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COUNCIL FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN GENERAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Exemplar Book on Effective Questioning

Dramatic Arts

Compiled by the Statistical Information and Research (SIR) Unit

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PREFACE

The National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations are set and moderated in part using tools which specify the types of cognitive demand and the content deemed appropriate for Dramatic Arts at Grade 12 level. Until recently, the level of cognitive demand made by a question was considered to be the main determinant of the overall level of cognitive challenge of an examination question.

However, during various examination evaluation projects conducted by Umalusi from 2008-2012, evaluators found the need to develop more complex tools to distinguish between questions which were categorised at the same cognitive demand level, but which were not of comparable degrees of difficulty. For many subjects, for each type of cognitive demand a three-level degree of difficulty designation, *easy, moderate and difficult* was developed. Evaluators first decided on the type of cognitive process required to answer a particular examination question, and then decided on the degree of difficulty, *as an attribute of the type of cognitive demand*, of that examination question.

Whilst this practice offered wider options in terms of *easy, moderate* and *difficult* levels of difficulty for each type of cognitive demand overcame some limitations of a one-dimensional cognitive demand taxonomy, other constraints emerged. Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (BTEO) (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956) and the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy are based on the assumption that a cumulative hierarchy exists between the different categories of cognitive demand (Bloom et al., 1956; Bloom, Hastings & Madaus, 1971). The practice of 'levels of difficulty' did not necessarily correspond to a hierarchical model of increasing complexity of cognitive demand. A key problem with using the level of difficulty as an attribute of the type of cognitive demand of examination questions is that, questions recognised at a higher level of cognitive demand are not necessarily categorised as more difficult than other questions categorised at lower levels of cognitive demand. For example, during analyses a basic recognition or

recall question could be considered more difficult than an easy evaluation question.

Research further revealed that evaluators often struggled to agree on the classification of questions at so many different levels. The finer categorization for each level of cognitive demand and the process of trying to match questions to pre-set definitions of levels of difficulty made the process of making judgments about cognitive challenge overly procedural. The complex two-dimensional multi-level model also made findings about the cognitive challenge of an examination very difficult for Umalusi Assessment Standards Committee (ASC) to interpret.

In an Umalusi Report, *Developing a Framework for Assessing and Comparing the Cognitive Challenge of Home Language Examinations* (Umalusi, 2012), it was recommended that the type and level of cognitive demand of a question and the level of a question's difficulty should be analysed separately. Further, it was argued that the ability to assess cognitive challenge lay in experts' abilities to recognise subtle interactions and make complicated connections that involved the use of multiple criteria simultaneously. However, the tacit nature of such judgments can make it difficult to generate a common understanding of what constitutes criteria for evaluating the cognitive challenge of examination questions, despite descriptions given in the policy documents of each subject.

The report also suggested that the Umalusi external moderators and evaluators be provided with a framework for thinking about question difficulty which would help them identify where the main sources of difficulty or ease in questions might reside. Such a framework should provide a common language for evaluators and moderators to discuss and justify decisions about question difficulty. It should also be used for building the capacity of novice or less experienced moderators and evaluators to exercise the necessary expert judgments by making them more aware of key aspects to consider in making such judgments.

The revised Umalusi examination moderation and evaluation instruments for each subject draw on research and literature reviews, together with the knowledge gained through the subject workshops. At these workshops, the proposed revisions were discussed with different subject specialists to attain a common understanding of the concepts, tools and framework used; and to test whether the framework developed for thinking about question difficulty 'works' for different content subjects. Using the same framework to think about question difficulty across subjects will allow for greater comparability of standards across subjects and projects.

An important change that has been made to the revised examination evaluation instrument is that the analysis of *the type of cognitive demand* of a question and analysis of *the level of difficulty* of each question are now treated as two separate judgments involving two different processes. Accordingly, the revised examination evaluation instrument now includes assessment of difficulty *as well as* cognitive demand.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Full name
ASC	Assessment Standards Committee
BTEO	Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement
DBE	Department of Basic Education
FET	Further Education and Training
IEB	Independent Examinations Board
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
QAA	Quality Assurance of Assessment
QCC	Qualifications, Curriculum and Certification
SIR	Statistical Information and Research

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In addition, Dramatic Arts subject experts and practitioners are acknowledged for their contribution to the content of this exemplar book. Included in this group are: Umalusi External Moderators and Maintaining Standards Subject Teams and Team Leaders; together with the South African Comprehensive Assessment Institute and the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) Examiners and Internal Moderators.

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This exemplar book was prepared by Mr Mohamed Faruk Hoosain.

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1.   INTRODUCTION

The rules of assessment are essentially the same for all types of learning because, to learn is to acquire knowledge or skills, while to assess is to identify the level of knowledge or skill that has been acquired (Fiddler, Marienau & Whitaker, 2006). Nevertheless, the field of assessment in South Africa and elsewhere in the world is fraught with contestation. A review of the research literature on assessment indicates difficulties, misunderstanding and confusion in how terms describing educational measurement concepts, and the relationships between them, are used (Frisbie, 2005).

Umalusi believes that if all role players involved in examination processes can achieve a common understanding of key terms, concepts and processes involved in setting, moderating and evaluating examination papers, much unhappiness can be avoided. This exemplar book presents a particular set of guidelines for both novice and experienced Dramatic Arts national examiners, internal and external moderators, and evaluators to use in the setting, moderation and evaluation of examinations at the National Senior Certificate (NSC) level.

The remainder of the exemplar book is organised as follows: First, the context in which the exemplar book was developed is described (Part 2), followed by a statement of its purpose (Part 3). Brief summaries of the roles of moderation and evaluation (Part 4) and cognitive demand (Part 5) an assessment. Examination questions selected from the NSC Dramatic Arts examinations of assessment bodies, the Department of Basic Education (DBE), and/or the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) are used to illustrate how to identify different levels of cognitive demand as required by the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) Dramatic Arts document (Part 6). Part 7 explains the protocols for identifying different levels of difficulty within a question paper. Application of the Umalusi framework for determining difficulty described in

Part 7 is illustrated, with reasons, by another set of questions from a range of Dramatic Arts examinations (Part 8). Concluding remarks complete the exemplar book (Part 9).

2.   CONTEXT

Umalusi has the responsibility to quality assure qualifications, curricula and assessments of National Qualification Framework (NQF) Levels 1 - 5. This is a legal mandate assigned by the *General and Further Education and Training Act (Act 58 of 2001)* and the *National Qualification Framework Act (Act 67 of 2008)*. To operationalize its mandate, Umalusi, amongst other things, conducts research and uses the findings of this research to enhance the quality and standards of curricula and assessments.

Since 2003, Umalusi has conducted several research studies that have investigated examination standards. For example, Umalusi conducted research on the NSC examinations, commonly known as 'Matriculation' or Grade 12, in order to gain an understanding of the standards of the new examinations (first introduced in 2008) relative to those of the previous NATED 550 Senior Certificate examinations (Umalusi, 2009a, 2009b). Research undertaken by Umalusi has assisted the organisation to arrive at a more informed understanding of what is meant by assessing the cognitive challenge of the examinations and of the processes necessary for determining whether the degree of cognitive challenge of examinations is comparable within a subject, across subjects and between years.

Research undertaken by Umalusi has revealed that different groups of examiners, moderators and evaluators do not always interpret cognitive demand in the same way, posing difficulties when comparisons of cognitive challenge were required. The research across all subjects also showed that

using the type and level of cognitive demand of a question *only* as measure for judging the cognitive challenge of a question is problematic because cognitive demand levels on their own do not necessarily distinguish between degrees of difficulty of questions.

The new Umalusi framework for thinking about question difficulty described in this exemplar book is intended to support all key role players in making complex decisions about what makes a particular question challenging for Grade 12 examination candidates.

3.   THE PURPOSE OF THE EXEMPLAR BOOK

The overall goal of this exemplar book is to ensure the consistency of standards of examinations across the years in the Further Education and Training (FET) sub-sector and Grade 12, in particular. The specific purpose is to build a shared understanding among teachers, examiners, moderators, evaluators, and other stakeholders, of methods used for determining the type and level of cognitive demand as well as the level of difficulty of examination questions.

Ultimately, the common understanding that this exemplar book seeks to foster is based on the premise that the process of determining the type and level of cognitive demand of questions and that of determining the level of difficulty of examination questions are two separate judgements involving two different processes, both necessary for evaluating the cognitive challenge of examinations. This distinction between cognitive demand and difficulty posed by questions needs to be made in the setting, moderation, evaluation and comparison of Dramatic Arts examination papers.

The exemplar book includes an explanation of the new Umalusi framework which is intended to provide all role-players in the setting of Dramatic Arts examinations with a common language for thinking and talking about question

difficulty. The reader of the exemplar book is taken through the process of evaluating examination questions; first in relation to determining the type and level of cognitive demand made by a question, and then in terms of assessing the level of difficulty of a question. This is done by providing examples of a range of questions which make different types of cognitive demands on candidates, and examples of questions at different levels of difficulty.

Each question is accompanied by an explanation of the reasoning behind why it was judged as being of a particular level of cognitive demand or difficulty, and the reasoning behind the judgements made is explained. The examples of examination questions provided were sourced by Dramatic Arts evaluators from previous DBE and the IEB Dramatic Arts question papers, pre- and post-the implementation of CAPS during various Umalusi workshops.

This exemplar book is an official document. The process of revising the Umalusi examination evaluation instrument and of developing a framework for thinking about question difficulty for both moderation and evaluation purposes has been a consultative one, with the DBE and the IEB assessment bodies. The new framework for thinking about question difficulty is to be used by Umalusi in the moderation and evaluation of Grade 12 Dramatic Arts examinations, and by all the assessment bodies in the setting of the question papers, in conjunction with the CAPS documents.

4.   MODERATION AND EVALUATION OF ASSESSMENT

A fundamental requirement, ethically and legally, is that assessments are fair, reliable and valid (American Educational Research Association [AERA], American Psychological Association [APA] and National Council on Measurement in Education [NCME], 1999). Moderation is one of several quality assurance assessment processes aimed at ensuring that an assessment is fair,

reliable and valid (Downing & Haladyna, 2006). Ideally, moderation should be done at all levels of an education system, including the school, district, provincial and national level in all subjects.

The task of Umalusi examination **moderators** is to ensure that the quality and standards of a particular examination are maintained each year. Part of this task is for moderators to alert examiners to details of questions, material and/or any technical aspects in examination question papers that are deemed to be inadequate or problematic and that therefore, challenge the validity of that examination. In order to do this, moderators need to pay attention to a number of issues as they moderate a question paper – these are briefly described below.

Moderation of the technical aspects of examination papers includes checking correct question and/or section numbering, and ensuring that visual texts and/or resource material included in the papers are clear and legible. The clarity of instructions given to candidates, the wording of questions, the appropriateness of the level of language used, and the correct use of terminology need to be interrogated. Moderators are expected to detect question predictability, for example, when the same questions regularly appear in different examinations, and bias in examination papers. The adequacy and accuracy of the marking memorandum (marking guidelines) need to be checked to ensure that they reflect and correspond with the requirements of each question asked in the examination paper being moderated.

In addition, the task of moderators is to check that papers adhere to the overall examination requirements as set out by the relevant assessment body with regard to the format and structure (including the length, type of texts or reading selections prescribed) of the examination. This includes assessing compliance with assessment requirements with regard to ensuring that the content is examined at an appropriate level and in the relative proportions (weightings) of content and/or skills areas required by the assessment body.

The role of Umalusi examination **evaluators** is to perform analysis of examination papers after they have been set and moderated and approved by the Umalusi moderators. This type of analysis entails applying additional expert judgments to evaluate the quality and standard of finalised examination papers before they are written by candidates in a specific year. However, the overall aim of this evaluation is to judge the comparability of an examination against the previous years' examination papers to ensure that consistent standards are being maintained over the years.

The results of the evaluators' analyses, and moderators' experiences provide the Umalusi Assessment Standards Committee (ASC) with valuable information which is used in the process of statistical moderation of each year's examination results. Therefore, this information forms an important component of essential qualitative data informing the ASC's final decisions in the standardisation of the examinations.

In order for the standardisation process to work effectively, efficiently and fairly, it is important that examiners, moderators and evaluators have a shared understanding of how the standard of an examination paper is assessed, and of the frameworks and main instruments that are used in this process.

5. COGNITIVE DEMANDS IN ASSESSMENT

The *Standards for educational and psychological testing* (AERA, APA, & NCME, 1999) require evidence to support interpretations of test scores with respect to cognitive processes. Therefore, valid, fair and reliable examinations require that the levels of cognitive demand required by examination questions are appropriate and varied (Downing & Haladyna, 2006). Examination papers should not be dominated by questions that require reproduction of basic

information, or replication of basic procedures, and under-represent questions invoking higher level cognitive demands.

Accordingly, the Grade 12 CAPS NSC subject examination specifications state that examination papers should be set in such a way that they reflect proportions of marks for questions at various level of cognitive demand. NSC examination papers are expected to comply with the specified cognitive demand levels and weightings. NSC examiners have to set and NSC internal moderators have to moderate examination papers as reflecting the proportions of marks for questions at different levels of cognitive demand as specified in the documents. Umalusi's external moderators and evaluators are similarly tasked with confirming compliance of the examinations with the CAPS cognitive demand levels and weightings, and Umalusi's revised examination evaluation instruments continue to reflect this requirement.

Despite that, subject experts, examiners, moderators and evaluators are familiar with the levels and explanations of the types of cognitive demand shown in the CAPS documents, Umalusi researchers have noted that individuals do not always interpret and classify the categories of cognitive demand provided in the CAPS the same way. In order to facilitate a common interpretation and classification of the cognitive demands made by questions, the next section of this exemplar book provides a clarification of each cognitive demand level for Dramatic Arts followed by illustrative examples of examination questions that have been classified at that level of cognitive demand.

6. EXPLANATIONS AND EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS ASSESSED AT THE DIFFERENT COGNITIVE DEMAND LEVELS IN THE DRAMATIC ARTS TAXONOMY ACCORDING TO CAPS

The taxonomies of cognitive demand for each school subject in the CAPS documents are mostly based on the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001) but resemble the original Bloom's taxonomy in that categories of cognitive demand are arranged along a single continuum. Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (BTEO) (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956) and the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy imply that each more advanced or successive category of cognitive demand subsumes all categories below it. The CAPS Taxonomies of Cognitive Demand make a similar assumption (Crowe, 2012).

> **Note:**
> In classifying the type and level of cognitive demand, each question is classified at the highest level of cognitive process involved. Thus, although a particular question involves recall of knowledge, as well as comprehension and application, the question is classified as an 'analysis' question if that is the highest level of cognitive process involved. If evaluating' is the highest level of cognitive process involved, the question as a whole should be classified as an 'evaluation' question. On the other hand, if one of more sub-sections of the question and the marks allocated for each sub-section can stand independently, then the level of cognitive demand for each sub-section of the question should be analysed separately.

The CAPS documents for many subjects also give examples of descriptive verbs that can be associated with each of the levels of cognitive demand. However, it is important to note that such 'action verbs' can be associated with more than one cognitive level depending on the context of a question.

The Dramatic Arts CAPS document states that Grade 12 NSC Dramatic Arts examination papers should examine three levels of cognitive demand (Table 1).

TABLE 1: THE TAXONOMY OF COGNITIVE DEMAND LEVELS FOR THE DRAMATIC ARTS NSC EXAMINATIONS

Cognitive Level
Lower Order: Knowledge, recalling, recognising, listing, identifying, describing, naming, finding
Middle Order: Comprehension and Application explaining, interpreting, using information in another familiar situation, applying, exemplifying, discussing
Higher Order: Analysis, Evaluation and Synthesis justifying, comparing, organising, critiquing, exploring, producing, creating, planning, integrating, structuring, arranging, validating, concluding, devising

Source: Caps Dramatic Arts (2011) P. (50)

To facilitate reading of this section, each of the above cognitive demand levels in the Dramatic Arts Taxonomy is explained, and the explanation is followed by at least **three** examples of questions from previous Dramatic Arts NSC examinations classified at each of the levels of cognitive demand shown in Table 1 above. These examples were selected to represent the **best and clearest** examples of each level of cognitive demand that the Dramatic Arts experts could find. In the discussion below each example question explains the reasoning processes behind the classification of the question at that particular type of cognitive demand (Table 2 to Table 5).

Table 2:   Examples of questions at level 1: Knowledge

Low order: Knowledge: Level 1
Such questions require candidates to recognise or retrieve information from memory. Answering these types of questions involves cognitive processes such as: Describing, finding, identifying, listing, locating, naming, recognising and retrieving
Example 1:
Question 1.2: NOVEMBER 2008, DBE 1.2 Choose a description from COLUMN B that matches a term in COLUMN A. Write only the letter next to the question number (1.2.1 – 1.2.10) in the ANSWER BOOK.

	COLUMN A		COLUMN B
1.2.1	Realism	A	sets the scene, time and place
1.2.2	Episodes	B	devices used to remind the audience that they are watching a play
1.2.3	Scenery/Set		
1.2.4	Placards and captions	C	deals with man in a hostile, desolate environment
1.2.5	Prologue		
1.2.6	Erwin Piscator	D	lighting apparatus clearly visible and plain white light used
1.2.7	The Good Woman of Setzuan	E	attitudes represented physically or through behaviour
1.2.8	Epic acting style	F	often symbolic and suggestive and fragmentary pieces are used
1.2.9	Gestus		
1.2.10	Alienation device	G	strives to depict a 'slice of life' on stage
		H	a play written by Bertolt Brecht
		I	made up of a series of scenes
		J	actors should not immerse themselves in the characters
		K	Marxist director considered to be the pioneer of communist political theatre

(10)

Discussion:

This question is categorized as a remembering or recall of *knowledge* type question; answering the question is a 'matching' exercise requiring the cognitive processes of recall and recognition. Candidates have to match each of the terms or phrases in column A with the definitions or description provided in Column B. They should have learnt about these terms and definitions in class as per CAPS content. They have to recall the meanings of each term and then recognise the correct definition or description for each term from the options provided.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

1.2.1 - G and A	(1)	
1.2.2 - I	(1)	
1.2.3 - F	(1)	
1.2.4 - B and A	(1)	
1.2.5 - A	(1)	
1.2.6 - C	(1)	
1.2.7 - H	(1)	
1.2.8 - J	(1)	
1.2.9 - E	(1)	
1.2.10 - D, B, J	(1)	

(10)

Example 2:

Question 6: NOVEMBER 2012, DBE

6.6.1   Name the process used to create this play.   (1)

6.6.2   Briefly describe THREE phases in the creation process   (6)

Discussion:

The cognitive process involves recalling the name / label used to create this production type as well as describing the three phases in the creation process. The description involves a well-defined set procedure with a series of steps. 'Knowledge' questions require candidates to remember, recognize, identify, name, list, describe, label, state, or identify basic or factual information, details, functions, processes or mechanisms. The action verbs in this question, 'name' and 'describe', suggest that these may both be 'knowledge' questions. To answer the questions, candidates have to recall knowledge of the standard workshop process.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

6.6.1   Accept one of the following:

Workshop/Workshopped/Workshopping   (1)

6.6.2   Markers are to use discretion as candidates, depending on their teaching, may describe the phases or stages. Award ONE mark for the phase and ONE mark for the description thereof.

The phases/stages are: **Observation** – can be done through research, actors physically go out into the streets and observe people or have interviews with them.

Improvisation – Actors would use material collected in the first phase to create or improvise scenes in the rehearsal space.

Selection – Improvised pieces that worked are selected or chosen.

Recording – The final stage of the process – transferring the action to text/video/recording.

(2 x 3) (6)

Example 3:

QUESTION 4: NOVEMBER 2014, DBE

Study the sources below and answer the questions that follow.

SOURCE A

A production of *Siener in die Suburbs*

4.1 Identify characters A, B and C. (3)

Discussion:

To answer this question, candidates have to identify three well-known characters in the play from the source material. Their knowledge of the characters in the play and recognition of the action shown in the source material should help them to identify the characters. The cognitive processes involved are thus recall and recognition of knowledge.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

4.1   A – Giel

        B – Tjokkie

        C – Jakes (3)

Table 3:   Examples of questions at Level 2: Comprehension and Application

Such questions require candidates to see the relationships between ideas, and the way in which concepts are organised or structured. The ideas and concepts may be contained in explanations, models or theories which they have learnt, or they may be in new material which is presented to them. These types of question require re-organising information, data, ideas, facts or details that are explicitly stated or observable in material provided or, which have been learnt, in a different way or form from what was presented. Answering these types of questions involve cognitive processes such as: Classifying, comparing, exemplifying, explaining, inferring, interpreting, paraphrasing and summarising.

Example 1:
QUESTION 1: NOVEMBER 2010, DBE
1.2   Explain each Brechtian term/phrase listed below:
1.2.1   Verfremdungseffekt (2)
1.2.2   Parable   (2)
1.2.3   Epic   (2)
1.2.4   Narrator   (2)
1.2.5   Historification   (2)
2.2   Explain each term/phrase listed below:
2.2.1 Comic cross-talk   (2)
2.2.2 Existentialism   (2)
2.2.3 Tragi-comedy   (2)
2.2.4 Non-narrative   (2)
2.2.5 Language as a barrier to communication (2)

Discussion:
Comprehension involves more than recall of facts; it entails showing understanding. Answering these two questions requires understanding facts, ideas, principles, procedures and processes. The cognitive processes involved go one step beyond mere recall; candidates need to explain each of the terms. A difference between this question and Example 1 Question 1.2 in the previous table is that here, candidates have to use their own words to explain the terms/phrases. The task goes beyond recognition and recall. Although candidates also have to work at a lower cognitive level (Knowledge) to answer them, the questions are classified as being at Level 2 (Comprehension) as this level is the highest level of cognitive process involved.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

1.2   1.2.1   **Verfremdungseffekt** means the distancing or alienation effect to prevent the audience indulging in the play and provoke them into action to change what they did not like. Where candidates use the 'V-effect' allocate one mark. (2)

         1.2.2   A **Parable** is an apparently simple story/plot that has a more sophisticated meaning/lesson that initially apparent. A simple story with a moral. Where a candidate mentions 'The Chinese Chalk Circle' story, award one mark. (2)

1.2.3   **Epic** plays span a great deal of time and move to different places. The cast is often large and the focus is on storyline rather than character. Similar to Epic poetry – uses narration and dialogue. Where candidates use the word 'episodic' award only one mark. (2)

1.2.4   **Narrator** this figure helps distance the audience from the action by reminding the audience that they are watching a play. The narrator comments on the action, gives other viewpoints and sometimes

		speaks what the character thinks and does not say. The narrator helps bridge the vast space and time in epic plays. (2)
	1.2.5	**Historification** setting the play in a non-specific time and place. It is another alienation technique. The plot is set in the then and there not the here and now. (2)
2.2	2.2.1	**Comic cross-talk** one liners that the characters say to each other, sometimes funny sometimes bearing no relation to what was said previously. Like the cross-talk of music hall comedians. (2)
	2.2.2	**Existentialism** is the philosophical movement that preceded Absurdism. The movement focused on the meaning of existence and questioned the Judeo-Christian moral tradition. (2)
	2.2.3	**Tragi-comedy** has serious topics dealt with in a humourous manner. Often ordinary people and characters. (2)
	2.2.4	**Non-narrative** it lacks characters and plot in the conventional sense. Play has a timelessness and a placelessness.One mark where a character says: 'It does not have a proper storyline'. (2)
	2.2.5	**Language as a barrier to communication** Absurdists believed that humans set our conversation so that real communication rarely happens. E.g. We answer questions with another question, ignore questions or answer obviously. (2)

Example 2:

QUESTION 10: NOVEMBER 2008, DBE

10.1   Dramatic tension in *Missing* is created by the conflict that arises from the theme of liberation and exorcism.

10.1.1 Briefly discuss this theme.   (4)

Discussion:

This question is classified as a middle order cognitive demand item, since it requires comprehension and application. The cognitive processes associated with this question includes the candidates having to discuss the theme. They have to interpret and understand the information provided in the opening statement. They then have to recall the relevant knowledge of the play 'Missing'. Lastly, they need to apply their knowledge and understanding of 'Missing' to discuss the theme of liberation and exorcism with reference to dramatic tension.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

10.1   10.1.1 In De Wet's plays we have to deal with **exorcism** (where people live in fear of things) and **liberation** (where people get rid of their fears and narrow mindedness). It is an individual liberation, rather than a social liberation. The concrete space that is created through the set of *Missing* becomes a place of liberation from a suffocating small world reality of the commonplace narrow-mindedness. The Constable becomes the magical liberator that enters the space.

Miem, and to a lesser degree Gertie, are the custodians of a narrow-minded Calvinistic culture where oppression of sexuality in contrast with the sub-conscious is emphasised. Meisie is forbidden to visit the circus and the doors are locked. The windows are closed and the curtains are drawn to protect against the threat of the evil forces, seeking young girls. (4)

Example 3:

QUESTION 6.5: NOVEMBER 2012, DBE

SOURCE A

A production photo of *Sophiatown* showing the extract in SOURCE B

SOURCE B

	(The household breaks into a celebratory song.)	1
	A bo tle	
	Re ba kakqathe	
	Ga bo pala	
	Re bo tsho lole (x 2)	5
	(Let it come	
	We'll drink it	
	If it doesn't taste nice	
	We'll throw it out) (x 2)	
	(RUTH fetches bottles of gin, brandy and whiskey, hidden in brown-paper packets. LULU hands out glasses. The song gets raucous. RUTH interrupts.)	10
RUTH:	I've got a surprise! Along with the usual gift from the Yeoville shops: a bottle of special home-made Jewish Friday night wine.	
FAFHEE:	What?	15
RUTH:	I thought we might all like to try it. It's specially made for Friday night, and today's Friday, so here we are. Who knows, the entire house may be miraculously converted.	
FAFHEE:	Three drops of this Jewish wine and we're all Softown Majietas.	
JAKES:	Com'on then, let's hit that bottle.	20
	(He opens the wine and pours.)	
	Right everybody, take a glass. We'll drink a toast in Jewish wine to the Jewish girl. And here's hoping for an instant rise in circulation.	

6.5   In this scene all the characters are enjoying themselves.
Describe, in a paragraph, another scene from the play where the mood and atmosphere are completely different. (5)

Discussion:
Although the action verb 'describe' suggests that this question may be a 'knowledge' question, this is not the case. To answer the question, candidates have to use the scene provided to recognise and recall a scene of a very different nature

that serves to counterpoint it. However, to identify a scene where the mood and atmosphere are different, candidates have to understand and interpret the scene provided and compare it with another scene where the mood and atmosphere are completely different. Although the opening statement in the question sums up the mood and atmosphere of the scene provided by stating the all the characters in the scene are enjoying themselves, candidates still have to explain how and why the scene they select contrasts with the mood and atmosphere of the scene provided. Thus, the question is classified as a 'comprehension' question which requires understanding and low-level interpretation.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

6.5
A subjective answer is required and markers are to use discretion when marking.
Accept candidates' responses where relevant and appropriate.
The following is merely a suggestion:
Later on, in the same scene, the characters are either tipsy or drunk. As in Lulu's case when there is a violent knocking on the door. The characters think that it is the vice and liquor squad and they all scramble to hide. From being very happy and carefree they are scared and fearful. There is tension and anxiety as they receive the notice of removals. (5)

EXAMPLE 4:

QUESTION 8.3: NOVEMBER 2008, DBE
Read the extract below and answer the question that follows.

Johan:	I'm warning you, I'll –	1
Thami:	I know what you'll do.	
Johan:	Don't make me.	
Thami:	Don't make you what? Kill an unarmed man? Why not? That's what you can do.	5
Johan:	I didn't mean to –	
Thami:	But you did! You killed a man who couldn't protect himself.	
Johan:	I didn't know he was … I thought … I didn't know it was his finger. They used me. You *know* that. They lied.	
Thami:	They didn't lie. You killed Julius Thwalo.	10
Johan:	They lied about the way it happened. I didn't go there to kill somebody.	
Thami:	But you had a gun. What are guns for?	
Johan:	I was a policeman. They gave me one. It was my job.	
Thami:	Now you want me to be your partner. How can I be that? Every time I look at you I see that poor man, sleeping in his little shack. Him, his wife and his kids in one room. Next thing, someone banging on the door, someone shouting, torches shining through the window. He wakes up, heart is jumping out of his chest. His kids cry, his wife holds his arm. Then he understands what is happening, because he's heard about it from others. *(Advances towards Johan)* He has no weapons. He goes to the door. He opens the door. Torchlight in his eyes. Men's shadows with hats, and boots, voices shouting, smell of gun oil. Then he … with all his strength of his rage, he lifts up his arm and points a finger – straight into your face. *(He points his finger furiously into Johan's face. Johan freezes, stares bewilderedly at the finger.)* What are you waiting for? *(Johan violently grabs Thami's finger, spins him around and locks his left arm across Thami's neck. With his right he holds the knife across Thami's throat.)* Do it! Slit my throat.	15 20 25 30
Johan:	Be careful!	
Thami:	Go on, do it!	

8.3 Both these characters are complex and their motivations are based on involved and conflicting psychological urges. Explain the creative process you would use to go about preparing to perform EITHER Thami OR Johan. (10)

Discussion:

The action verbs in the question 'explain' suggests that this is a 'comprehension' question. To answer the question candidates have to recall knowledge of the processes and techniques used to prepare for performing a character. They should have learnt about this content in class. However, candidates also need to understand the characters listed in the question and the subtext of the characters motivation underpinning the dialogue. Candidates also have to apply their knowledge of the creative processes and use their understanding of the character to explain how they would prepare to perform one of the two characters listed.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

8.3

MARKS		DESCRIPTOR
8 - 10	Very Good	Candidate uses a clear process to discuss his/her preparation for the role of Thami or Johan (e.g. Stanislavski). Connects the method of the performance preparation with examples of the character's history, personality and actions.

6 - 7	Good	Candidate is able to describe a process and relate it to the character. Often the description of the process is more detailed than the connection to the character's actions and personality.
3 - 5	Average	Candidate EITHER has grasp of process technique and is able to give it in some detail but lacks the ability to relate the character to the process OR describes character in a sketch and fails to relate to the process of preparation.
0 - 2	Weak	Candidate gives a basic description of a character but fails to connect to process except to say for example 'speak loudly', 'act correctly'.

E.g. Using Stanislavski as process for acting (the practitioner most likely to be used by Grade 12 learners).

I would use Stanislavski's process for creating a character. I choose Thami. To begin with, I would study the text in detail referring to the overall objective of the text and then break it up into scenes, each with its own objective. This scene shows the tables being turned on Johan where Thami decides he has had enough of being silent while Johan indulges himself as a victim. Thami has been fairly passive until now but shows a more aggressive side. This is called intellectualisation.

The next step is internalisation where tools such as 'emotional memory' (remembering a similar time in one's own life to access the emotions needed) and "the magic if" (asking oneself 'How would I feel if I was in this position?') are used to create the internal feelings necessary for honest emotions. I have never been in Thami's position so I would use the 'magic if' and ask myself how would I feel if Johan repeatedly indulged himself by denying he had killed someone in cold blood and tried to make decisions for me when I was working hard to create a decent life for my family.

The final step is physicalisation. The character needs to come alive on stage with detailed and small accurate actions. To do this I would convey Thami's shyness and civility with an underlying strength through slight gestures and mannerisms. He would seem gentle but able to suddenly become commanding.
(10)

Table 4: Examples of questions at level 3: Analysis

Higher order: Analysis: Level 3
Such questions require candidates to engage in more abstract interpretation or reasoning, or use of conjecture, background knowledge and understanding, clues or implicit information, facts, or concepts in material provided, or from memory as a basis of forming hypotheses, predicting consequences, deducing reasons, suggesting a possible explanation, inferring causes, drawing conclusions, interpreting relationships, patterns, results, or ideas. Answering these types of questions involves cognitive processes such as: Attributing, deconstructing, integrating, organising, outlining and structuring.

Example 1:
QUESTION 5.2.1: NOVEMBER 2009, DBE

> **SOURCE B – Extract from *Woza Albert!***
>
> *Lights up, dim, on Mbongeni as Auntie Dudu, an old woman, wearing a* 1
> *white dust-coat as a shawl. She is searching a garbage bin (upturned*
> *box). She eats some food, chases flies, then notices the interviewer.*
> *She speaks very shyly.*
>
> Mbongeni: Hey? My name is Auntie Dudu. No work my boy, I'm too old. Eh? 5
> (Listens) If Morena comes to South Africa? That would be very good.
> Because everybody will be happy and there will be lots and lots of
> parties. And we'll find lots of food here – (indicates the bin) – cabbages,
> tomatoes, chicken, hot-dogs, all the nice things white people eat. Huh?
> (Receives tip.) Oh, thank you, my boy. Thank you, Baba. Inkos'ibusise. 10
> (God bless) God bless you. Bye bye, bye bye …
> *A fly buzzes close. She chases it.*

5.2 Refer to SOURCE B above and answer the following question
  5.2.1 Explain how and why Mbongeni might transform himself physically, vocally and in terms of costume into the character of 'Auntie Dudu'. (6)

Discussion:

The action verb **'explain'** suggests that this question may be a 'comprehension' question, but this is not the case. Unlike example 4 in Table 3, to answer this question candidates have to engage in more abstract interpretation or reasoning. They have to carefully analyse the source material to identify the clues provided and apply their knowledge and understanding of the play and the principles underpinning the subtext of characters for performance. To explain 'how' and 'why' the character Mbongeni might transform himself, they need to analyse how to express the character of 'Antie Dudu' and convey a credible performance by transforming the character of Mbongeni physically, vocally and in terms of costume. Thus, although candidates have to work at lower cognitive levels (Knowledge, Comprehension and Application) to answer the question, the question is classified as being a higher order analysis question.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

5.2 5.2.1 Physically – He would adopt the bent posture, movements, energy, pace and gestures of an old woman.
  • Vocally – he would try to imitate a woman's voice. Voice would rise as excitement increases especially when talking about the left-over food.
  • Costume – in Dramatic Form, workshopped plays borrowed from Poor Theatre e.g.: the convention of one prop item representing many things. The coat becomes a shawl which Mbongeni wraps around his shoulders.

(6)

Example 2:
Question 8.1.2: November 2009, DBE

GROUNDSWELL BY IAN BRUCE

Read the following extract from a theatre review by Kobus Burger in Beeld, 1 November 2006

> The drama centres on a small, simple and very personal story, but Bruce succeeds in turning the personal into the universal with great ease.
>
> One evening's events in a guesthouse near Port Nolloth say everything about the relationships dynamics in the current South Africa.
>
> Perhaps Bruce says more than any TV debate, newspaper article or man in the street has yet dared to say.

8.1.2 Discuss how the following universal experiences are (true on a universal level) expressed in the play through the characters:
- Unresolved past
- The feeling of belonging and the issue of identity
- Guilt, accusation and redemption   (12)

Discussion:
This question requires candidates to analyse ideas from the text in relation to the 'text-in-context' to make their point. They will cite evidence and develop logical arguments for concepts. The action verb 'discuss', suggests that this question may be a 'knowledge' question, but this is not the case. The use of the word 'how' increases the level of cognitive demand made. To answer the question, candidates have to recall knowledge of characters and specific contextual examples in the play which refer to their dilemmas and choices. They will explain how the characters past choices impacts on the characters' present status. They will apply their knowledge and understanding of the themes in the play and analyse how the characters life choices are valid. This involves non-routine thinking based on the texts theme and their world-view. They have to analyse and make sensible links between specific examples in this play text and the wider themes in the play. They have to build their explanation by using relevant evidence from the play as a whole.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

8.1.2 The themes of the play are of a universal nature.
The play is not context-bound.
Groundswell underscores the idea that coming to terms with ourselves and our past in South Africa is inevitably an extended process requiring courage and honesty and which leaves little room for superficial self-satisfaction and complacency. Should candidates make close reference to the text marks should be awarded accordingly.

The following themes are to be discussed by candidates:

An unresolved past
Although the politics and government of the country have been changed for more than ten years, we see that, when certain sensitive issues are raised, old divisions are found to be disturbingly close to the surface.
The country has changed, allowing all its citizens to interact freely, but have these men changed sufficiently to be able to make free use of this liberation? The answer in the play is that they can do so only superficially.

Belonging and identity
Very closely related to this unresolved past is the play's theme of identity.
To a large extent these three men's lives were shaped and defined during the apartheid era.

There is no physical reason why Johan and Thami cannot plan to be neighbours. The obstacles are internal.

Each man is trying to find out who he is in the new South Africa, how he fits into it. At the same time each man remains bound to a view of himself that reflects the past and obstructs the ability to adapt.

Guilt, accusation and redemption

The question of guilt is explored in the play, and on a number of levels.

Johan accuses Mr Smith of having benefited from apartheid, of having benefited from Johan's policing of the townships. He also accuses him of denying his guilt in these matters, and thereby denying himself the opportunity of redemption.

Johan also has his own burden of guilt – he has killed a man, albeit because of a mistaken sense of danger at the time.

His subsequent dismissal from the police force, and his treatment as a scapegoat by white society, seem to have been supported by a deeply-felt self-chastisement. Johan's sense of guilt is very important to the play. It may be said to be the driving force behind his desire to help Thami, and to be accepted into Thami's world. It is also behind his vehement attacks on Mr Smith, whom he identifies as representing those middleclass whites who allowed him to take the blame for apartheid's dirty work, while they got on with their lives, pretending that all was well and that they were blameless.

Johan very badly wants Mr Smith to own up to his guilt. It is not, however, because he wants to punish him. It is because, he insists, confession is the way to redemption. Redemption is what Johan of course wants for himself, and it becomes evident in the last scene that, to his mind, helping Thami to achieve a better future is his only way to it. Thus, he tries to get Mr Smith to feel the same kind of consuming guilt that he does and to recognise an equal need for redemption.

MARKS		DESCRIPTOR
10 -12	Outstanding	Candidate brilliantly identifies and understands the themes of the play. He/she demonstrates insight by connecting the personal issues to the universal issues (themes) of the play. All aspects regarding the themes are discussed.
8 - 9	Good	The candidate identifies and describes the themes of the play in a logical manner. He/she connects the personal with the universal (themes). A few aspects regarding the themes are omitted.
6 - 7	Satisfactory	The candidate describes some of the themes of the play. He fails to connect the personal with the universal (themes). The answer does not demonstrate insight and is not well structured.
4 - 5	Elementary	Very basic aspects of the themes of the play are discussed. There are some glaring omissions in the answer. No logical discussion evident.
0 - 3	Weak	The candidate suggests very little about the themes of the play. Answer is not clear. Question is misunderstood by the candidate.

(12)

Example 3:

Constable:	There's a gale blowing up. The shutters are banging. The house rocks 1
	and creaks. I'm frightened and I go to find my mother. She is sitting with
	my father on the veranda. The wind is blowing her hair. My mother and
	father are each holding shards of smoked glass. 'Go to the kitchen and
	get yourself some glass', she says with her mouth full of hair. I go to the 5
	kitchen. I think that the glass might be for the wind. Tant Hannie gives
	me a long, sharp piece of smoked glass. 'Hold it between your thumb and
	big finger', she says. She gives my brother glass as well. 'You don't know
	about it, do you?' she whispers and laughs. 'The solar eclipse. It's nearly
	here. The glass is for looking through. Otherwise the sun will burn you. If 10
	you look carefully, you'll see …' She glides one hand with shining rings
	over her other hand … 'how the shadow of the moon slides over the sun.'
	We wanted to get as close to the sun as possible. We climb up the peach
	tree and sit on the roof. The wind is pulling me. I get a fright and drop my
	piece of glass and it falls onto the veranda roof. Then – quite suddenly – 15
	everything's quiet. Nothing stirs. And my brother says, 'Look' and he
	peers through the glass with one eye. I say, 'Give it to me,' but he won't.
	So I cup my hands over my eyes and I look up. I see a shadow take a
	bite out of the sun. And as I look and look, the sun gets smaller. Just
	darkness and sickle-sun. And then suddenly, everything is black. 20

10.3.2 What advice would you give to an actor who must perform this extract of Constable?

Refer to the following aspects as guidelines in your discussion:
- The atmosphere/mood you wish to create
- The use of voice (8)

Discussion:

The word 'what' suggests that this question may be a knowledge question. However, it is classified as an 'analysis' question because candidates have to analyse and explain how they would advise an actor to perform and interpret the extract provided to achieve a specific mood through the use of voice and other technical skills. To answer the question, candidates have to recall knowledge of performance skills, vocal interpretation and reception theory. They have to understand how the use of phrasing, pause, inflection and tonal variation as well as other technical delivery skills will impact on the creation of a specific mood. Although answering the question involves the use of lower cognitive levels (Knowledge, Comprehension and Application), candidates also have to analyse how the particular extract should be performed in order to convey and create a particular mood/atmosphere to explain how technical skills can be used to interpret the lines vocally.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

10.3.2 The atmosphere is secretive and sinister. The actor would use his voice in such a way to create a similar atmosphere. He would use a slower tempo, use lower vocal tones that are interchanged with higher vocal tones. He could perhaps use a lyrical quality, or a singing quality to create the appropriate atmosphere. Constable would use his body in a still manner, his head may be turned and he would focus in front of him. It is important to take into account that he is narrating a story as if it is taking place at the present moment. There would be an 'immediacy' in his experience of the events. Constable's bizarre narration of the solar eclipse coincides with the noise of the wind. It must be presented in a secretive manner as if an unreal dream – a certain hauntedness of fairy-tale atmosphere could be created. The audience must get the feeling that something abnormal is happening, while in reality it is a natural phenomenon. It becomes magical and strange in the way Constable is narrating the story. Constable's bizarre narration of the solar

eclipse coincides with the noise of the wind, the falling of quinces like hail, and flowers that fly away. All these things are very secretive, and are presented as an unreal dream – a type of ghostliness.

Acknowledge reference to Stanislavsky and any other motivated vocal application. (8)

Table 5: Examples of questions at level 3: Evaluation and Synthesis

Higher order: Evaluation and Synthesis: Level 3
Such questions require candidates to make a critical judgement, for example, on qualities, accuracy, acceptability, worth, plausibility, or probability of a given argument, or proposed solution, outcome or strategy, using background knowledge of the subject and/or evidence/ information provided by sources to motivate the judgement. Synthesising questions entail integrating ideas and information and relating parts of material, ideas or information to one another and to an overall structure or purpose in a way that is relational. Answering these types of questions involves the following cognitive processes: Evaluating, attributing, checking, deconstructing, integrating, organising, outlining and structuring.
Example 1:
Question 11: November 2008, DBE Read the extract from the poem Cattle in the rain by Musaemura Zimunya and answer the questions that follow. Nothing has no end,   1 it is true. This rain used to soak us in the pastures and the cattle would not stop to graze, they would not be driven to the kraal,   5 it made me cry and curse sometimes and I used to wish I was born for the skirt. Just imagine penetrating the wet bush almost doubled up with a heavy smelling coned up jute sack   10 as a rain coat, pebbles of water pounding on the head, very irritating too. Sometimes an angry wasp disturbed by the foregoing cows stabbed you on the cursing lips   15 and in the frantic stampede wet thorns snapped at random in your benumbed feet. And the rain does not cease and the cows just go on. 11.1 Explain whether you would present this extract for performance as an individual piece or as choral verse (group of voices). Justify your choice by referring to the extract and the vocal qualities created by individual and group voices. (7)

Discussion:

The action verb 'explain' in question 11.1 suggests that this question may be a 'comprehension' type question. However, to answer the question candidates have to make a choice and justify their choice/decision. They have to interpret and analyse the lines of the poem provided in the source material and then assess whether the piece that will be performed should be an individual piece or a choral verse, and provide reasons for their choice. They have to state what dramatic and vocal skills they have chosen and explain why and how the vocal skills selected will have a specific theatrical effect. They have to evaluate the effect of their choice on the overall performance. Answering the question involves recalling knowledge of performance skills, vocal interpretation and reception theory. It entails understanding how the use of phrasing, pause, inflection and tonal variation as well as other technical delivery skills impact on the creation of a specific mood. It involves making a sound analysis of the poem and inferring the needs of the particular situation. Although the lower level cognitive processes of knowledge, comprehension, application and analysis are involved in answering the question, candidates also have evaluated how best to perform the extract. They have to make a judgement and form an opinion based on criteria that allow them to make a principled choice and justify their decision. Hence this question is classified as a higher order evaluation question.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

11.1   Candidate may choose either group or individual (1 mark)
Candidate needs to justify choice using both the requirements of the poem and the qualities of the individual voice or group voices.

The following is a suggested answer. All justified and valid answers should be accepted.

E.g. the poem is one boy's voice so I would use an individual voice (2 marks – if given a reason). The poem uses "I" frequently and takes a personal narrative form telling the story of the boy in the rain looking after cattle (2 marks). The actor would use a variety of vocal qualities opening with the phrase in lines 1 and 2 with a resigned (accepting) tone and shifting to storytelling mode in line 3 (2 marks). The focus would be vocal rather than physical and the actor could vocally become the little boy in the present at certain moments (lines 11 and 16) (1 mark).

1 mark given for choice of group or individual. Rest allocated thus:

MARKS		DESCRIPTOR
5 - 6	Very good	Candidate is able to answer clearly and directly, using a description of the group or individual techniques and linking that to the poem.
3 - 4	Average	Candidate focuses on either the voice/s speaking or on the poem but does not discuss both.
1 - 2	Weak	Candidate makes a generalised statement with vague reference to the question.

(7)

Example 2:	

Question 12: November 2009, DBE

12.5 As part of your Dramatic Arts course you will have performed as a character in various drama scenes with at least one other performer.

12.5.2 Discuss how you and the other performer(s) in this scene made use of the stage area to show the relationships between the characters. (5)

    12.5.3 Evaluate the effectiveness of your final performance of this scene for formal assessment. Comment on what theatre skills were used and how and why (purpose) they were used. (4)

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

12.5.2

MARKS		DESCRIPTOR
4-5	Good	Candidate is able discuss how he/she and the other performer(s) in the scene performed made use of the stage area to show the relationships between the characters. In the answer, specific detail is given to position on stage, relationship to other character(s) and physical position of actors' bodies (e.g. sitting down and looking up at more powerful character).
2-3	Average	Candidate is able discuss how he/she and the other performer(s) in the scene stood in the stage area and where the actors were relative to each other. Any reasons as to why these positions were suitable are brief or non-existent.
0-1	Weak	Candidate gives basic statement explaining either the actors in relation to each other or in relation to the audience and stage. No discussion of suitability given.

(5)

12.5.3

| MARKS		DESCRIPTOR
3-4	Good	Candidate is able to evaluate the effectiveness of the final performance for assessment using examples of what happened during the final performance and can make suggestions to improve the performance if performed in future.
2	Average	Candidate is able to evaluate the final performance for assessment at a basic level, tends to make statements unsupported by any examples.
0-1	Weak	Candidate gives basic statement saying whether the performance was successful or not and gives an example or makes an evaluation more by chance than design.

(4)

EXAMPLE 3:

Question 9: November 2009, DBE

9.1.4 Imagine you are the director of *Siener in die Suburbs*. Draw the sketch below in your ANSWER BOOK and show on the sketch where you would place/position the characters Giel, Tjokkie and Albertus during the opening scene when Giel tells Albertus about the fight he had with the Jew. Give a reason for the placing of the characters. Make use of the following key when indicating the characters.

A – Albertus

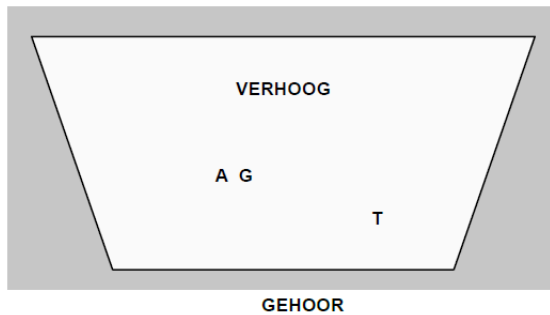T – Tjokkie

G – Giel

STAGE

AUDIENCE
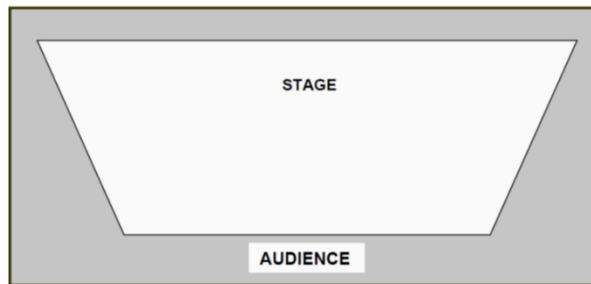
(6)

Discussion:

Answering performance-based questions such as this question requires knowledge of procedural theatrical skills for presentation of material and of the conventions of genre (dramatic genre, technical presentation etc). The action verb 'imagine' in Question 9.1.4 suggests that this task may be a creative one. The phrase 'give a reason' indicates that the question is also an evaluation task. To answer the question candidates have to show their placing of characters and explain and justify their choices. Answering the question requires candidates to put parts together to form a new whole. In pulling the different elements together, they are synthesising. Candidates first have to recall *knowledge* of performance skills, and reception theory in terms of staging. They have to apply their knowledge and understanding of theatre staging choices, specifically their knowledge and understanding of placing characters using the 'triangle' method of focusing characters on stage, to make a selection of places. (The triangle method helps place the dominant character at the apex of the imaginary stage triangle, so that it is easier for the eye to be guided to the main actor and avoids visual clutter and masking.) They have to analyse which staging positions would be most appropriate, effective and feasible and make judgement about the effect of the placements on the performance (evaluate). They then have to defend the particular staging placement they select. Although candidates have to work at several cognitive levels – 'synthesising' is the highest level, thus the question is classified as a 'synthesis' question.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

The memo for his play has not been translated into English as the play is only available in Afrikaans.

9.1.4

| VERHOOG |
| A G |
| T |
| GEHOOR |

EEN punt word toegeken vir die plasing van elke karakter, EEN punt vir die verduideliking vir die karakters.
Tjokkie is voor by die werkbank, naby die Buick wat voor die garagedeur staan, verhoog links. Hy is besig om by die werkbank te werk terwyl die gesprek tussen Giel en Albertus plaasvind. Albertus en Giel staan nader aan mekaar, meer na verhoog regs. Giel was op pad na die kombuisdeur wat agter verhoog regs is.
(6)

To accomplish the goal of discriminating between high achievers, those performing very poorly, and all candidates in between, examiners need to vary the challenge of examination questions. Until recently, the assumption has been that 'alignment' with the allocated percentage of marks for questions at the required cognitive demand levels meant that sufficient examination questions were relatively easy; moderately challenging; and difficult for candidates to answer.

However, research and candidate performance both indicate that a range of factors other than type of cognitive demand contributes to the cognitive challenge of question. Such factors include the level of content knowledge required, the language used in the question, and the complexity or number of concepts tested. In other words, cognitive demand levels on their own do not necessarily distinguish between degrees of difficulty of questions.

This research helps, to some extent, explain why, despite that some NSC examination papers have complied with the specified cognitive demand weightings stipulated in the policy, they have not adequately distinguished between candidates with a range of academic abilities in particular between higher ability candidates. As a result, examiners, moderators and evaluators are now required to assess the difficulty of level of each examination question in addition to judging its cognitive demand.

Section 7 below explains the new protocol introduced by Umalusi for analysing examination question difficulty.

7. ANALYSING THE LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY OF EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

When analysing the level of difficulty of each examination question, there are six important protocols to note. These are:

1. Question difficulty is **assessed independently** of the type and level **of cognitive demand**.
2. Question difficulty is assessed against **four levels of difficulty**.
3. Question difficulty is determined against the assumed capabilities of the **ideal 'envisaged'** Grade 12 Dramatic Arts NSC examination **candidate**.
4. Question difficulty is determined using **a common framework** for thinking about question difficulty.
5. Question difficulty entails **distinguishing unintended sources of difficulty** or ease **from intended sources of difficulty** or ease.
6. Question difficulty entails identifying **differences** in levels of difficulty **within a single question**.

Each of the above protocols is individually explained and discussed below.

7.1 Question difficulty is assessed independently of the type and level of cognitive demand

As emphasised earlier in this exemplar book, the revised Umalusi NSC examination evaluation instruments separate the analysis of the type of cognitive demand of a question from the analysis of the level of difficulty of each examination question. Cognitive demand describes the *type of cognitive process* that is required to answer a question, and this does not necessarily equate or align with the *level of difficulty* of other aspects of a question, such as the difficulty of the content knowledge that is being assessed. For example, a recall question can ask a candidate to recall very complex and abstract scientific content. The question would be categorised as Level 1 in terms of the

cognitive demand taxonomy but may be rated as 'difficult' (Level 3 Table 6 below).

> **Note:**
> Cognitive demand is just one of the features of a question that can influence your comparative judgments of question difficulty. The type and level of cognitive process involved in answering a question does not necessarily determine how difficult the question would be for candidates. Not all evaluation/synthesis /analysis questions are more difficult than questions involving lower-order processes such as comprehension or application.

7.2   Question difficulty is assessed at four levels of difficulty

The revised Umalusi NSC examination evaluation instruments require evaluators to exercise expert judgments about whether each examination question is 'Easy', 'Moderately challenging', 'Difficult' or 'Very difficult' for the envisaged Grade 12 learner to answer. Descriptions of these categories of difficulty are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 6:   LEVELS OF DIFFICULTY OF EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1	2	3	4
Easy for the envisaged Grade 12 student to answer.	**Moderately challenging** for the envisaged Grade 12 student to answer.	**Difficult** for the envisaged Grade 12 student to answer.	**Very difficult** for the envisaged Grade 12 student to answer. The skills and knowledge required to answer the question allow for the top students (*extremely* high-achieving/ability students) to be discriminated from other high achieving/ability students).

> **Note:**
> The forth level, 'very difficult' has been included in the levels of difficulty of examination questions to ensure that there are sufficient questions that discriminate well amongst higher ability candidates.

7.3 Question difficulty is determined against the assumed capabilities of the ideal 'envisaged' Grade 12 dramatic arts NSC examination candidate

The revised Umalusi NSC examination evaluation instruments require evaluators to exercise expert judgments about whether each examination question is 'Easy', 'Moderately challenging', 'Difficult' or 'Very difficult' for the '**envisaged**' Grade 12 learner to answer (Table 5). In other words, assessment of question difficulty is linked to a particular target student within the population of NSC candidates, that is, the Grade 12 candidate of average intelligence or ability.

The Grade 12 learners that you may have taught over the course of your career cannot be used as a benchmark of the 'envisaged' candidate as we cannot know whether their abilities fall too high, or too low on the entire spectrum of all Grade 12 Dramatic Arts candidates in South Africa. The revised Umalusi NSC examination evaluation instruments thus emphasise that, when rating the level of the difficulty of a particular question, your conception of the 'envisaged' candidate needs to be representative of the entire population of candidates for all schools in the country, in other words, of the overall Grade 12 population.

Most importantly, the conception of this 'envisaged' candidate is a learner who has been taught the whole curriculum adequately by a teacher who is qualified to teach the subject, in a functioning school. There are many disparities in the South African education system that can lead to very large differences in the implementation of the curriculum. Thus this 'envisaged' learner is not a typical South African Grade 12 learner – it is an intellectual construct (an imagined person) whom you need to imagine when judging the level of difficulty of a question. This ideal 'envisaged' Grade 12 learner is an aspirational ideal of where we would like all Dramatic Arts learners in South Africa to be.

> **Note:**
> The concept of the ***ideal envisaged Grade 12 candidate is*** that of an imaginary learner who has the following features:
>   a. Is of average intelligence or ability
>   b. Has been taught by a competent teacher
>   c. Has been exposed to the entire examinable curriculum
> This ideal learner represents an imaginary person who occupies the middle ground of ability and approaches questions *having had all the necessary schooling*.

7.4 Question difficulty is determined using a common framework for thinking about question difficulty

Examiners, moderators and evaluators **in all subjects** are now provided with a common framework for thinking about question difficulty to use when identifying sources of difficulty or ease in each question, and to provide their reasons for the level of difficulty they select for each examination question.

The framework described in detail below provides the main sources of difficulty or 'ease' inherent in questions. The four sources of difficulty, which must be considered when thinking about the level of difficulty of examination questions in this framework, are as follows:

1. '**Content difficulty**' refers to the difficulty inherent in the subject matter and/or concept/s assessed.
2. '**Stimulus difficulty**' refers to the difficulty that candidates confront when they attempt to read and understand the question and its source material. The demands of the reading required to answer a question thus form an important element of 'stimulus difficulty'.
3. '**Task difficulty**' refers to the difficulty that candidates confront when they try to formulate or produce an answer. The level of cognitive demand of a question forms an element of 'Task difficulty', as does the demand of the written text or representations that learners are required to produce for their response.
4. **'Expected response difficulty'** refers to difficulty imposed by examiners in a marking guideline, scoring rubric or memorandum. For example, mark allocations affect the amount and level of answers students are expected to write.

This framework derived from Leong (2006) was chosen because it allows the person making judgments about question difficulty to grapple with nuances

and with making connections. The underlying assumption is that judgment of question difficulty is influenced by the interaction and overlap of different aspects of the four main sources of difficulty. Whilst one of the above four sources of difficulty may be more pronounced in a specific question, the other three sources may also be evident. Furthermore, not all four sources of difficulty need to be present for a question to be rated as difficult.

The four-category conceptual framework is part of the required Umalusi examination evaluation instruments. Each category or source of difficulty in this framework is described and explained in detail below (Table 7). Please read the entire table very carefully.

TABLE 7:   FRAMEWORK FOR THINKING ABOUT QUESTION DIFFICULTY

STIMULUS DIFFICULTY
Stimulus difficulty refers to the difficulty of the linguistic **features of the question** (**linguistic** complexity) and the challenge that candidates face when they attempt to read, interpret and understand the words and phrases in the question AND when they attempt to read and understand the **information or 'text' or source material (diagrams, tables and graphs, pictures, cartoons, passages, etc.) that accompanies the question.**
For example:
Questions that contain words and phrases that require only simple and straightforward comprehension are *usually* easier than those that require the candidate to understand **subject specific phraseology and terminology** (e.g. idiomatic or grammatical language not usually encountered in everyday language), or that require more technical comprehension and specialised command of words and language (e.g. everyday words involving different meanings within the context of the subject).
	Questions that contain information that is 'tailored' to an expected response, that is, questions that contain no irrelevant or distracting information, are *generally* easier than those than require candidates to select relevant and appropriate information or **unpack a large amount of information** for their response. A question **set in a very rich context** *can* increase question difficulty. For example, learners *may* find it difficult to select the correct operation when, for example, a mathematics or accountancy question is set in a context-rich context.
	Although the level of difficulty in examinations is *usually* revealed most clearly through the questions, text complexity or the degree of **challenge or complexity in written or graphic texts** (such as a graph, table, picture, cartoon, etc.) that learners are required to read and interpret in order to respond *can* increase the level of difficulty. Questions that depend on reading and selecting content from a text *can*

be more challenging than questions that do not **depend on actually reading the accompanying text** because they test reading comprehension skills as well as subject knowledge. Questions that require candidates to **read a lot** *can* be more challenging than those that require limited reading. Questions that tell learners where in the text to look for relevant information are *usually* easier that those where **learners are not told where to look**.

The level of difficulty *may* increase if texts set, and reading passages or other **source material** used are challenging for the grade level, and make **high reading demands** on learners at the grade level. Predictors of textual difficulty include:

- **semantic content** – for example, if vocabulary and words used are typically outside the reading vocabulary of Grade 12 learners, 'texts' (passage, cartoon, diagram, table, etc.) are *usually* more difficult. 'Texts' are *generally* easier if words or images are made accessible by using semantic/context, syntactic/structural or graphophonic/visual cues.
- **syntactic or organisational structure** – for example, sentence structure and length. For example, if learners are likely to be *familiar with the structure* of the 'text' or resource, for example, from reading newspapers or magazines, etc. 'texts' are *usually* easier than when the structure is unfamiliar.
- **literary techniques** – for example, abstractness of ideas and imagery – and **background knowledge required**, for example, to make sense of allusions.
- if the **context** is **unfamiliar** or remote, or if candidates do not have or are **not provided with access to the context** which informs a text (source material, passage, diagram, table, etc.) they are expected to read, and which informs the question they are supposed to answer and the answer they are expected to write, then constructing a response is *likely* to be more difficult than when the context is provided or familiar.

Questions which require learners to **cross-reference different sources** are *usually* more difficult than those which deal with one source at a time.

Another factor in stimulus difficulty is presentation and visual appearance. For example, type face and size, use of headings, and other types of textual organisers etc. can aid **'readability'** and make it easier for learners to interpret the meaning of a question.

EXAMPLES OF INVALID OR UNINTENDED SOURCES OF STIMULUS DIFFICULTY

- Meaning of words unclear or unknown.
- Difficult or impossible to work out what the question is asking.
- Questions which are ambiguous.
- Grammatical errors in the question that could cause misunderstanding.
- Inaccuracy or inconsistency of information or data given.
- Insufficient information provided.
- Unclear resource (badly drawn or printed diagram, inappropriate graph, unconventional table).
- Dense presentation (too many important points packed in a certain part of the stimulus).

TASK DIFFICULTY
Task difficulty refers to the **difficulty that candidates confront when they try to formulate or produce an answer**.

For example:

In most questions, to generate a response, candidates have to work through the steps of a solution. *Generally*, questions that **require more steps in a solution** are more difficult than those that require fewer steps. Questions involving only one or two steps in the solution are *generally* easier than those where several operations required for a solution**.**

Task difficulty may also be mediated by the **amount of guidance present in the question**. Although question format is not necessarily a factor and difficult questions can have a short or simple format, questions that provide guided steps or cues (e.g. a clear and detailed framework for answering) are *generally* easier than those that are more open ended and require candidates to form or tailor their **own response strategy** or argument, work out the steps **and maintain the strategy for answering** the question by themselves. A high degree of prompting (a high degree of prompted recall, for example) *tends* to reduce difficulty level.

Questions that test specific knowledge are *usually* less difficult that **multi-step, multiple-concept or operation questions**.

A question that requires the candidate to **use** a **high level of** appropriate **subject specific, scientific or specialised terminology in** their **response** *tends* to be more difficult than one which does not.

A question requiring candidates to **create a complex abstract (symbolic or graphic) representation** is *usually* more challenging than a question requiring candidates to create a concrete representation.

A question requiring writing a one-word answer, a phrase, or a simple sentence is *often* easier to write than **responses that require more complex sentences, a paragraph or a full essay or composition**.

Narrative or descriptive writing, for example where the focus is on recounting or ordering a sequence of events chronologically, is *usually* easier than **writing discursively** (**argumentatively or analytically**) where ideas need to be developed and ordered logically. Some questions reflect task difficulty simply by **'creating the space' for A-grade candidates** to demonstrate genuine insight, original thought or good argumentation, and to write succinctly and coherently about their knowledge.

Another element is the **complexity in structure of the required response**. When simple connections between ideas or operations are expected in a response, the question is *generally* easier to answer than a question in which the significance of the relations between the parts and the whole is expected to be discussed in a response. In other words, a question in which an unstructured response is expected is *generally* easier than a question in which **a relational response** is required. A response which involves **combining or linking a number of complex ideas or operations** is *usually* more

difficult than a response where there is no need to combine or link ideas or operations.

On the other hand, questions which require continuous prose or extended writing *may* also be easier to answer correctly or to get marks for than questions that require no writing at all or single letter answer (such as multiple choice), or a brief response of one or two words or short phrase/s because they **test very specific knowledge**.

The **cognitive demand** or **thinking processes** required form an aspect of task difficulty. Some questions test thinking ability, and learners' capacity to deal with ideas, etc. Questions that assess inferential comprehension or application of knowledge, or that require learners to take ideas from one context and use it in another, for example, *tend* to be more difficult than questions that assess recognition or retrieval of basic information. On the other hand, questions requiring recall of knowledge are *usually* more difficult than questions that require simple recognition processes.

When the **resources for answering** the question are included in the examination paper, then the task is *usually* easier than when candidates have to **use and select their own internal resources** (for example, their own knowledge of the subject) or transform information to answer the question.

Questions that require learners to take or **transfer** ideas, **skills or knowledge from one context/subject area and use them in another** *tend* to be more difficult.

EXAMPLES OF INVALID OR UNINTENDED SOURCES OF TASK DIFFICULTY
- Level of detail required in an answer is unclear.   - Context is unrelated to or uncharacteristic of the task than candidates have to do.   - Details of a context distract candidates from recalling or using the right bits of their knowledge.   - Question is unanswerable.   - Illogical order or sequence of parts of the questions.   - Interference from a previous question.   - Insufficient space (or time) allocated for responding.   - Question predictability or task familiarity. If the same question regularly appears in examination papers or has been provided to schools as exemplars, learners are likely to have had prior exposure, and practised and rehearsed answers in class (for example, when the same language set works are prescribed each year).   - Questions which involve potential follow-on errors from answers to previous questions.

EXPECTED RESPONSE DIFFICULTY
Expected response difficulty refers to difficulty imposed by examiners in a **mark scheme and memorandum**. This location of difficulty is more applicable to 'constructed' response questions, as opposed to 'selected' response questions (such as multiple choice, matching/true-false).

For example:

When examiners expect few or no details in a response, the question is *generally* easier than one where the mark scheme implies that **a lot of details are expected**. A further aspect of expected response difficulty is the clarity of the **allocation of marks**. Questions are *generally* easier when the allocation of marks is explicit, straight-forward or logical (i.e. 3 marks for listing 3 points) than when the **mark allocation is indeterminate or implicit** (e.g. when candidates need all 3 points for one full mark or 20 marks for a discussion of a concept, without any indication of how much and what to write in a response). This aspect affects difficulty because candidates who are unclear about the mark expectations in a response may not produce sufficient amount of answers in their response that will earn the marks that befit their ability.

Some questions are more difficult/easy to mark accurately than others. Questions that are **harder to mark and score objectively** are *generally* more difficult for candidates than questions that require simple marking or scoring strategies on the part of markers. For example, recognition and recall questions are *usually* easier to test and mark objectively because they usually require the use of matching and/or simple scanning strategies on the part of markers. More complex questions requiring analysis (breaking down a passage or material into its component parts), evaluation (making judgments, for example, about the worth of material or text, or about solutions to a problem), synthesis (bringing together parts or elements to form a whole), and creativity (presenting own ideas or original thoughts) are *generally* harder to mark/score objectively. The best way to test for analysis, evaluation, synthesis and creativity is usually through extended writing. Such extended writing *generally* requires the use of more cognitively demanding *marking* strategies such as interpreting and evaluating the logic of what the candidate has written.

Questions where **a wide range of alternative answers or response/s** is possible or where the correct answer may be arrived at through different strategies *tend* to be more difficult. On the other hand, questions may be so open-ended that learners will get marks even if they engage with the task very superficially.

EXAMPLES OF INVALID OR UNINTENDED SOURCES OF EXPECTED RESPONSE DIFFICULTY

- Mark allocation is unclear or illogical. The weighting of marks is important in questions that comprise more than one component when components vary in levels of difficulty. Learners may be able to get the same marks for answering easy component/s of the item as other learners are awarded for answering the more difficult components.
- Mark scheme and questions are incongruent. For example, there is no clear correlation between the mark indicated on the question paper and the mark allocation of the memorandum.
- Question asked is not the one that examiners want candidates to answer. Memorandum spells out expectation to a slightly different question, not the actual question.
- Impossible for candidate to work out from the question what the answer to the question is (answer is indeterminable).
- Wrong answer provided in memorandum.
- Alternative correct answers from those provided or spelt out in the memorandum are also plausible.
- The question is 'open' but the memo has a closed response. Memo allows no leeway for markers to interpret answers and give credit where due.

EXPECTED RESPONSE DIFFICULTY

Expected response difficulty refers to difficulty imposed by examiners in a **mark scheme and memorandum**. This source of difficulty is more applicable to 'constructed' response questions, as opposed to 'selected' response questions (such as multiple choice, matching or true-false questions).

For example:

When examiners expect few or no details in a response, the question is *generally* easier than one where the mark scheme expects **a lot of details**.

A further aspect of expected response difficulty is the clarity of the **allocation of marks**. Questions are *generally* easier when the allocation of marks is explicit, straight-forward or logical (i.e. three marks for listing three points) than when the **mark allocation is indeterminate or implicit** (e.g., when candidates need all three points for one mark or 20 marks for a discussion of a concept, without any indication of how much or what to write in a response). This aspect affects difficulty because candidates who are unclear about the mark expectations in a response may not produce sufficient amount of answers in their response that will earn the marks that befit their ability, or they may spend too much time writing excessively long answers.

Some questions are more difficult/easy to mark accurately than others. Questions that are **harder to mark and score objectively** are *generally* more difficult for candidates than questions that require simple marking or scoring strategies on the part of markers. For example, recognition and recall questions are *usually* easier to test and mark objectively because they usually require the use of matching and/or simple scanning strategies on the part of markers. More complex questions requiring analysis (breaking down a passage or material into its component parts), evaluation (making judgments, for example, about the worth of material or text, or about solutions to a problem), synthesis (bringing together parts or elements to form a whole), and creativity (presenting own ideas or original thoughts) are *generally* harder to mark/score objectively. The best way to test for analysis, evaluation, synthesis and creativity is usually through extended writing. Such extended writing *generally* requires the use of more cognitively demanding *marking* strategies such as interpreting and evaluating the logic of what the candidate has written.

Questions where **a wide range of alternative answers or response/s** is possible or where the correct answer may be arrived at through different strategies *tend* to be more difficult. On the other hand, questions may be so open-ended that learners will get marks even if they engage with the task very superficially.

Examples of invalid or unintended sources of expected response difficulty

- Mark allocation is unclear or illogical. The weighting of marks is important in questions that comprise more than one component when components vary in levels of difficulty. Learners may be able to get the same marks for answering easy component/s of the item as other learners are awarded for answering the more difficult components.
- Mark scheme and questions do not match. For example, there is no clear correlation between the mark indicated on the question paper and the mark allocation of the memorandum.
- Question asked is not the one that examiners want candidates to answer. Memorandum spells out expectation to a slightly different question, not the actual question.

- Impossible for candidate to work out from the question what the answer to the question is (answer is indeterminable).
- Wrong answer provided in memorandum.
- Alternative correct answers from those provided or spelt out in the memorandum are also plausible.
- The question is 'open' but the memo has a closed response. Memo allows no leeway for markers to interpret answers and give credit where due.

The framework described above does not provide you with explicit links between the different sources of difficulty, or show relationships and overlaps between the different categories and concepts in the framework. This is because it is impossible to set prescribed rules or pre-determined combinations of categories and concepts used for making judgments about the source of difficulty in a particular examination question.

The intention behind the framework is to allow you to exercise your sense of judgment as an expert. The complexity of your judgment lies in your ability as an expert to recognise subtle interactions and identify links between different categories of a question's difficulty or ease. For example, a question that tests specific knowledge of your subject can actually be more difficult that a multi-step question because it requires candidates to explain a highly abstract concept, or very complex content. In other words, although questions that test specific knowledge are *usually* less difficult than multiple-concept or operation questions, the level of difficulty of the content knowledge required to answer a question can make the question more difficult than a multi-step or multi-operation question.

Not all one-word response questions can automatically be assumed to be easy. For example, multiple-choice questions are not automatically easy because a choice of responses is provided – some can be difficult. As an expert in your subject, you need to make these types of judgments about each question.

7.5 Question difficulty entails distinguishing unintended sources of difficulty or ease from intended sources of difficulty or ease

> ***Note:***
> It is very important that you become extremely familiar with the framework explained in Table 7, and with each category or source of difficulty provided (i.e. content difficulty, task difficulty, stimulus difficulty, and expected response difficulty). You need to understand the examples of questions which illustrate each of the four levels (Table 8 to Table 11). This framework is intended to assist you in discussing and justifying your decisions regarding the difficulty level ratings of questions. You are expected to **refer to all four categories or sources of difficulty** in justifying your decisions.
>
> When considering question difficulty ask:
> * How difficult is the **knowledge** (content, concepts or procedures) that is being assessed for the envisaged Grade 12 candidate? (*Content difficulty*)
> * How difficult is it for the envisaged I Grade 12 candidate to formulate the answer to the question? In considering this source of difficulty, you should **take into account the type of cognitive demand** made by the task. (*Task difficulty*)
> * How difficult is it for the envisaged Grade 12 candidate to **understand the question and the source material** that need to be read to answer the particular question? (*Stimulus difficulty*)
> * What does the **marking memorandum and mark scheme** show about the difficulty of the question? (*Expected response difficulty*)

Close inspection of the framework for thinking about question difficulty (Section 7.4, Table 7) above, shows that, for each general category or source of difficulty, the framework makes a distinction between 'valid' or intended, and 'invalid' or unintended sources of question difficulty or ease. Therefore, defining question difficulty entails identifying whether sources of difficulty or ease in a question were intended or unintended by examiners. Included in Table 7 are examples of unintended sources of difficulty or ease for each of the four categories.

Valid difficulty or 'easiness' in a question has its source in the requirements of the question, and is ***intended*** by the examiner (Ahmed and Pollit, 1999). Invalid sources of difficulty or 'easiness' refer to those features of question difficulty or 'easiness' that were ***not intended*** by the examiner. Such unintended 'mistakes' or omissions in questions can prevent the question from assessing what the

examiner intended, and are likely to prevent candidates from demonstrating their true ability or competence, and can result in a question being easier or more difficult than the examiner intended.

For example, grammatical errors in a question that could cause misunderstanding for candidates are unintended sources of question difficulty because the difficulty in answering the question could lie in the faulty formulation of the question, rather than in the intrinsic difficulty of the question itself (for example, because of stimulus difficulty). Candidates "may misunderstand the question and therefore not be able to demonstrate what they know" (Ahmed and Pollit, 1999, p.2). Another example is question predictability (when the same questions regularly appear in examination papers or textbooks) because familiarity can make a question which was intended to be difficult, less challenging for examination candidates.

Detecting unintended sources of difficulty or ease in examinations is largely the task of moderators. Nevertheless, evaluators also need to be vigilant about detecting sources which could influence or alter the intended level of question difficulty that moderators may have overlooked.

Note:
When judging question difficulty, you should distinguish **unintended sources of question difficulty or ease** from those sources that are intended, thus ensuring that examinations have a range of levels of difficulty. The framework for thinking about question difficulty allows you to systematically identify technical and other problems in each question. Examples of problems might be: unclear instructions, poor phrasing of questions, the provision of inaccurate and insufficient information, unclear or confusing visual sources or illustrations, incorrect use of terminology, inaccurate or inadequate answers in the marking memorandum, and question predictability. You should **not** rate a question as difficult/easy if the source of difficulty/ease lies in the 'faultiness' of the question or memorandum. Instead, as moderators and evaluators, you need to alert examiners to unintended sources of difficulty/ease so that they can improve questions and remedy errors or sources of confusion before candidates write the examination.

7.6 Question difficulty entails identifying differences in levels of difficulty within a single question

An examination question can incorporate more than one level of difficulty if it has subsections. It is important that the components of such questions are 'broken down' into to their individual levels of difficulty.

> **Note:**
> Each subsection of a question should be analysed separately so that the percentage of marks allocated at each level of difficulty and the weighting for each level of difficulty can be ascertained as accurately as possible for that question.

8. EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF DIFFICULTY

This section provides at least **three** examples of questions from previous dramatic arts NSC examinations (Table 8 to Table 11) categorised at each of the four levels of difficulty described in Section 7 (Table 6) above. These examples were selected to represent the **best and clearest** examples of each level of difficulty that the dramatic arts experts could find. The discussion below each example question tries to explain the reasoning behind the judgments made about the categorisation of the question at that particular level of difficulty.

TABLE 8: EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS AT DIFFICULTY LEVEL 1 – EASY

Example 1:
QUESTION 9: NOVEMBER 2008
SIENER IN DIE SUBURBS BY PG DU PLESSIS
9.2   *Every character in Siener in die Suburbs speaks in a distinctive manner.* Read the extracts below and choose which dialogue suits each of the characters. Write only the letter A – D next to the name of the character, for example: Giel: E.

9.2.1

Name of character	Dialogue
Tiemie	**A** 'Wat vreet jou?', 'Hy gaan jou hel gee. Maar neuk op!', 'nou sit jy met die grootste tang …', 'Jou kans weggefoeter ...', 'Vir wat moet hy die ding altyd so oprev …', 'Jy's low class. Waar's jou pa? Jy's 'n tang!', 'Hy gaan sy bearings neuk' '… nog een van die bloedjies wat in hierdie plek moet vergaan', 'Hoe de duiwel moet ek 'n bosluis uit 'n hond se dinges loslieg?'
Tjokkie	**B** 'Hoe groter die ding, hoe vinniger slaat ons hom dood', 'Ek het haar opgehel', 'ek sal die bitchgeit uit jou uitfoeter', 'Net so skwirt dan's daai puisie uit', 'Dink jy my derms hoor dit nie?'
Jakes	**C** 'dwarsklappe en kleintjies: oudgebaar wees op dertig', 'maak my vrek … ek't genoeg gehad van die hele boel …', 'vasmaak aan hierdie nes', '… om daar te lê en kleintjies kry soos 'n varksog', 'ek's nie preggie nie, nê Ma?'
	D 'dat ons saam 'n tent opslaan', ' 'n reine liefde', ' 'n mooie gedagte', 'die vaders des huises', 'Dis my kuns, verdomp!', 'Ek honour my bekkings, skuld of nie skuld nie.'

(3)

Discussion:

This question is classified as easy because:

- The evidence suggests that candidates should have covered this work in class through reading the play and through character analysis. They should be very familiar with the characters listed and the dialogue in the play. Thus, **content difficulty** indexes the difficulty in the subject matter, topic or conceptual knowledge.

- What we found was the instructions provided in the question are clear and concise. The text provided in the **stimulus** material does not make high reading demands on candidates. Grade 12 candidates should easily be able to interpret and understand the excerpts of dialogue provided in the source material in relation to the characters listed. What potentially makes the **stimulus** moderately difficult/confusing is that three characters are listed but four sets of dialogue are provided. In sum, this refers to the difficulty candidates face when they attempt to read, interpret and understand the words, phrases in the question, or source material that accompanies the question.

- We established that the **task** is a simple matching exercise involving recognition and recall. Candidates have to identify the dialogue that suits each of the three characters listed. Essentially, they have to link each of the four sets of dialogue with one of the three characters provided in the table. One dialogue serves as a distractor. The level of cognitive demand is of the lower order; the cognitive processes required to answer the question are recognizing and remembering. Hence, **task difficulty** refers to the difficulty that candidates confront when they try to formulate or produce an answer.

• The evidence suggests that all candidates have to do in their response is write the letter of the corresponding dialogue next to the name of a 'matching' character. The allocation of the marks indicates that three marks are allocated for three answers. The marking and **expected response** is straightforward. Ultimately, this refers to the difficulty imposed by examiners in the mark scheme and memorandum.

The question is easy in terms of the concept/content, stimulus material, task and expected response demands. |

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

9.2.1   Tiemie: C
        Tjokkie: A
        Jakes: B

(3)

Example 2:

QUESTION 2: NOVEMBER 2014, SECTION B: SOUTH AFRICAN THEATRE (1960–1994)

WOZA ALBERT! BY PERCY MTWA, MBONGENI NGEMA AND BARNEY SIMON

2.4   The play Woza Albert! captures the concept that the actor's body is a tool of communication.
      2.4.2   Identify TWO different ways in which the body is used as a tool of communication in the play. (2)

Discussion:

This question is classified as easy because:

• The evidence suggests that this **content** knowledge forms a core part the curriculum topic dealing with technical application of vocal and physical skills. All Grade 12 candidates should be familiar with the notion of the use of the body as a tool of communication in plays. The concepts of vocal and physical communication are not complicated or difficult to understand. Thus, **content difficulty** indexes the difficulty in the subject matter, topic or conceptual knowledge.

• What we found was the question is clear and very specific; it is clear that candidates need only identify two ways. The terms 'captures', 'concept' and 'tool of communication' should all be familiar to Grade 12 Dramatic Arts candidates **(stimulus)**. In summation, this refers to the difficulty candidates face when they attempt to read, interpret and understand the words, phrases in the question, or source material that accompanies the question.

• We established that the **task** entails recalling ways in which the body can be used as a tool for communication in plays. All candidates have to do is recall from memory what they have learnt in class and write two simple. facts. There are many different ways but candidates only have to remember two of the ways. Hence, **task difficulty** refers to the difficulty that candidates confront when they try to formulate or produce an answer.

• The evidence suggests that the allocation of two marks per way is logical and indicates to candidates that only two short answers are required. The envisaged Grade 12 candidate should find it easy write their answers and have no problem achieving the marks allocated **(expected response).** Ultimately, this refers to the difficulty imposed by examiners in the mark scheme and memorandum.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

2.4.2   Markers accept any TWO valid responses.
Actors transform from character to character. They change accents, posture and gesture, for example from a toothless old man into Auntie Dudu. Actors become objects, for example an instrumental jazz band, the helicopter, etc. Actors also use their voices to make sound effects/idiophones, for example the siren or helicopter sounds. Candidates may mention other examples.

(2)

Example 3:

QUESTION 7: NOVEMBER 2014, SECTION C: SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEMPORARY THEATRE (POST-1994)
MISSING BY REZA DE WET
7.2   Describe how the following characters respond to the arrival of the circus in town:
   • Miem (2)
   • Gertie (2)

Discussion:
This question is classified as easy because:

- The evidence suggests that the **content** forms an essential part of the curriculum topic dealing with 'texts-in-context' where facts related to characters in context are at the heart of teaching the text. The response of the two characters is central to knowledge of the play and not difficult to grasp. Thus, **content difficulty** indexes the difficulty in the subject matter, topic or conceptual knowledge.
- What we found was the instructions are very specific and clear; it is not difficult to work out what the question is asking. The terms used in the question (such as respond) should all be familiar to Grade 12 candidates **(stimulus)**. In sum, this refers to the difficulty candidates face when they attempt to read, interpret and understand the words, phrases in the question, or source material that accompanies the question.
- We established that the **task** is to describe the two characters' responses to the arrival of the circus. Although the question tests very specific knowledge, it should be easy for Grade 12 candidates to formulate a response. The question is categorized as a remembering or recall of basic knowledge type question **(task)**. Hence, **task difficulty** refers to the difficulty that candidates confront when they try to formulate or produce an answer.
- The evidence suggests that although the question does not state how much to write, the allocation of two marks per character is clear and logical and indicates to candidates that two short responses are required. The envisaged Grade 12 candidate should find it easy write the answers and have no problem achieving the marks allocated **(expected response)**. Ultimately, this refers to the difficulty imposed by examiners in the mark scheme and memorandum.

The question is easy in terms of the concept/content, stimulus material, task and expected response demands.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

7.2   Marker award TWO marks for attitude and motivation for each character.

Accept well motivated answers.

Miem
- Miem is negative and fearful of the circus.
- She sees the circus as evil.
- She wants to protect Meisie from the 'evil' and dangerous world of the circus.
- She fears the unknown and that is why she fears the circus.
- However, although she is against what the circus represents she still wants to hear Gertie's telling of the circus.
- She responds to the circus by saying everyone else associated with and close to it is responsible.
- Miem is the one who makes the link between the circus and the disappearance of the girls. This fuels her bitter attitude towards the circus and its evil music.

(2)

Gertie
- Gertie pretends to be negative and against the circus.
- However, she is strangely drawn to and fascinated by the circus.
- She actually went to see the tent with the circus freaks.
- She is very curious but due to her Afrikaner Calvinism she resists the temptation.
- She witnesses the circus procession in the street. She is always at the circus.
- She tells Miem what Miem wants to hear about the circus.

(2)

TABLE 9: EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS AT DIFFICULTY LEVEL 2 – MODERATE

Example 1:
DRAMATIC ARTS - NOVEMBER 2011, SECTION A QUESTION 2: THEATRE OF THE ABSURD Answer this question if you have studied *Waiting for Godot* OR *The Bald Primadonna* OR *Bagasie*. <blockquote>Absurdist plays portrayed the ridiculousness of human life through the use of disjointed dialogue, illogical or nearly non-existent plots and static characters with no historical background.</blockquote> Refer to the statement above and, in an essay, discuss how through dialogue, plot and character the absurd style is developed in the text you studied. Using the criteria in the statement, refer to specific examples from the absurd play you studied this year. (30)
Discussion: This question is classified as 'moderately challenging' because: • The evidence suggests that the **content** is at the requisite grade level and several knowledge elements are required related to concepts and facts around the use of unique dialogue and plot style for Absurdist Theatre. The content and concepts assessed is essentially specialised to the Absurdist

period. It does assume that the learners will require background knowledge related to the use of dialogue, plot, and character as contextualised in the absurdist style with examples developed in the text studied. Simple, straightforward, subject specific terminology and examples are required on the use of dialogue, plot, and character as developed in the text. It tests very specific knowledge on the style of Absurdist Theatre dialogue, plot and character in a specific text. They have to explain the purpose and use of Absurdist Theatre skills using specific textual examples. Thus, **content difficulty** indexes the difficulty in the subject matter, topic or conceptual knowledge.

- What we found was that it is not difficult to work out what the question is asking **(stimulus)**. The meaning of words is clear and known in the question. The level of detail required is clear and the question is answerable in the format of an essay. Some scaffolding and criteria to discuss in the essay is provided as a prompt for guiding candidates to mediate the question to formulate the answer. It is possible for the candidate to work out from the question how to formulate the answer. In sum, this refers to the difficulty candidates face when they attempt to read, interpret and understand the words, phrases in the question, or source material that accompanies the question.

- We established that the question asked is moderately challenging as the learners would need to provide examples in context using the given criteria. They have to describe, explain and interpret how dialogue, plot and character are developed in the text. The question involves basic application of identifying and explaining Absurdist Theatre skills or concepts in context. The task therefore implies more than one thinking step and is beyond a habitual response **(task)**. Hence **task difficulty** refers to the difficulty that candidates confront when they try to formulate or produce an answer.

- The evidence suggests that the answer is determinable and the mark allocation is given, but needs to clearly state how many examples, words or even the length of the answer required for the candidate to get 30 marks. It is not hard to mark this question, because the range of responses will be predictable, though the rigour of discussion and the relevance of textual examples cited will impact on awarding marks. Responses therefore will differ and markers have to carefully evaluate the motivation given by the candidate making marking this question moderately difficult. **(expected response)**. Ultimately, this refers to the difficulty imposed by examiners in the mark scheme and memorandum.

This question is moderately difficult with regard to content, task and expected response.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines
CANDIDATES ANSWERED THIS QUESTION IF THEY HAD STUDIED EITHER *WAITING FOR GODOT* OR *THE BALD PRIMADONNA* OR *BAGASIE*.

The essays should be marked using the rubric grid. Take into consideration the candidates' approach to the topic. Motivated, original answers that show insight should be given credit.

CATEGORY	MARK	DESCRIPTORS (EVIDENCE)
Outstanding	26–30	• Well organised, comprehensive and coherent,

achievement (higher order)		polished structure.
		• Supported by an exceptionally high level of competence to process information into original interpretation and thoughtful selection of facts.
		• Using a selection of relevant dramatic references.
		• Insightful, fluent, observation and knowledge powerfully expressed.
		Candidate discusses the absurdist view that existence is pointless and that people attempt to make meaning of the world around them by creating some sense of order and structure. Candidate discusses clearly how plot is circular with no definite beginning, middle and end which help to stress the meaningless of life. Is able to show clearly that language is reduced to meaningless clichés. Is able to show the static nature of the characters and their repetitive actions. Connects to relevant examples from the play he/she has studied. The candidate shows an excellent understanding of Absurd Theatre and the play studied.
Meritorious achievement (higher order)	22–25	• Well organised, detailed and coherent, polished structure.
		• Supported by a high level of competence and careful selection of facts to process information.
		• Using a selection of relevant dramatic references.
		• Shows insight, observation and knowledge well expressed.
		The candidate has a similar level of knowledge of Absurd Theatre and the play studied as the Outstanding candidate. The main difference is the ability to connect with the topic cohesively. Is able to discuss the topic and use language effectively. Often this candidate overwrites putting down correct information but lacks the succinctness and originality of the Outstanding candidate.
Substantial achievement (middle order)	18–21	• Organised, detailed, some level of competence, some slight flaws evident in structure.
		• Interesting reading, clear and logical statements, convincing, simple direct language.
		• Supported by a selection of relevant dramatic references.
		• Shows good grasp of the topic.

		EITHER: Candidate attempts to discuss the plot, dialogue characters and their actions. He/she refers to some examples of Absurd Theatre but is vague as to how these examples are presented in the play. The candidate shows a good understanding of Absurd Theatre and the play studied. OR: Excellent analysis of Absurd Theatre and the play studied but connection to the topic is by chance in the essay rather than a discussion of the topic presented. A narrative of plot is given rather than a discussion. Dialogue is mentioned but candidate discusses it in a generalized manner. Often the characters are merely listed and a brief character sketch of each is given.
Adequate achievement (middle order)	14–17	• Structure not necessarily logical. • Displays a basic understanding but tends towards mechanistic and stereotyped response at times. • Adequate selection of relevant 'dramatic' references. • Adequate reading but feels memorised. Not always a high level of insight.
		Candidate well prepared and can give details about Absurd Theatre, plot, dialogue and characters in the play studied but lack ability to apply to topic. Often work seems to be a repetition of notes/character sketches supplied in class and thus may be fragmented. But the candidate has solid knowledge of the content.
Moderate achievement (middle order)	10–13	• Not always organised, not logically constructed. • Limited selection of information, poor language skills might be a contributing factor. • Candidate lacks the ability to support his/her answer with suitable examples.
		Candidate has knowledge of Absurd Theatre, plot, dialogue and characters and of the play studied but tends to write down anything and everything he/she knows without connecting to the topic. Information is generally correct but may be presented in a confused manner. Tends to EITHER be continuous writing (no paragraphing) OR short sentences explaining certain aspects of the content. Knows the content of the play studied.
Elementary achievement (lower order)	06–09	• Rambling – no structure, limited vocabulary, little attempt to present information in an acceptable manner. • Very little information, jumbled, not easy to follow, often irrelevant. • Candidate lacks the ability to support his/her answer with suitable examples.

		Candidate has some knowledge of Absurd Theatre, characters and of the play studied but tends to write down short phrases about the plot, dialogue and characters. Often incorrect information is also given (about a different play/characters or another section of theatre history) the marker will have to look for correct information in the answer. Difficult to mark because at first glance it looks as if the whole answer is incorrect. The candidate tends to tell the story of the play or give brief character sketches.
Not achieved (lower order)	00–05	• Incoherent, very little work, limited skills, in need of support. • Irrelevant. • Simple phrases or words written down that candidate has learnt but does not understand
		The candidate's knowledge of Absurd Theatre, plot, dialogue and characters and the play studied is poor. Often incorrect information is given. Tends to be a list of words, phrases and sentences written down in the order that the candidate remembers things. Candidate often rambles on in a confused way.

(30)

Example 2:

DRAMATIC ARTS - NOVEMBER 2011, SECTION B

QUESTION 3: *BOESMAN AND LENA* BY ATHOL FUGARD THEATRE OF THE ABSURD

SOURCE A

3.1 **SOURCE A** is a photograph from a film production of *Boesman and Lena*.

3.1.2 Is the picture **(SOURCE A)** an accurate representation of the relationship between Boesman and Lena? Justify your answer with reference to the play text. (5)

Discussion:

This question is classified as 'moderately challenging' because:

- The evidence suggests that the **content** is at the requisite grade level and several knowledge elements are required related to character and theme. It does assume that the learners will require background knowledge related to the relationship between characters and applying visual reading skills. Answering the question requires good understanding of the relationship

between Boesman and Lena. They have to be very familiar with specific textual examples of tensions between the two characters. The question is answerable as it tests very specific knowledge related to plot and character. The difficulty level of the question is raised to moderately difficult because learners have to make the connection between the visual and the demands of the question. Thus, **content difficulty** indexes the difficulty in the subject matter, topic or conceptual knowledge.

- What we found was that it is not difficult to work out what the question is asking. The meaning of words in the question are clear and known. It is possible for the candidate to work out from the question how to formulate the answer. The question depends on studying the visual stimulus and tells learners where to look **(stimulus)**. In summation, this refers to the difficulty candidates face when they attempt to read, interpret and understand the words, phrases in the question, or source material that accompanies the question.

- We established that the answer is in the format of a short answer through justifying their answer with examples from the text. Learners are asked to justify through specific examples from the text why they either agree or disagree whether Source A is an accurate representation of the relationship between Boesman and Lena. The question asks learners to justify with contextual examples whether the visual is valid and an accurate depiction or not which makes the task moderately difficult rather than easy **(task)**. Hence **task difficulty** refers to the difficulty that candidates confront when they try to formulate or produce an answer.

- The evidence suggests that although the answer is determinable, the mark allocation needs to clearly state how many examples, or even the length of the answer required for the candidate to get 5 marks. The memo does not give a clear indication as to how marks are awarded and spread according to the questions.

  Although the range of responses will be predictable, responses will differ and markers have to carefully evaluate the motivation given by the candidate, making marking this question moderately difficult **(expected response)**. Ultimately, this refers to the difficulty imposed by examiners in the mark scheme and memorandum.

This question is moderately difficult with regard to content, task and expected response.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

3.1.2   Accept candidate's responses if well motivated by reference to text.
Based on the textual information most candidates would say No. The picture shows a couple holding hands fairly peacefully whereas the play text highlights the abusive nature of their relationship – Boesman hitting Lena for breaking the empties, when in fact he broke them, Lena showing Outa her bruises, Lena counting her bruises. He abuses her verbally, taunting her and making her doubt herself, he neglects and refuses to talk to her for long periods of time. At no time do we really see a connected couple as reflected in the picture. In addition, the characters in the picture do not seem to be beaten down by life as Boesman and Lena in the text. Some candidates may identify actors in the picture (Angela Basset and Danny Glover) and say that they are not South African and would not be suitable therefore to accurately represent Boesman and Lena. Accept yes if candidates give a well substantiated answer. (5)

Example 3:

DRAMATIC ARTS - NOVEMBER 2011, SECTION A

QUESTION 7: *NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH* BY JOHN KANI

Read the extract from *Nothing But The Truth* below and answer the questions that follow.

SIPHO:	By this time Themba had finished high school. My father somehow found the money to send Themba to Fort Hare University. I was very happy for him but I was also sad and angry. I did not understand where my father got the money now. I found out later that my father cashed in his Old Mutual Life Insurance Policy. Took the money and sent Themba to university to study for a B.Comm.	1
	My father could only pay for boarding and tuition. I paid for everything else. His clothes – and he only wore the best. His food and pocket money. The course was three years. He took five wonderful years. The best holiday Themba ever had, at my expense.	10
	My mother died before Themba graduated. I cried. She was the only one who ever said to me she loved me. My father openly favoured Themba and it hurt. Themba graduated a year later and never got a job. All that university education for nothing. All wasted on Themba and he never cared. Both my father and I continued to support him.	15
	(He goes to the kitchen, grabs the whisky bottle and tries to open it.)	
MANDISA:	*(Following)* This is ridiculous.	
THANDO:	*(Grabbing the bottle from him)* Why did you continue to support him?	
MANDISA:	I don't believe a word of it. My father told us he graduated at the top of his class. Are you telling me that my father was useless, never took care of his family? That's a lie! I refuse to listen to anymore of this drunken drivel.	20

7.2   Describe how you would physically and vocally create the character of Sipho in performance in a realistic manner (lines 1–16).   (8)

Discussion:
This question is classified as 'moderately challenging' because:

- The evidence suggests that the **content** is at the requisite grade level and several knowledge elements related to physical and vocal skills are required including how to apply the knowledge to create a specific character. It does assume that the learners will require and apply background knowledge related to the use of vocal and physical skills. The question is answerable as it tests very specific knowledge related to vocal and physical interpretive skills

to a known piece. What makes this question moderately difficult is that the candidates would have to know important concepts related to the use of the voice and body as an instrument of communication. Thus, **content difficulty** indexes the difficulty in the subject matter, topic or conceptual knowledge.

- What we found was the meaning of words in the question are clear and known. It is possible for the candidate to work out from the question how to formulate the answer using subject specific language / terminology. The question depends on studying the written stimulus and tells learners where to look. The level of detail required is clear as the lines are referenced, and therefore it is not difficult to work out what the question is asking. What makes this question moderately difficult is the application of the stimulus in a written mode. **(stimulus)**. In sum, this refers to the difficulty candidates face when they attempt to read, interpret and understand the words, phrases in the question, or source material that accompanies the question.

- We established that the answer is in the format of a short paragraph which requires specialised subject knowledge terms and processes with reasons. The answer is determinable through reasoned discussion as students make some decision as to how they would approach the problem of applying physical and vocal interpretive skills. They have to use contextual clues to identify the meaning of a text, obtain and interpret information using text features, apply simple dramatic conventions of interpreting lines physically and vocally for a character. Some complexity in the structure of the response may be present as it requires a student to justify how they would interpret the lines for the authentic creation of a character. What makes this question moderately difficult is that candidates would need to know how to apply physical and vocal skills in an interpretive way to the lines in the source using writing skills. However, this would not have made the question difficult as candidates would have had sufficient practice during their practical assessment tasks to interpret physical and vocal skills **(task)**. Hence, **task difficulty** refers to the difficulty that candidates confront when they try to formulate or produce an answer.

- The evidence suggests that the range of responses will be varied even though one could accept candidate's individual and creative interpretations if well motivated and substantiated from the text required for the candidate to get 8 marks. The mark allocation is not indicated against specific criteria related to physical and vocal interpretive skills for the creation of the character of Sipho. What makes this question moderate is the fact that for eight marks candidates have to write an extended text to justify their physical and vocal choices **(expected response)**. Ultimately, this refers to the difficulty imposed by examiners in the mark scheme and memorandum.

This question is moderately difficult with regard to content, task, stimulus and expected response.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

7.2 Accept candidate's individual and creative interpretations if well motivated and substantiated from the text. Facial expression – Initially facial expression would reflect his calmness but would gradually get animated as he goes along. He would frown or raise his eyebrows when speaking the line – 'My father somehow found the

money to send Themba to Fort Hare University.' Slight flaring of nostrils and raising of eyebrows when speaking lines 8–11. Have a sarcastic smile on his face.

Sad expression when he speaks of his mother who really loved him.

Sipho could be seated initially, stand up when he speaks about paying for Themba. He could pace when speaking lines 10–14 and walk hastily to the kitchen to fetch his whisky.

Volume – Initially starts off softly, volume would gradually increase in lines 8–11, it would soften as he speaks of his mother, a little louder as he shows slight anger at his father's favouritism. Loud when he speaks line 15–16.

Tone – starts off conversationally, changes to show resentment that his father Cashed his insurance policy, sarcasm when he speaks of the best holiday that Themba ever had, reflective when he speaks of his mother and anger again as he speaks of his father and brother.

Candidate should refer to both physical and vocal aspects.

Candidates may also refer to Stanislavski's acting techniques as a framework for the question or as support for statements made.
(8)

TABLE 10: EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS AT DIFFICULTY LEVEL 3 – DIFFICULT

Example 1:
DRAMATIC ARTS - NOVEMBER 2014, SECTION C: SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEMPORARY THEATRE (POST-1994) SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEMPORARY THEATRE (POST-1994) QUESTION 5: NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH BY JOHN KANI 5.8 You plan to take this play on tour. Explain what staging challenges (difficulties) you may have and how you would solve them. (4)
Discussion: This question is classified as 'difficult' because: • The evidence suggests that the **content** is at the requisite grade level and several knowledge elements related to stages and staging are required. The question is answerable as it tests very specific knowledge related to stages and staging. It does assume that the learners will require, and apply background knowledge related to the use of specifically Poor and/or Workshop theatre skills. The question requires the use of theatrical concepts to solve a non-routine problem. Thus, they would be relying on their own practical experiences and resources to formulate the answer. The question is at the difficult level because the answer depends on knowing theatre history and practical knowledge in a new context as it involves applied reasoning. Thus, **content difficulty** indexes the difficulty in the subject matter, topic or conceptual knowledge.

- What we found was the meaning of words in the question are clear and known. It is not difficult to work out what the question is asking as simple straightforward words have been used. It is possible for the candidate to work out from the question how to formulate the answer by weighing multiple things. **(stimulus)**. In sum, this refers to the difficulty candidates face when they attempt to read, interpret and understand the words, phrases in the question, or source material that accompanies the question.
- We established that the question requires reasoning, planning using evidence and a higher level of thinking for the reason that it uses thinking processes where candidates have to present solutions to show interrelationships among concepts, issues, and problems, and to offer solutions to staging challenges by using reasoning, planning, and evidence to support suggestions. It requires them to proffer solutions for the staging challenges as they would be touring with the play. They have to cite staging challenges and develop logical arguments for their choices. Thus, candidates have to transfer ideas from one context to another. The answer is determinable through reasoned discussion using a triple-loop reasoning focus of what, why and how staging techniques may present challenges and to be solution driven. What makes this question difficult is that students are asked to interpret information and make an informed decision as to what further information is required so that judgements, decisions and course of action can be decided upon **(task)**. Hence **task difficulty** refers to the difficulty that candidates confront when they try to formulate or produce an answer.
- The evidence suggests that to get the 4 marks allocated candidates have to write a short paragraph which requires specialised subject knowledge and processes with reasons. The memo suggests the answer would require subject specific language proficiency and the use of applied staging skills. It points to the types of stages and their advantages. It suggests marks for the type of staging and solutions required for the candidate to get 4 marks. Because the responses will differ, markers have to carefully evaluate the motivation given by the candidate **(expected response)**. Ultimately, this refers to the difficulty imposed by examiners in the mark scheme and memorandum.

This question is difficult with regard to content, task and expected response.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

5.8 Mark holistically. Accept answers that are well-motivated and accurate.
It would be difficult, costly, time consuming and would require manpower to build, set up and strike this realistic set on tour. Perhaps the director could utilise whatever he or she finds in the places to which the play tours. If theatres are used, they might have something which could be adapted. If toured to schools, perhaps a found space or hall/classroom with furniture could be used and lighting etc. kept to a minimum. Perhaps frames could be used with bead curtains attached or they could be fitted into existing doors.
(4)

Example 2:

DRAMATIC ARTS - NOVEMBER 2011, SECTION B
QUESTION 5: WOZA ALBERT! BY PERCY MTWA, MBONGENI NGEMA AND BARNEY SIMON

Read the extract from Woza Albert! below and answer the questions that follow.

	Lights reduce to spot-light the boxes. Actors turn their hat brims up. Mbongeni spins his hand above his head. Helicopter sounds. They are in a helicopter, looking down.	1
PERCY:	(*Mimes radio*): Radio 1254 CB receiving, over. What? That's impossible! Are you sure? Okay, over and out. Hey, what do you see down below?	5
MBONGENI:	(*Mimes binoculars*): Oh, it's a beautiful day down below. Birds are flying, swimmers are swimming, waves are waving. Hey! Morena's walking on water to Cape Town! Ag shame! His feet must be freezing! Hey, I wish I had my camera here!	10
PERCY:	This must be the miracle of the decade!	
MBONGENI:	Ag, I always forget my camera!	
PERCY:	Down! Down! Radio 1254 CB receiving, over. Yes, we've got him. Yeah, what? Torpedo? Oh, no, have a heart! He's not even disturbing the waves! Ja, I wish you could see him, he looks amazing!	15
MBONGENI:	(*Nodding frenetically into mike*): Ja jong, ja! [Yes man, yes!]	
PERCY:	What? Bomb Morena? Haven't you heard what they say? You start with Morena and it's worse than an atom bomb! Over and out! Hey, this is a shit bladdy job! You pull the chain ...	
MBONGENI:	No, come on, come on. Fair deal! Eenie, meenie, minie, moe. Vang a kaffir by the toe. As hy skrik, let him go. Eenie, meenie, minie, moe! It's you!	20
PERCY:	Okay, this is the last straw! I think I am resigning tomorrow!	
MBONGENI:	Ready ... target centre below ... release depth charges ... bombs ... torpedoes ... go!	25
	They watch: the bombs fall. A moment of silence and then a terrible explosion. They separate, come together, detonating each other. Light reduces to stark overhead shaft.	
BOTH:	Momeeeee! Aunti-i-ieee! He-e-e-l-l-p!	
	Blackout	30

5.4 Discuss why the creators of *Woza Albert!* use comedy in this extract when the subject matter is serious. (6)

Discussion:

This question is classified as 'difficult' because:

- The evidence suggests that the **content** is at the requisite grade level. The question is based on theatre history and practical knowledge about comic skills. Learners will have to know how to make contextual connections from a textual, social and theatrical point of view. It does assume that the learners will require and apply background knowledge related to the use of comic techniques and staging. They would also be relying on their own practical experiences and resources to formulate the answer. There is space for the A-Grade candidate to make this connection of the suitability of using comic techniques for a serious topic. Comic techniques and staging is not an easy concept for candidates to make sense of because of having to visualise comedy and timing. Answering the questions requires a deep understanding of how comedy in a serious context is applicable. It is therefore conceptually challenging for the envisaged Grade 12 candidate. Thus, **content difficulty** indexes the difficulty in the subject matter, topic or conceptual knowledge.

- What we found was that the meaning of words in the question are clear and known. It is not difficult to work out what the question is asking as simple straightforward words have been used. It is possible for the candidate to work out from the question how to formulate the answer. However, the extract provided makes reading demands on the envisaged Grade 12 candidate, as quite a lot of theatrical action has to be unpacked, visualised, interpreted and contextualised **(stimulus)**. In sum, this refers to the difficulty candidates face when they attempt to read, interpret and understand the words, phrases in the question, or source material that accompanies the question.
- We established that the answer is in the format of a short paragraph which requires specialised subject knowledge terms and processes with reasons. The answer is achieved through reasoned discussion and making connections with the theatrical skill of comic techniques in a serious context. Students are asked to interpret information and make an informed decision as to the value and use of comic conventions in a serious context so that judgements and decisions on their efficacy can be decided upon. It uses thinking processes where candidates have to: identify use of comic theatrical devices used and their dramatic effect and identify characteristic textual comic features in context. They have to suggest how and why this comedy genre is effective in depicting a serious social subject matter. They would have to argue why comic techniques have a theatrical potency. The answers would point to their understanding of comic theatre skills and techniques from the text and theatre history. They must state the comic concepts and interpret and justify whether it is effective. Answering this question requires high level reasoning to evaluate the efficacy of using comic techniques on a serious matter. What makes this question difficult is that candidates are asked to discuss the use of comedy on a serious topic which involves some complexity of thought processes and justification **(task).** Hence, **task difficulty** refers to the difficulty that candidates confront when they try to formulate or produce an answer.
- The evidence suggests that there is complexity in the expected response, as complex ideas related to why and how comedy is required. It calls on learners to synthesise their understanding of theatrical and dramatic conventions in relation to the text in order to get 6 marks. Although responses will differ, markers have to carefully evaluate the motivation given by the candidate. The memo needs to clearly state how many examples are required or even the length of the answer candidates need to produce in order to get the 6 marks **(expected response)**. Ultimately, this refers to the difficulty imposed by examiners in the mark scheme and memorandum.

This question is difficult with regard to content, stimulus, task and expected response.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

5.4

- Protest Theatre often uses comedy as a device. Targeted characters are made into caricatures. Often individuals in positions of power that use their power to oppress.
- Comedy will help the audience realise that the apartheid ideology was in fact weak.
- The audience, by laughing at these characters, realise their hypocrisy.

	• Comedy will expose the absurdity of the thoughts of certain key political figures of the apartheid regime PW Botha, the SOUTH African Defence
	• Force (SADF), the Police Force (SAP), and all the apartheid backers.
	• Comedy often makes serious issues more accessible and open to debate.
	• There is a cathartic effect through laughter.
	• Poor theatre technique.
	• The play is also satirical.

(6)

Example 3:

DRAMATIC ARTS - NOVEMBER 2014, SECTION C: SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEMPORARY THEATRE (POST-1994)
QUESTION 6: GROUNDSWELL BY IAN BRUCE

Study the source below and answer the question that follows.

SOURCE B

JOHAN:	*(Removing a wallet from an inside pocket)* Then this must be your wallet?
SMITH:	*(Taken aback)* What?
THAMI:	What are you doing?
JOHAN:	I'm making sure, that's all. *(He opens the wallet and goes through it; takes out a driver's licence, reads the name.)* Jeffrey Reginald Smith. 5
SMITH:	*(Stands up and lunges towards Johan)* Give that to me.

6.2 Discuss TWO qualities you would look for when you cast each character. (6)

Discussion:

This question is classified as 'difficult' because:

- The evidence suggests that the **content** is at the requisite grade level, though learners will have to know how to make connections from a casting point of view with substantiation. The question is answerable as it tests very specific knowledge related to casting techniques in relation to characters in the play. The question depends on their practical knowledge as it asks learners to be theatrical in their reasoning. To answer the question candidates need to know how to apply casting techniques, which makes the content conceptually challenging for the envisaged Grade 12 candidate. Thus, **content difficulty** indexes the difficulty in the subject matter, topic or conceptual knowledge.

- What we found was the meaning of words in the question are clear and known. It is not difficult to work out what the question is asking as simple straightforward words have been used. The answer would require vocabulary within the candidate's subject range and reasoning skills. The extract is short and easy to visualise the contrasting theatrical impact of the two characters, making casting decisions discernible **(stimulus)**. In sum, this refers to the difficulty candidates face when they attempt to read, interpret and understand the words, phrases in the question, or source material that accompanies the question.

- We established that the answer is in the format of a short paragraph which requires specialised subject knowledge of casting in the context of the play. Complex ideas related to the relationship between appropriate casting and characters is required. The answer is achieved through reasoned discussion and making connections with the characters motivation, the sub-text, their

stage presence and visualising the staging in relation to their casting choices. There is space for A-Grade candidates to make this connection. It would require imagination, the ability to visualise and use reasoning. It uses thinking processes where candidates have to make connections between the characters qualities as revealed through the dialogue in the play and intangibles such as the characters aura and how it supports and contributes to advancing an authentic portrayal of the character. There is some complexity of thought processes which provides justification where more than one possible answer is required. It requires candidates to generate numerous ideas or alternatives to solve a problem that requires a novel solution with justification. The complexity of the answer involves understanding the three separate characters physique and vocal qualities as supporting the authenticity of their portrayal. What makes this question difficult is that students require reasoning, planning, choice-making and a higher level of thinking **(task)**. Hence, **task difficulty** refers to the difficulty that candidates confront when they try to formulate or produce an answer.

- The evidence suggests that the range of responses will be predicated on specific examples of casting the three characters based on their motivation, the sub-text, their stage presence and visualising the staging in relation to their casting choices. The memo indicates that two qualities needs to be stated, but it does not unpack how marks will be awarded for the candidate to get the 6 marks **(expected response)**. Ultimately, this refers to the difficulty imposed by examiners in the mark scheme and memorandum.

This question is difficult with regard to content, task and expected response.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

6.2 Markers accept any other well motivated answer.

Character
Johan
He is in his mid-thirties, a permanent resident of the Garnet Lodge. He has a fit body (diver) and should be able to convey drunkenness realistically and play an aggressive, complex character.

Thami
About 30, Thami is temporary manager of the Garnet Lodge. A hard worker, Thami provides for his wife. He is a serious type, not a risk taker (perhaps rather fearful of this). Perhaps a sense of sadness portrayed throughout, as his dream of a consignment has not been realised.

Smith
He is in his mid-60s and an overnight guest at the lodge. An English-speaking South African who is retired, tired and wandering. The actor playing Smith should be able to show his age physically.
(3 x 2) (6)

TABLE 11: EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS AT DIFFICULTY LEVEL 4 – VERY DIFFICULT

Note:

During the development of the exemplar book some subject specialist argued that there is a faint line between a difficult and a very difficult question. It was also evident that in some subjects question papers did not have questions that could be categorised as very difficult. In order to cater for this category, subject specialists were requested to adapt existing questions and make them very difficult or create their own examples of very difficult question. However, it was noted that in some instances attempts to create very difficult questions introduced invalid sources of difficulty which in turn rendered the questions invalid. Hence Umalusi acknowledges that the very difficult category may be problematic and therefore requires especially careful scrutiny.

Example 1:

DRAMATIC ARTS - NOVEMBER 2011, SECTION A

QUESTION 6: *SOPHIATOWN* BY THE JUNCTION AVENUE THEATRE COMPANY

Read the extract from *Sophiatown* below and answer the questions that follow.

MINGUS:	Hey Fahfee – we're busy – Jake's writing me a masterpiece.	1
FAHFEE:	Words again, Mr Jakes?	
JAKES:	A love letter, Fahfee.	
FAHFEE:	A love letter! Let me see – love ... That's number 35 – Katpan. Or 36 – Nonkwayi. Male and female anatomicals – 35 or 36 it is!	5
JAKES:	Love! It's just quarrels all the way.	
FAHFEE:	Quarrels – number 5 – the Tiger.	
MINGUS:	Ag man, Jakes, what do you know of love? Waar's jou ousie?	
JAKES:	Ek het nie.	
MINGUS:	Daar's die main trouble, man.	10
FAHFEE:	So what's the love letter?	
MINGUS:	Read it Jakes, read it! Fahfee here is the man with an ear for numbers. Tell me this is not my number!	
JAKES:	It's not finished.	
MINGUS:	(*Threatening*) Read it out, Jakes.	15
JAKES:	Okay. 65 Gerty Street, Sophiatown, Johannesburg. 21st November 1954. My dear darling Princess. I saw you at the funeral and I think you're smashing. I only go for the best. Winthrops, Bostonians, Simpsons, Borsalinos, and you. I'm the best dresser in town. American straights. I'm a smart guy and I don't get messed around. Be here at six o'clock tonight. I'm an honest gangster. I only go for the town center – I don't touch Sophia. I fought in the war, in planes and tankers and I love the Odin Cinema. Balansky's is not for me – too much shouting.	20

6.5 Mingus is not given any words to speak while Jakes is talking (lines 16–23). Explain how you would direct the physical reactions of the actor playing Mingus to show his thoughts and feelings while   Jakes is talking.

(4)

Discussion:

This question is classified as 'very difficult' because:

- The evidence suggests that the **content** is at the requisite grade level. They would have to use a selection of relevant directorial pointers which are insightful and relevant. The content focuses on using a reasoned directorial discussion and making connections with the staging in context. It includes directorial reasoning, spatial planning and theatrical viewpoints to support their assertions. Thus, **content difficulty** indexes the difficulty in the subject matter, topic or conceptual knowledge.
- What we found was that the meaning of the words in the question are clear and known. The answer would require vocabulary within the candidates' subject range. It is possible for the candidate to work out from the question how to formulate the answer, although the extract requires in depth reading **(stimulus).** In sum, this refers to the difficulty candidates face when they attempt to read, interpret and understand the words, phrases in the question, or source material that accompanies the question.
- We established that the response is in a complex reasoned paragraph, where they would have to write discursively (analytically) expressing their directorial choices. Although the question is answerable, as it tests very specific knowledge related to directorial skills it is complex as several thinking steps are required in a non-routine manner. It uses thinking processes where candidates have to make several directorial connections. They would have to write their thoughts in an abstract and applied manner. Students would have to show a well organised, comprehensive and coherent, polished structured paragraph, supported by an exceptionally high level of competence to process information into an original interpretation using specific thoughtful selections of directorial pointers. It assumes the ability to visualise the scene theatrically and to know the sub-text of the spoken lines and unspoken thoughts. There is space for A-Grade candidates to make this connection. The question asks learners in sum to offer theatrical directorial reasoning. This task requires a relational response which involves linking complex directorial skills in a challenging context. The answer would have to reveal a highly developed creative, inventive, ingenious and high skills-based theatre mindset. These factors make the task very difficult **(task)**. Hence **task difficulty** refers to the difficulty that candidates confront when they try to formulate or produce an answer.
- The evidence suggests that the range of responses will be varied, as one would have to accept candidate's individual and creative interpretations, if well motivated and substantiated from the extract, for candidates to earn the 4 marks. There is complexity in the expected response, as complex ideas related to directing and staging are required from the candidate. This would impact on the memo accommodating the range of responses. The mark allocation is not indicated against the use of specific directorial skills and depth of reasoning. What makes this question very difficult is the fact that for four marks candidates have to write an extended paragraph to justify their directorial choices. Responses will differ and markers have to carefully evaluate the motivation given by the candidate, making marking this question very difficult as it looks at "knowledge-in-action" (applied) and not merely "knowledge-of-action" (recall) **(expected response)**. Ultimately, this

refers to the difficulty imposed by examiners in the mark scheme and memorandum.

This question is very difficult with regard to content, task, and expected response.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

6.5 The director would get the actor portraying Mingus to react with pride, like a showman. He could strut around or point to himself when Jakes says, 'I only go for the best.' He could point to the items of clothing as Jakes reads them out e.g. Winthrops, Bostonians etc. He swanks around the stage when Jakes reads, 'I am the best dresser in town.' He could move downstage to the words, 'I'm an honest gangster' to impress the audience.'

Accept candidate's responses if well supported. (4)

Example 2:

DRAMATIC ARTS - NOVEMBER 2014, SECTION C: SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEMPORARY THEATRE (POST-1994)
QUESTION 6: GROUNDSWELL BY IAN BRUCE

Study the sources below and answer the question that follows.

SOURCE A

A production photo of *Groundswell* depicting the extract in SOURCE B.

SOURCE B

JOHAN:	(*Removing a wallet from an inside pocket*) Then this must be your wallet?	
SMITH:	(*Taken aback*) What?	
THAMI:	What are you doing?	
JOHAN:	I'm making sure, that's all. (*He opens the wallet and goes through it; takes out a driver's licence, reads the name.*) Jeffrey Reginald Smith.	5
SMITH:	(*Stands up and lunges towards Johan*) Give that to me.	

6.4 Explain to actors how the relationship between Johan, Smith and Thami could be expressed through facial expression, movement and gesture.
(You may refer to either SOURCE A or B.) (6)

Discussion:
- The evidence suggests that in order to successfully answer this question candidates need to have a reasonably in-depth knowledge of directorial skills and sub-text motivation. The question contains a combination of a broad number of diverging knowledge elements related to facial expression, movement, gesture, spatial awareness and directing thereby making answering it very difficult. These are very difficult concepts for the envisaged Grade 12 candidate, for the reason that they would have to source from a selection of dramatic and directorial skills to offer insightful, fluent and original judgements that are cogently expressed. But this does not make the stimulus to be very difficult **(content)**. Thus, **content difficulty** indexes the difficulty in the subject matter, topic or conceptual knowledge.
- What we found was that a variety of elements make the question very difficult to answer. Although the meaning of the words in the question are clear and known. The candidate needs to know visual literacy skills, directorial spatial relationships and how to interpret the sub-text of dialogue physically. Candidates will have to refer to Source B, but use Source A to assist them in visualising the scene. Perhaps certain candidates may find reading and analysing both sources distracting **(stimulus)**. In sum, this refers to the difficulty candidates face when they attempt to read, interpret and understand the words, phrases in the question, or source material that accompanies the question.
- We established that the response is in a complex reasoned paragraph, where they would have to write discursively (analytically), discussing theatrical and directorial thinking processes and choices. It is challenging as it requires inventiveness and ingenuity in so far as visualising and describing the requisite directorial choices that were made. Candidates have to make several reasoned connections. The task is cognitively demanding as they would have to show complex, reasoning, developing choices and thinking creatively by relating their choices to directorial concepts. This makes the task multi-faceted and very difficult for the envisaged Grade 12 candidate. The task requires a relational response which involves linking complex directorial concepts to the stimulus. There is space for A-Grade candidates to make this connection **(task)**. Hence, **task difficulty** refers to the difficulty that candidates confront when they try to formulate or produce an answer.
- The evidence suggests that the answer would have to show in an extended paragraph an original interpretation and thoughtful selection of directorial pointers, which are insightful and relevant and justify directorial choices for the three characters totalling 6 marks. The answers to this question are wide ranging. The marking guideline for the question is based on content pointers rather than a detailed marking guideline referencing how and why marks are spread. The allocation of marks is reliant on the competence of the marker who needs to carefully study the answer and then decide whether the answer provided is appropriate. They have to evaluate the validity of what each candidate has written. What makes this expected response very difficult is the fact that for six marks candidates could experience difficulty in deciding how much they need to write and how their answer should be phrased or structured including how many directorial choices and justifications they have to make **(expected response)**. Ultimately, this refers to the difficulty imposed by examiners in the mark scheme and memorandum.

This question is very difficult with regard to content, task, and expected response.

Memorandum/Marking guidelines

6.4 Markers accept any other motivated answer. Candidates may or may not refer to Source A and if they give their own interpretation, based on Source B this is also acceptable.

Johan
His facial expression is aggressive, bitter and threatening. He wants something from Smith. His investment in a concession but if he can't get that, he wants his money by any other means. The movement of his body is closed off from Smith and he stands his ground, not moving/budging. The gesture of withholding Smith's wallet out of reach, shows that Johan wants Smith's money.

Smith
The facial expression shows his mouth is open, aghast (shocked) at Johan's actions. He has a shocked expression on his face. He is desperate, caught off-guard. The movement of his body is off-balance as he unsuccessfully lurches (moves) towards Johan for his wallet, movement is a lunge. His arm reaches forward is the gesture which reflects this.

Thami
His facial expression reflects shock and amazement (surprise). His movement is possibly frozen as he is seated at the table. He looks like he is about to jump up with the gesture of his hands placed on his knees.
(3 x 2) (6)

9.   CONCLUDING REMARKS

This exemplar book is intended to be used as a training tool to ensure that all role players in the Dramatic Arts Examination are working from a common set of principles, concepts, tools and frameworks for assessing cognitive challenge when examinations are set, moderated and evaluated. We hope that the discussion provided and the examples of questions shown by level and type of cognitive demand and later by level of difficulty assist users of the exemplar book to achieve this goal.

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