker from the Cape Flats will always be to give those in the audience who've never set foot there a truthful experience. Secondly, for those currently living there and coming from there I'd like to hold a mirror up to their reality and make them feel that the film provides a sincere treatment of their environment and circumstances,'* shares director Daryne Joshua. *'We shot in the actual room where Ellen murdered her son Abie. The atmosphere was unnerving, eerie and solemn.'*

### **Lighting**

The opening scene starts when Pakkies is seen looking at her bruised hands in the bathroom minutes after she has murdered her son. It then jump-cuts to an earlier time where mother and son are depicted in loving conversation in happier times, before Abie's downward spiral into drug addiction. These scenes differ in their use of light and colour. In the opening scene Pakkies is set in a low-lit bathroom that creates shadows in the shot. In the second scene, she and her son are shown in a well-lit room through close-up and medium shots where the camera draws your focus solely on each actor by closing off the world around them creating an almost compressed effect that highlights the affection towards each other in their facial expressions and tone of voice. It produces an effect of being 'with' the character.

When Abie attacks his parents, it is nighttime, but the bright lights between the blocks of flats reveals the fury on his face. Once inside the house, the dim lighting adds to the viewer's confusion and anxiety, while symbolically replicating the sense of Abie's darkly demonic state.

### **Costume**

- The costumes and makeup in the film serve to reflect the socio-economic status of the characters.
- Ellen's worn out conservative pink nightgown reflects a hard-working woman, conservative and ordinary.
- There is a stark contrast to her son whose costumes reflect his gradual disintegration into the world of addiction and drugs.

- His once clean-cut youthful appearance becomes dirty and unkempt – all this is shown through the use of makeup – a clean youthful face changes into a haggard, dark-ringed eye of pain and torment.
- Makeup and costume also reflect Ellen's journey after she murders her son and becomes incarcerated and tormented by what she has done.
- The clean, well-dressed, neat domestic worker transforms into an emotionally tormented woman who no longer takes the time to look after herself – no makeup and dark rings under her eyes.

### **Sound**

Sound was also utilised to ground the film in realism by using the environmental sound at Lavender Hill while keeping the score classical and subtle for most of the film. The soundtrack, particularly the theme song, is raw and haunting, adding to the emotional atmosphere of the film. Use of live musicians playing violin, viola, cello, flute and guitar was layered with virtual instruments. The flute solos in many of the pieces added to the haunting realism. The melancholic guitar tune is a common motif as are the sounds of the dogs barking constantly in the distance in Lavender Hill.

### **Cinematography**

The opening scene starts when Pakkies is seen looking at her bruised hands in the bathroom minutes after she has murdered her son. It then jump-cuts to an earlier time where mother and son are depicted in loving conversation in happier times. In this first thirty-seven seconds of the film then, the two timelines through which Pakkies' story unfolds have already been introduced. In the second scene, she and her son are shown in a well-lit room through close-up and medium shots where the camera draws your focus solely on each actor by closing off the world around them, creating an almost compressed effect that highlights the affection towards each other. It produces an effect of being 'with' the character. Following the scene where Pakkies and her son are depicted in happier times, the director jumps back to the previous scene in the first timeline, where she is looking at herself in the mirror. The camera then reveals her, in a long-shot from across a bedroom. A jump-cut now takes the viewer back again to the loving mother and her son. The camera seems to be in a position peeking from behind the woman's waist. Her silhouette from this angle is dark, but this long-shot shows Abie sitting on his bed, headphones around his neck with book and pen in hand. The non-linearity created through jump-cuts in these opening scenes serve to illustrate two sides of Pakkies. Much of the film progresses in this manner through jump-cuts.

The subsequent scenes document the period of roughly six years from when Abie, aged fourteen, starts using drugs to the time of his death at the age of twenty. By an hour and ten minutes into the film, Abie's mental state starts to become violent and threatening. Here the director picks up the pace of the film with fast-framed time-jumps that contrast with those slower ones across the first half of the film. The scenes are now depicted as single events at different times that 'feel' chronological. The emotional turmoil intensifies in the last twenty-five minutes. Here the director skilfully brings together the complexities of the parallel narratives to a meeting point at one horrific point, Abie's death. This is done through a series of filming techniques where the dialogue of the characters (Pakkies herself, her lawyer, the presiding magistrate at her trial, and the state prosecutor) from different scenes perform as 'the storytellers' in the time-jumps to reveal explicit details of her life experiences.

At the peak of the film, an unsteady tracking-shot moves alongside walking feet, then moves in an upward direction momentarily pausing to draw attention to the axe in the person's hand before it moves further up to reveal this person as Abie in a medium close-up shot. An over-the-shoulder shot from behind Abie brings into view the open gates of his parents' home that will allow him access to the non-forbidden yard. A medium close-up shot from behind his father and the bright lights between the blocks of flats reveals the fury on his face as he verbally lashes out at his father and then hits him with the axe. In a medium-shot his mother is shown inside the house looking on and running towards the door. Once inside the house, the unsteadiness of the camera creates anxiety that starts to build tension in the viewer. We see an over-the-shoulder shot from behind Pakkies shifting to a frame that shows Abie swearing and screaming at his mother. These unsteady camera shots switch to medium close-ups of Pakkies' husband who has now come inside the house. The camera now steadies squarely on a medium-shot of Abie as he points the axe at his parents and backtracks towards the wall. The camera, again moving in unsteady shots, creates a jarring effect as it shows Abie moving from lounge to kitchen. Following the now first converging parallel narratives, the scene switches to the trial, where Ellen takes the witness stand to give her testimony. The time-jumps are self-reflectively referenced as her court dialogue acts as a voice-over or 'storyteller' for the final scene. The camera takes the viewer back to the morning of Abie's murder. An overhead-shot shows Ellen lying on her bed, staring straight ahead. The camera shows her in a medium-long shot getting up out of bed, sitting momentarily still with her legs hanging over the bed. She gets up and moves to the right of the camera, out of the frame, while her voice from the trial tells of the many nightmares he brought on. A wide-angled crouching-shot from the lounge shows her coming from the kitchen with a black bag in hand and starting to clean up the mess he had created. The events of that morning depicted by the camera and her voice-over of her court testimony unfold simultaneously. The camera shows a close-up of Pakkies putting a kettle onto a gas stove. It moves to a medium head-and-shoulders side-shot of her looking straight ahead as the dim of the morning pushes through the kitchen curtains, crafting an image of her in silhouette. A close-up shot taken from the right then shows her face. In the following scene, Pakkies is shown in a long-shot taken from across a room. An eye-level shot from the front of the bed shows Abie asleep. The view returns to the long-shot from behind the bed and shows Pakkies walking out of the room, while it slowly moves down bringing Abie asleep into full view. Inside the house, the camera catches her in a low-level long-shot as she enters a room. The camera shot moves downward to bring a rope into focus.

The final scene begins with a shot of the rope being tied to the bottom bedpost in a focused close-up. The camera follows the length of the rope in her hands in this close-up as she moves upward towards Abie and then starts to put the rope around his neck. As he starts to choke, the camera cuts back to Ellen and moves simultaneously with her into a crouching position as she tightens the rope. An extreme close-up from the bottom end of the bed in a narrow-depth of field hones in on Abie as his eyes seem to blacken during his now desperate attempts to loosen the rope around his neck. The camera cuts back to Pakkies, showing her in a medium long-shot tightening the rope and pulling harder, still concentrated and calm. The camera moves one last time back to Abie in the same extreme close-up, a narrow depth-of-field shot showing him beginning to foam at the mouth. The camera again cuts back to her face in the same extreme close-up and narrow depth-of-field shot. The dialogue from the court room now re-enters the scene as she confirms that she pulled the rope tighter when he wanted to fight back. An extreme close-up shot sees her breathe with relief when she realises that he is not responding. The final minutes of the film go on to show the woman judge's ruling that the very systems and institutions that were meant to help her had actually failed her. She is shown as an

inspiring motivational speaker in what we would read as the epilogue. A written message before the final credits begin sets the story in a wider human context.

## VIEWER RESPONSE

### GENERAL:

**In the context of Postmodernism, the viewer does have a specific role to play:**

- The viewer is included as an agent of meaning making.
- Their reception is acknowledged in terms of creating their own meaning from what they view.
- Viewers watch the film from their own frame of reference. Since individual viewers will have individual frames of reference, viewer reception will differ.
- The viewer is permitted to draw their own conclusions as the artist is no longer the guiding authority of the work.
- These films use drama to inform, educate and arouse the consciousness of individuals in society with a view to making them aware of their responsibilities as members of society whose duty it is to make the world a better place.

### ***District 9***

- Viewers tend to respond with a sense of empathy and reflection, and a commitment to social justice.
- The film challenges viewers to confront their own biases and prejudices towards people who are different from them, and to recognise the harm that discrimination and marginalisation can cause.
- Viewers are encouraged to reflect on their own beliefs and attitudes towards different groups of people. The film invites viewers to question their assumptions about refugees, immigrants and other marginalised groups, and to consider the ways in which their own biases may contribute to discrimination and social injustice.
- Viewers can respond to the film by taking action to promote social justice and combat discrimination. This could involve getting involved in community organisations that work to support the disenfranchised. They are encouraged to speak out against prejudice when they witness it and to advocate for policies that promote inclusion and equality.
- Viewers tend to respond to the film with a sense of responsibility and commitment to making the world a more just and equitable place.
- The message that they receive about the dangers of prejudice is important when creating a more compassionate and inclusive society.

### ***Tsotsi***

- Viewers tend to respond to the film with empathy, introspection and a commitment to social change. The film depicts the harsh realities of poverty, violence and social inequality in South Africa, and it challenges viewers to acknowledge these circumstances and provokes thought on these issues.
- The film encourages viewers to reflect on their own privilege and position in society. It teaches viewers how poverty and social inequality can push people to commit acts of violence and desperation. Viewers are able to consider the ways in which their own advantages and opportunities may contribute to these problems.
- As a result of watching the film, viewers might be moved to take action to address the root causes of poverty and violence within their own communities. They could volunteer to work with organisations that support the poor and could campaign for

policies that promote economic equality. Viewers could also be motivated to support grassroots efforts to promote positive change.

- Viewers might respond with shock as the film's depictions of violence and desperation can be shocking and disturbing, particularly for those unfamiliar with the realities of life in South Africa's townships. The film's portrayal of poverty and inequality can also be confronting for some viewers.
- Viewers might appreciate and relate to the film's exploration of universal themes like redemption, compassion and the search for identity.

***Ellen: The Ellen Pakkies Story***

- Viewers' reactions to the film can be emotional and intense, as the film deals with difficult themes like addiction, violence and the complexities of motherhood.
- Viewers may feel a deep sense of empathy for Ellen, as she struggles to care for her drug-addicted son while also dealing with the trauma and stress of her own life.
- Viewers may relate to Ellen's experiences of feeling overwhelmed and helpless in the face of addiction.
- The film may provoke anger in viewers as they may feel frustrated by the lack of resources and support available to families dealing with addiction. They may be shocked by the failure of the system to support these families. They may also feel overwhelmed by the cycle of poverty and despair felt by the victims.
- The film also evokes sadness in the viewers because of the film's tragic ending and the portrayal of the toll that addiction and violence can take on families. They might feel heartbroken for Ellen and her family and mourn the loss of lives that could have been saved with more resources and support.
- Viewers are moved to reflect on the complexities of motherhood through the character of Ellen. They might be encouraged to consider what actions they can take to improve their own community in this space.

**CONTENT RUBRIC**

MARK	/40	
A+ 90% +	36	Brilliant, shows clear insight. Uses appropriate academic register. Argument/discussion leads to a conclusion (not loose/unrelated statements). Justifies the answer with appropriate reference to the text with examples from the film (relations among the filmic principles are recognised). Relates the answer to the given argument (answer is purpose-driven and not regurgitation). Clear understanding of the work. Erudite introduction, excellent conclusion with a clear distillation of argument/discussion, solid links and outstanding paragraphing.
A 80% +	32	Excellent but not brilliant. Uses appropriate academic register. Argument/discussion leads to a conclusion but not as tightly structured as an A+. Justifies the answer with appropriate reference to the text with examples from the film. Relates the answer to the given argument/discussion (argument is purpose-driven and not regurgitation). Clear understanding of the work. Focused introduction and conclusion. Solid paragraphing and an attempt at links.
B 70% +	28	A good essay. Uses appropriate academic register. Relates the 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 the answer with appropriate reference to the text with examples from the film. Understands the work. Good introduction and conclusion. Solid paragraphing and an attempt at links.
C 60% +	24	An average essay. Relates the 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 the answer with reference to the plot. Understands the work. Average introduction and conclusion which attempt to focus on the topic/question. Adequate paragraphing and no attempt at links.
D 50% +	20	Relates the answer to the given argument/discussion but is flawed and/or unsubstantiated. Unbalanced focus in discussing the aspect/elements of the essay (some aspects get more focus than others). Justifies the answer with reference to the plot. Fairly good knowledge of the work. Muddled introduction and conclusion that vaguely attempt to focus on the topic/question. Adequate paragraphing and no attempt at links.
E 40% +	16	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 the answer with reference to the plot. No attempt at a focused introduction and the conclusion merely repeats the question. Poor paragraphing. No attempt at links.
F 30% +	12	Focuses only on one aspect of the question. Discussion of elements is very thin. Expression poor, little structure. Knowledge weak. No introduction or conclusion. Poor paragraphing. No attempt at links.
FF 20% +	8	Weak. Poor understanding of film and content. Focuses only on one aspect of the question. Expression poor, little structure.
G 10% +	4	Worse than FF. Little knowledge, no argument. Expression poor, no structure.
H 0% +	0	Answer does not relate to the question. No attempt to answer the question.

**Total: 120 marks**