

# Noughts & Crosses

## Play Guide for AQA GCSE Drama

### Downloadable Worksheets

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## Names and roles of theatre makers



### TEST YOURSELF A1

Look at the descriptions below of various theatre makers describing their roles and responsibilities. Match each description with the correct theatre maker.

COSTUME DESIGNER

UNDERSTUDY

TECHNICIAN

STAGE MANAGER

THEATRE MANAGER

DIRECTOR

PLAYWRIGHT

SOUND DESIGNER

PERFORMER

PUPPET DESIGNER

SET DESIGNER

LIGHTING DESIGNER

During the performance, I rely both on a cue sheet and the stage manager calling cues to ensure that I change the lighting at exactly the right moment.

Once the production is scheduled, I make sure that the building is ready to receive the show, including having ushers and box office staff on hand for performances.

My primary tools are dialogue and stage directions. I might write several drafts of the script before I am happy with it. Some scripts even change during the rehearsal process.

When I read a script, I note all the opportunities for sound, including music for transitions or sound effects. I think about how sound can affect the atmosphere of the play.

For some shows, particularly if outfits are complex and have to be specially made, I arrange fittings with the actors well before rehearsals. For other shows, I wait until rehearsals and the process is more collaborative.

My job is one of the most important. I am responsible for making sure that all of the backstage elements run smoothly, including issuing the calls to the actors; being prepared to prompt if someone forgets a line and calling technical cues.

My design might be restricted by the technical capabilities of a theatre. If there is only a small lighting rig, I might have to limit some of the effects I want. I might be able to come up with solutions such as handheld lights.

I have to think about the size of the stage and where entrances and exits will occur, as well as any levels or ramps that might be needed. I decide if I want to use **backdrops** or **projections** in my design as well as how scene changes might occur. I then prepare sketches and a **model box**.

I am prepared to assume the role I have been learning if the usual actor is unable to perform. This can be quite nerve-wracking as I won't have had as much time to rehearse as the usual actor.

I was delighted when I was cast. During rehearsals, the director guided my interpretation of the part, including the blocking of my movements.

When I first read the script, I think about what the play's message is. I develop a concept for the play which will influence how I cast it and when and where I will set it.

Some productions demand a lot from my skills. If we are working in a large outdoor space, I design and create large **backpack puppets** that can be seen well at a distance.

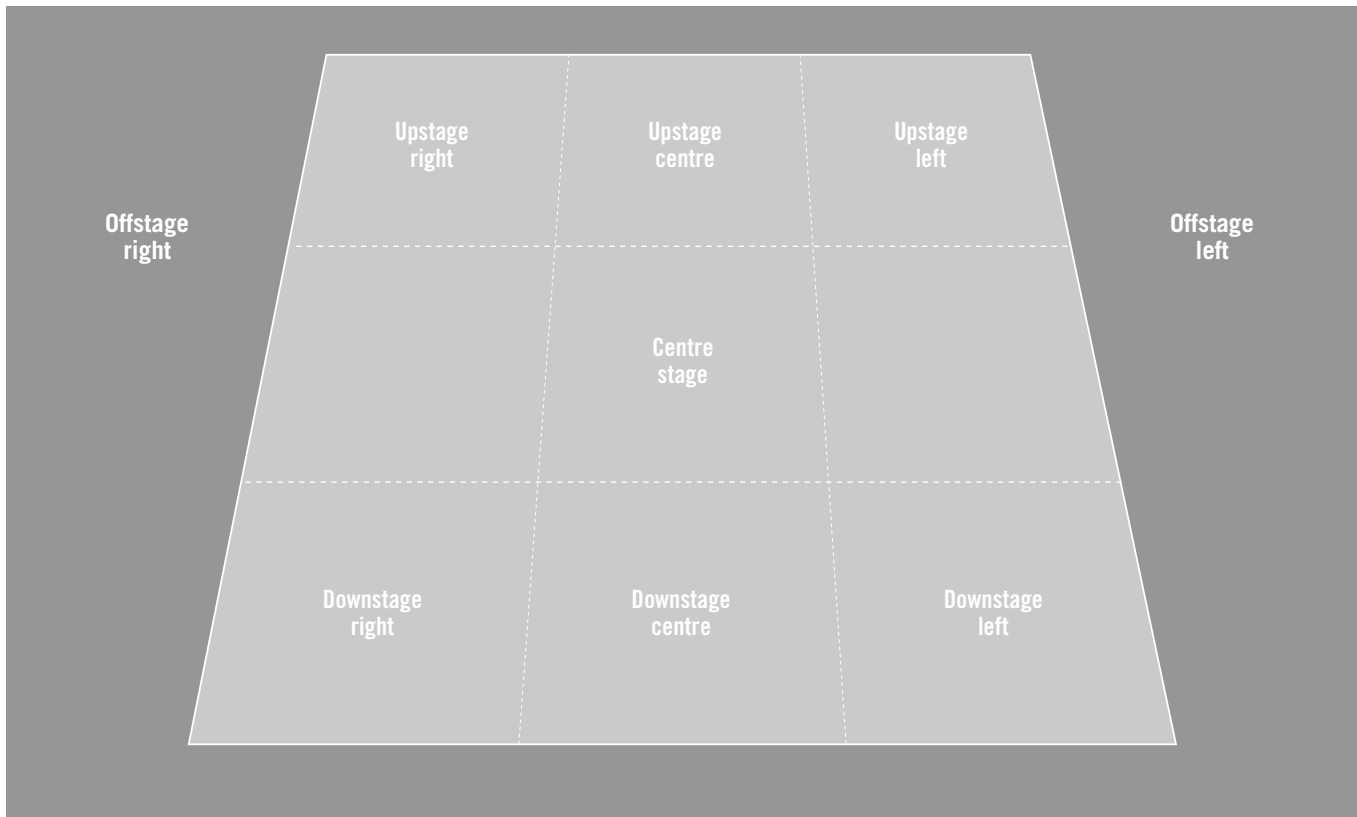
## Stage positioning

### TASK A1

1 Imagine you are a set designer and the director has asked you to put the following items on stage:

- A A wide doorway, upstage centre
- B A pair of chairs and a table, centre stage
- C A small rug, downstage right
- D A window, upstage left
- E A kitchen sink, stage right.

Use the diagram below to note where you would put them.



2 Now imagine you are an actor and you have been asked to do the following blocking. Note where on the stage you will be each time.

- A Enter through the wide doorway.
- B Make yourself a cup of tea.
- C Sit down on a chair.
- D Look dreamily out of the window.
- E Stand as close and centrally to the audience as you can.
- F Move as far away from the rug as you can.

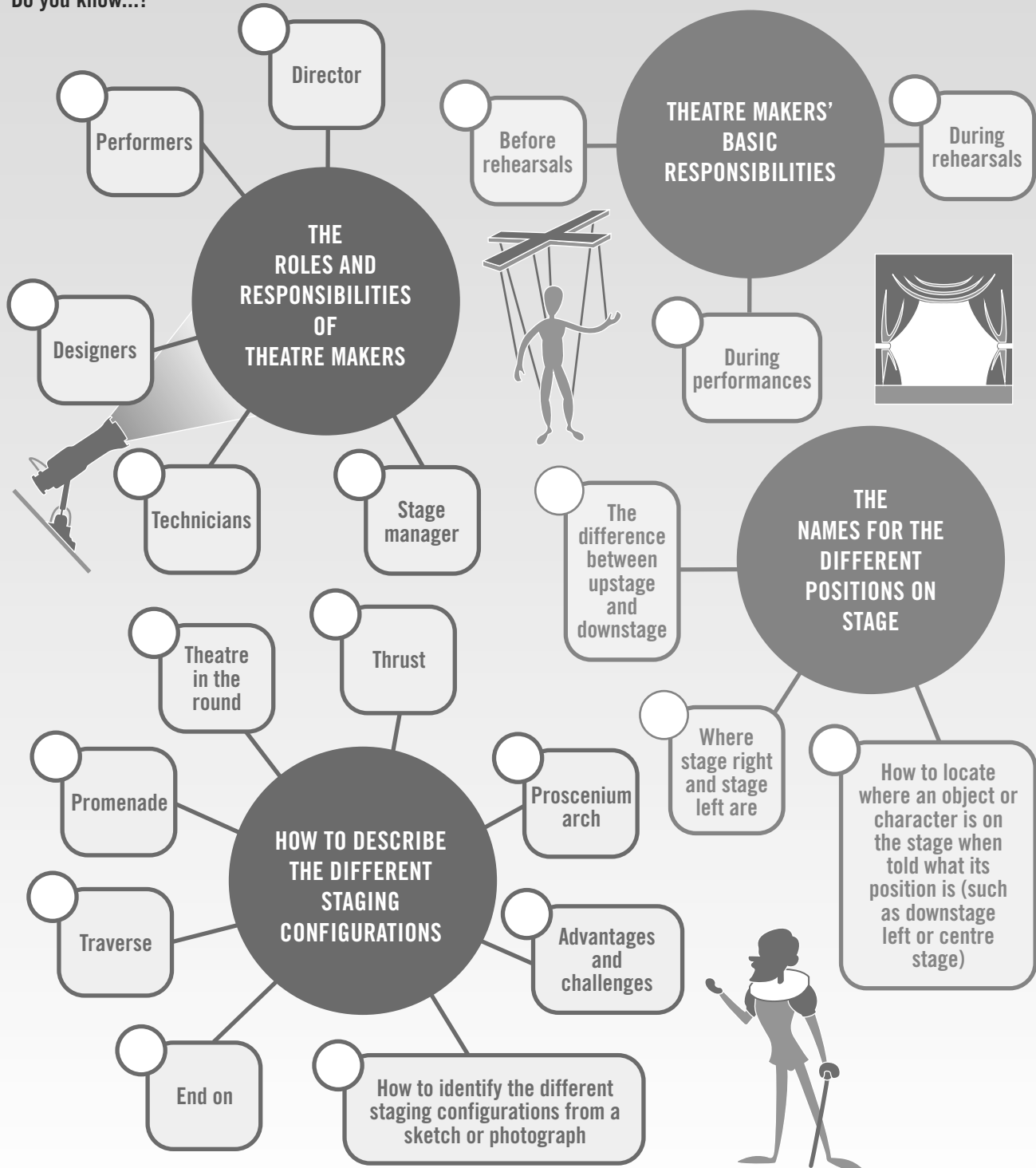
3 Copy a new version of the stage space and decide where you would position the characters in Act 1, Scene 7 in the girls' toilets, from the stage direction 'Lola, Joanne and Dionne, confront Sephy' (page 29). After you have marked where the characters and furniture are positioned, annotate the diagram by describing their stage positions. For example, if you have put Lola downstage, you might write: *Lola: downstage left (or DSL)*.

# LEARNING CHECKLIST: SECTION A

Tick each aspect of theatre roles and terminology if you are confident of your knowledge.

If you are unsure of anything, go back and revise.

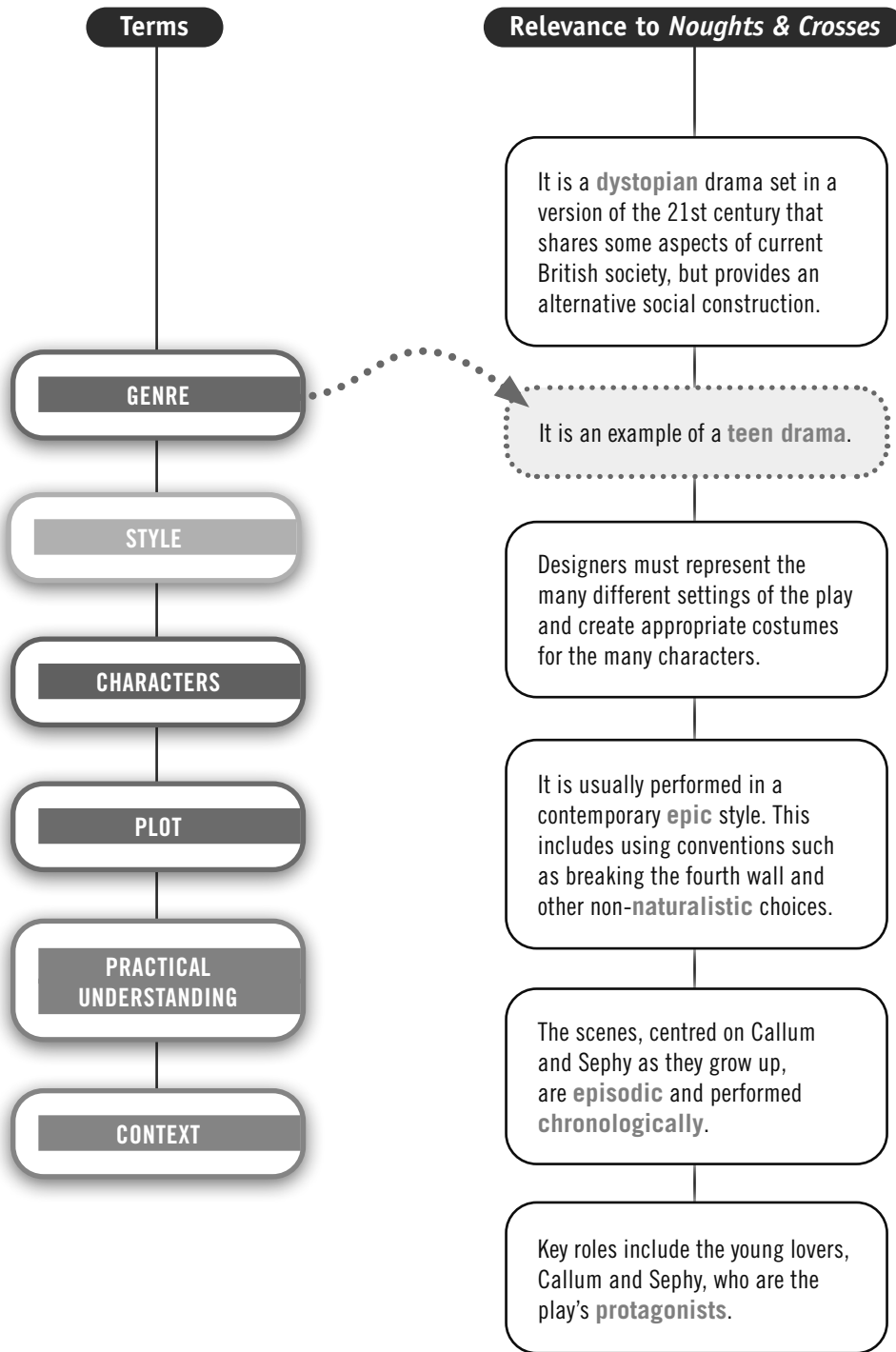
Do you know...?



# The features of drama

## TEST YOURSELF B1

Match the theatrical term with its correct application to *Noughts & Crosses*.



## When did it happen?

### Task B2

Below are 12 key plot points from *Noughts & Crosses*. Put them in the order in which they occur in the play, numbering them 1 to 12.

Callum is a witness at his father's trial.

Three Cross girls confront Sephy in the girls' toilets.

Kamal offers Callum a deal that would save his life.

A bomb explodes at the shopping centre.

Sephy attends Lynette's funeral.

Callum helps a group of Noughts, led by Jude, kidnap Sephy.

Sephy tries to sit with Callum and other Noughts at lunch.

A reporter announces that Ryan died trying to escape from prison.

Lynette snaps out of her dream-like state and realises that years have passed.

There is a demonstration on Callum's first day at Heathcroft.

Callum sneaks into Sephy's bedroom.

At the beach, Sephy tells Callum she is pregnant, and the police capture Callum.

# Who said that?



## TEST YOURSELF B2

Based on your reading of the play and your understanding of the main characters, match each line of dialogue with the correct character.

1 We want to have a word with you.

2 He was with his Dagger friend.

3 It makes it sound like... like I'm in one world and you're in another.

4 Sit down, Persephone, and stop making an exhibition of yourself.

5 This government does not allow itself to be whitetailed by illegal terrorist groups.

6 I'm not a Blanker. I may be a Nought, but I'm worth more than nothing.

7 But my skin's a beautiful colour.

8 It's not easy for him, with Mum's drinking.

9 We're going to a meeting and you're way too young.

10 Get Callum dressed and out of here!

11 I didn't think you had it in you, little brother.

12 I want you to hold this newspaper.

13 You've been brainwashed.

14 I pulled him closer to me, wrapping my arms around him.

15 The higher you climb, the further you have to fall.

16 Who d'you think paid for all their legal fees, you stupid girl?

17 Are you going to save your life or the child's?

CALLUM

JUDE

JASMINE

KAMAL

MEGGIE

SEPHY

MINERVA

LOLA

RYAN

SARAH

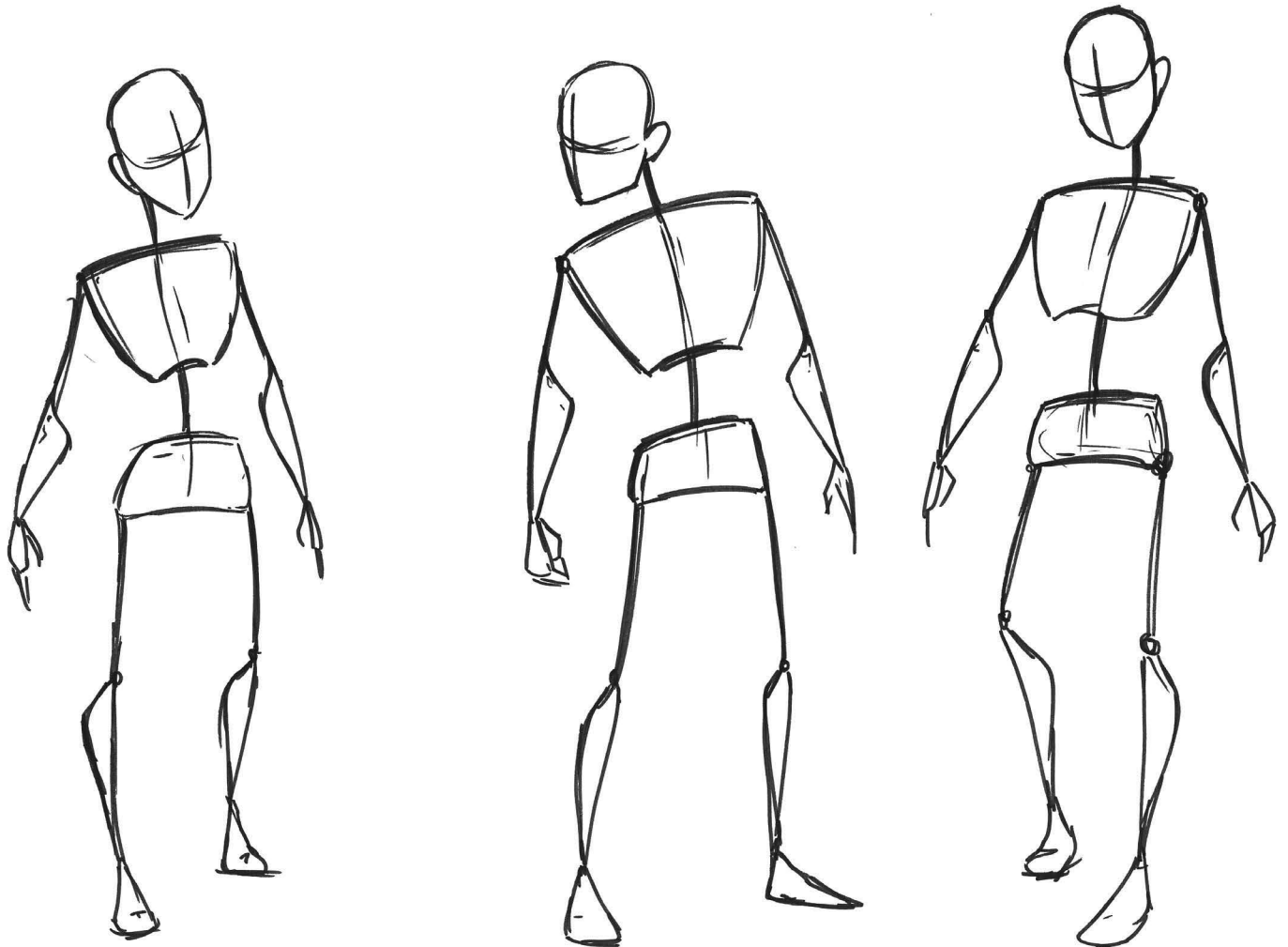
LYNETTE

## Inspiration for your costume designs

### Task B9

Use the outlines below to sketch costume ideas for the following moments:

- Callum in his new school uniform in Act 1, Scene 3
- Ryan and Jude dressed to go to the Militia meeting, Act 1, Scene 17
- Sephy woken by Callum in Act 2, Scene 12.





## Set design ideas and special effects

### Task B14

Use the chart below to note your ideas for some key locations, including how they suit the contemporary dystopian style and how they could practically be achieved.

Location and basic requirements	Set and prop ideas
Beach	
School dining hall: area to collect food; Noughts' table, seats.	
Café at Dundale Shopping Centre: stool for Sephy to sit; area for explosion; exits.	
Court house for the trial: areas for the lawyers, witnesses, accused and clerk to sit or stand.	
Execution chamber: area for Ryan (Act 2, Scene 8) or Callum (Act 2, Scene 28) to stand; area for witnesses.	

### Task B16

Look at the three scenes listed below and describe how, as a set designer, you could use special effects to add to the mood and tension.

Scene	Special set effects
The fight in the girls' toilets (Act 1, Scene 7)	
The explosion at the Dundale Shopping Centre (Act 1, Scene 21)	
Ryan's 'execution' (Act 2, Scene 28)	

## Lighting – context and style

### Task B17

Look at the student responses below. For each one, identify:

- Where in the play the lighting idea might be effective
- How it demonstrates the context and conventions of the play. (An example has been given to guide you.)

Three actor/technicians will operate three followspots in full view of the audience, in an otherwise dimly lit cube. One followspot is trained on Ryan throughout to observe his actions, while the other operators will change their focus on whoever is speaking. When Ryan receives his reprieve, he collapses and the light on him will switch off. Two of the followspot operators walk off, while a red wash fades up to depict the stylised 'riot' of the Noughts. The final followspot operator will use a pinspot focused closely on Callum's face for the final lines of the scene.

Pages 28–30. Context/style: This would establish the cold, unflattering lighting found in 21st-century schools. To emphasise the dystopian nature of the play, the lighting would be harsh and unflattering. The non-naturalistic use of the strobe would highlight the violence of this society.

For the shopping centre, there are multi-coloured neon signs advertising shops. The rest of the stage has a bright white wash. Shortly before the explosion, a technician brings on stage a flash pot (a type of pyrotechnic hardware). This is placed far upstage (at least 10 feet from actors or audience) and when detonated, creates a loud explosion and smoke. The neon lights flash, then go off, except for a single letter 'O', which flickers.



I would have a wash of bright white light and functional hanging fluorescent lights, lowered from the fly space. The actor playing Lola would walk onto the stage and turn on the overhead fluorescent lights with a switch as she enters the toilets. When the fight begins, a strobe would highlight the artificiality of the staging. It would also have the effect of freezing the girls in quick moments of violence.

In order to create the beach at night, an actor will hold a glowing 3D LED globe of light on a pole, to signify the Moon. A gobo in a profile lantern will create an effect of shadowy clouds. The rest of the stage is dimly lit, using a restricted colour palette of silvers and blues. When Callum and Sephy kiss, they are backlit, so that they are seen in silhouette. When the Noughts arrive, they shine torches on Sephy and Callum's faces. The struggle will seem chaotic as the torches swing and randomly illuminate parts of the fight.

# Characterisation



## TEST YOURSELF B5

The following descriptions indicate some of the important features to be considered when developing characterisations.

Match each one with the correct character from *Noughts & Crosses*.

Characters		Descriptions
JASMINE		The headmaster of Heathcroft High School who reluctantly accepts some Nought students.
MEGGIE		A teenage Nought boy who is in love with a Cross girl.
JUDE	.....	An angry teenage Nought boy who joins the Liberation Militia to fight the inequalities and unfairness of their lives.
MINERVA		A Nought who works as a secretary for the Hadleys and, in a limited way, serves as a link between Callum and Sephy.
SEPHY		A Nought man who, through many unhappy events, loses hope and is drawn into the world of the Liberation Militia, for whom he takes responsibility for an explosion.
KAMAL		A Nought girl who was brutally beaten because of her relationship with a Cross boy and believes herself to be a Cross.
LYNETTE		A high-ranking member of the Crosses, who rarely spends time with his family. He is concerned with appearances and frequently gives press conferences.
MR CORSA		A teenage Cross girl whose childhood friendship with a Nought boy matures into love.
SARAH		Sephy's sister who disapproves of Sephy's relationship with Callum. She defends her father's actions and is critical of her mother's drinking.
RYAN		A prominent Cross wife who resorts to drinking to deal with her disappointments. She once had a friendly relationship with her employee, Meggie, and she pays for Ryan's defence.
CALLUM		A Nought wife and mother who tries to protect her children from the harshness and unfairness around them.

## Characterisation focus on Callum and Sephy

### Task B27

Use the chart below to note how the actors playing Callum and Sephy could use their vocal and physical skills to trace the changes in character. (Some suggestions have been made, but add your own ideas and interpretations.)

Acting techniques	Callum	Sephy
<b>Act 1, Scene 1: The Beach.</b>		
<b>Vocal skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Callum is almost 16 and the pitch of his voice is fairly low.</li> <li>His accent is working-class Irish or Scottish.</li> <li>This is an intimate scene, so the tone is mainly soft.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sephy might use RP, but with moments of casual teenage dialect.</li> <li>Her tone is sharp when she says, 'Don't say that'.</li> <li>She speaks softly and tenderly when she says, 'They'll love you.'</li> <li>Her volume increases when she says, 'Cripes!'</li> </ul>
<b>Physical skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The characters are in close proximity throughout the scene.</li> <li>They sit cross-legged at the opening and then kneel face-to-face for the kiss.</li> </ul>	
<b>Impact on audience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This scene introduces the characters and shows their innocence.</li> <li>This shows the beginning of the romance as well as establishing the obstacles to it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sephy seems like a girl who is confident of her place in the world.</li> <li>Her affection for Callum and her curiosity about the future is established.</li> </ul>
<b>Act 1, Scene 4: The Beach.</b>		
<b>Vocal skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volume is louder than in Scene 1.</li> <li>He uses a bitter tone when he echoes Sephy's 'Just a word.'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sephy speaks softly and tentatively at first.</li> <li>When she speaks to the audience, her voice is confident and full of resolve.</li> </ul>
<b>Physical skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Callum at first turns his back to Sephy.</li> <li>He moves closer and takes her hands when he says, 'Promise me something,' which he says softly and seriously.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sephy moves around the stage, trying to make eye contact.</li> <li>Her expression is sad when she says sorry.</li> </ul>
<b>Impact on audience</b>	This shows the conflict caused by how society treats Noughts and Crosses and the strain it puts on the relationship.	Sephy has learned something important in this scene.
<b>Act 1, Scene 19: Callum's House.</b>		
<b>Vocal skills</b>		
<b>Physical skills</b>		
<b>Impact on audience</b>	The mood changes from playful and affectionate to panic when Callum realises Sephy could be in danger.	Sephy's affection for Callum contrasts with her exasperation about shopping with her mother.
<b>Act 2, Scene 12: Sephy's Bedroom.</b>		
<b>Vocal skills</b>		
<b>Physical skills</b>		
<b>Impact on audience</b>	Callum's anger contrasts with the growing romance.	Sephy relaxes in Callum's arms, hopeful of a future together.
<b>Act 2, Scene 21: The Hideaway.</b>		
<b>Vocal skills</b>		
<b>Physical skills</b>		
<b>Impact on audience</b>	We see a more brutal side to Callum, showing how the hardships have changed him.	Sephy tries many different ways to reach Callum and make him change his course of action.
<b>Act 2, Scene 23: The Hideaway.</b>		
<b>Vocal skills</b>		
<b>Physical skills</b>		
<b>Impact on audience</b>	Callum connects with Sephy and they enter their own world together, where nothing else matters.	An exhausted, crying Sephy touches Callum and they briefly find a connection again.

## Kamal and Ryan: stage directions and physical skills

### Task B32

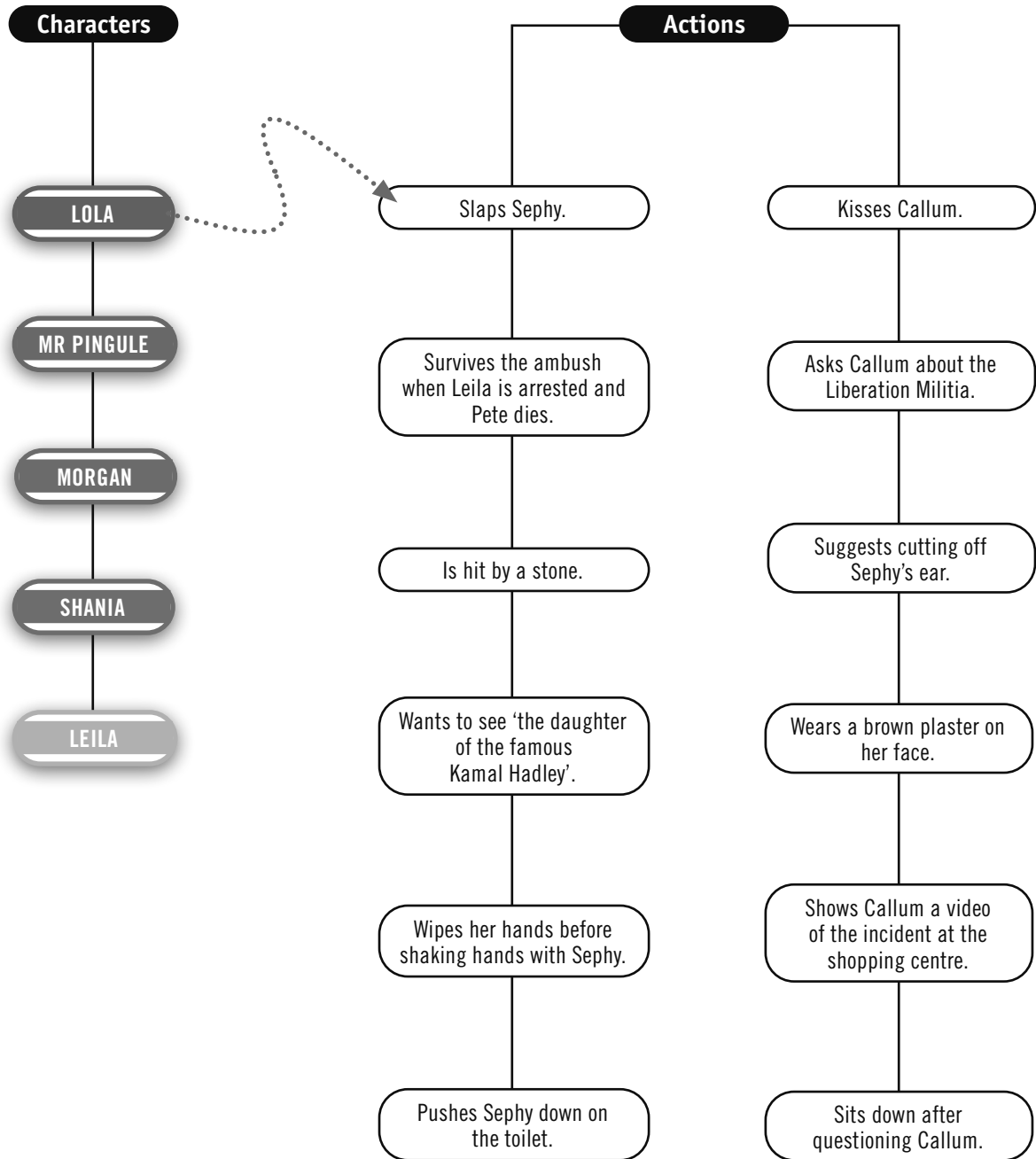
Use the chart below to note physical skills that the actors could use and the impact they will have on the audience.

Stage directions	Physical skills	Impact on audience
Jude and Ryan look at each other. (page 24)	Ryan and Jude make eye contact, conveying their support for the Militia. They hold the look for a moment, then Ryan looks away to avoid a confrontation with Meggie.	This is a small act of rebellion from Ryan who usually 'keeps his head down'. It foreshadows his involvement with the group.
Ryan spins Jude around and slaps his face. (page 34)		
Jude and Ryan study a map in silence. (page 48)		
Kamal comes into the room, with his Minder holding an umbrella over him and his Entourage. (page 56)		
Sephy runs up to Kamal and hugs him... He swings her around. (page 68)		
Ryan collapses, but is caught by the Guard and led out. (page 77)		
Kamal goes to kiss Sephy. She pulls away. He goes to leave. (page 85)		
Kamal enters with Juno, surrounded by Journalists. He holds a sheet of paper. (page 113)		

### Small roles and multi-rolling

#### TEST YOURSELF B7

Read each action or description below and decide which character it is appropriate for.

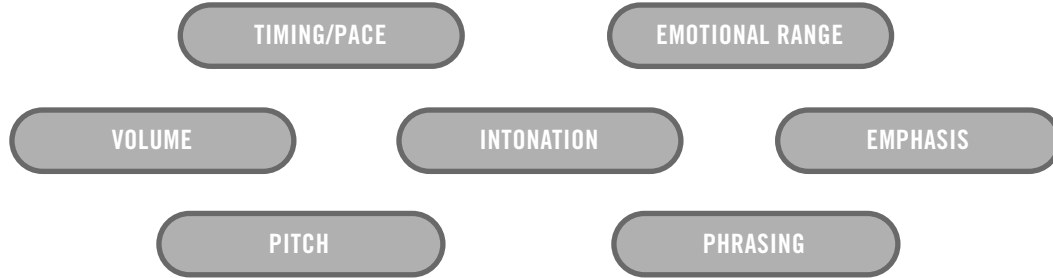


**Characterisation through vocal effects on dialogue**

**Task B54**

Now you have tried a range of vocal acting techniques, choose some that you could use on the lines on the following page to express the character and their situation. (An example has been suggested for you.)

Try to include two examples of vocal skills for each line. Think about:

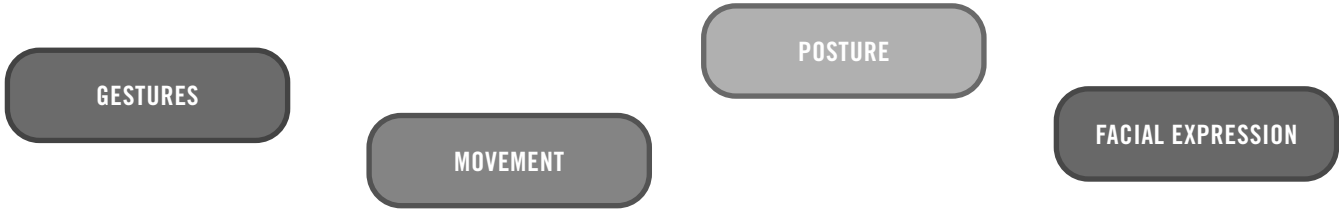


Line	Vocal skills	Details of what these choices will express to the audience
(Act 2, Scene 26) Callum (to Sephy): Tell me you didn't know this was going to happen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volume: Quiet, low.</li> <li>• Emphasis: On 'you'.</li> <li>• Emotional range: Hurt; voice intense, but wavering and cracking.</li> </ul>	Callum is speaking only to Sephy – it is not meant to be overheard. She means everything to him, so a betrayal from her would be shattering. He is desperate to know she didn't betray him and is devastated they can't escape together.
(Act 1, Scene 21) Kamal: All they've done is strengthen our resolve not to give in to such people or tactics.		
(Act 2, Scene 3) Minerva: We're going to be in the Sunday papers. How cool is that?		
(Act 1, Scene 10) Lynette: Not a long time ago. Yesterday. Last week.		

**Characterisation through physical effects on dialogue**

**Task B55**

Choose at least two physical skills you could use on the lines in the table below to express the character and their situation. Think about, for example:



Line	Physical skills	Details of what these choices will express to the audience
(Act 2, Scene 19) Jude: Bloody Dagger bitch.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Movement: Grabbing Sephy by the wrist.</li> <li>• Expression: Surprised – eyes wide open – then angry, scowling, mouth twisted.</li> <li>• Posture: Leaning forward, chin out.</li> </ul>	Jude is trying to capture and subdue Sephy. He is shocked that she hit back at him, so takes control by roughly grabbing her and glaring at her in a dominating and angry way. He is in 'fight' mode and uses his body to stop her getting away. The audience will see that despite her attempts, Sephy is not strong enough to fight him.
(Act 1, Scene 21) Meggie: Where have you been? You look terrible. Where's Jude?		
(Act 2, Scene 8) Ryan: Long live the...		
(Act 1, Scene 7) Lola: I bet it was one of her Blanker friends. Blank by name and blank by nature		



## Showing understanding of the play, characters and performance skills

### Task B64

Use the grid to make notes on key characters at three points in the play. (Some suggestions have been made, but you might find others to write about.)

Character	First key moment	Second key moment	Third key moment
<b>Sephy</b>	Act 1, Scene 1.	Act 2, Scene 9.	Act 2, Scene 23.
Interpretation	Our introduction to Sephy. She has a youthful innocence.	Demonstrates Sephy's growing estrangement from her family and their values.	Recognition between Sephy and Callum of how much they still love each other.
Physical skills	Levels and posture: She starts the scene standing centre stage, then flops onto the beach, legs sticking out in front of her. She kneels to kiss Callum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Movement and pace: Quick, angry movements and gestures.</li> <li>• Expression: Angry, scowling. Narrows eyes, downward mouth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Levels: Lying down at the beginning. Sits huddled when she cries.</li> <li>• Proximity: Sits several feet from Callum at first.</li> </ul>
Physical skills	Gestures and expressions: She tilts her head and is left like that for some time.	Gestures: Points at Jasmine on 'Don't you ever...' Waves arms searching for the word 'that... thing.'	Gestures: Rubs her stomach to soothe pain. Raises clasped hands in a pleading gesture on 'Then let me go.' Flinches from Callum.
Vocal skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accent/dialect: RP.</li> <li>• Tone: Light, expressive.</li> <li>• Volume: Louder on 'Yuk, Callum.'</li> <li>• Pace: Slower when they talk about their relationship, such as the pause when Callum asks if they are friends.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volume: Loud, doesn't care who hears.</li> <li>• Emphasis: stresses 'thing' to show her disgust.</li> <li>• Tone: Sarcastic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional range: Exhausted, hurt and distressed.</li> <li>• Volume: Quiet at first as she thinks the others are next door.</li> <li>• Tone: A more detached, storytelling voice when speaking to the audience.</li> </ul>
<b>Callum</b>	Act 1, Scene 2.	Act 2, Scene 12.	Act 2, Scene 27.
Interpretation	Introduction to the McGregor household and what it means to be a Nought.	Reunited with Sephy, they make plans for the future.	A more worldly and sad Callum faces his execution, refusing a reprieve.
Physical skills			
Vocal skills			
<b>Jasmine</b>	Act 1, Scene 8.	Act 2, Scene 9.	Act 2, Scene 11.
Interpretation	Blames Callum for the attack on Sephy.	Confrontation with Sephy.	Tries to present a united front with Kamal to convince Sephy about boarding school, but there are cracks in their relationship.
Physical skills			
Vocal skills			
<b>Kamal</b>	Act 1, Scene 5.	Act 2, Scene 3.	Act 2, Scene 27.
Interpretation	In official role speaking about terrorism.		
Physical skills			
Vocal skills			
<b>Meggie</b>	Act 1, Scene 2.	Act 1, Scene 15: Lynette's wake.	Act 2, Scene 16.
Interpretation	Meggie is the centre of the McGregor family.	Defends Sephy against Jude and Ryan.	
Physical skills			
Vocal skills			
<b>Ryan</b>	Act 1, Scene 2.	Act 1, Scene 21.	Act 2, Scene 10.
Interpretation	Proud of Callum and hopeful for his future.		
Physical skills			
Vocal skills			

## Design ideas for an extract and the whole play

### Task B68

Read Act 1, Scene 20 (pages 54–55). Then complete the following grid with design ideas for each specialism.

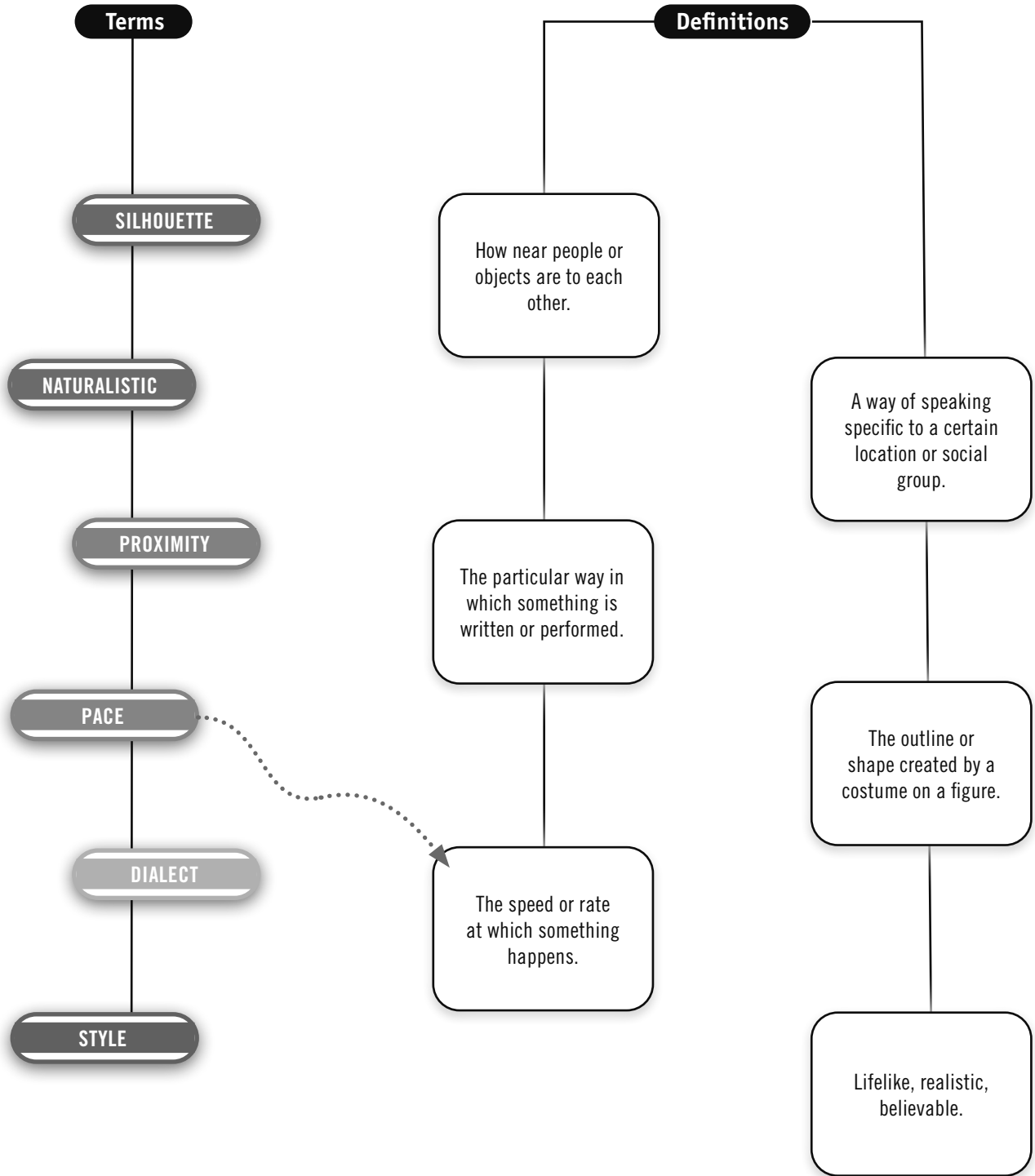
	Design ideas and challenges of extract	Examples	Details in extract	Rest of play (pick key moments to discuss in detail)
<b>Costume</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costumes for Sephy and Callum.</li> <li>• Costumes for shoppers and shopping centre staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fabrics:</li> <li>• Colours:</li> <li>• Materials:</li> <li>• Fit/condition:</li> <li>• Footwear/ accessories:</li> </ul>		
<b>Set</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Café.</li> <li>• Site of explosion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staging configuration:</li> <li>• Colours:</li> <li>• Materials:</li> <li>• Levels:</li> <li>• Props:</li> </ul>		
<b>Lighting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interior of shopping centre.</li> <li>• Special effect of explosion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colours</li> <li>• Angles/intensity:</li> <li>• Special effects:</li> <li>• Transitions:</li> </ul>		
<b>Sound</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shopping centre music.</li> <li>• Alarm.</li> <li>• Explosions.</li> <li>• Sirens.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volume:</li> <li>• Live or recorded:</li> <li>• On stage or off:</li> <li>• Transitions:</li> </ul>		
<b>Puppetry</b>	Figures of victims of explosion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manner of operation (wires, rod, onstage puppeteer):</li> <li>• Materials:</li> <li>• Colours:</li> </ul>		

# Performance and design



## TEST YOURSELF B9

Match the correct definition with each technical term used in theatre performance and design.



## LEARNING CHECKLIST: SECTION B

Tick each aspect of your understanding of *Noughts & Crosses* if you are confident of your knowledge.

If you are unsure of anything, go back and revise.

**Do you know...?**

How to describe the use of the performance space and character interaction

The context of the play, including time period and location

How to plan an answer to an exam question about the set play

How to write about an extract and expand it to the rest of the play, including choosing key moments to discuss in detail

How to write about acting skills, including correct terminology

How the context could be reflected by costume, set, puppet, sound and lighting design

At least four physical skills that actors can use

That everyone must answer the first three questions in the exam

At least four vocal skills that actors can use

The names of all the characters and their importance to the plot

That you will have a choice whether to answer either Question 4 (performance) or 5 (your choice of design specialism)

How to write about design skills, including correct terminology

## Discussing vocal and physical skills

### Task C6

Read the following response to a performance and annotate it with the vocal skills being discussed.

As the music producer, the actor sounded a bit like the Rolling Stones singer Mick Jagger: he drawled certain words and used nasal elongated vowel sounds. This use of a slightly old-fashioned Cockney-type accent associated him with famous rock stars of the 1960s. He had excellent comic timing, saying some words very quickly, so that the audience couldn't help but be caught by surprise and laugh at some of his more outrageous lines. He would throw away lines like, 'a genius like me', showing how big his ego was. One scene that particularly showed the actor's skills was when he when he alternated between talking into his mobile and barking instructions at the singer. His use of two different tones was very noticeable, one which was softly intimate changing to one which was commanding and a bit frightening, especially when he said in a cold, matter-of-fact way, 'You're nothing without me.' The emphasis on the word 'nothing' was hard and cruel. This showed how the character was used to controlling people and being obeyed.

### Task C9

Read the performance response given below. Annotate it to show which physical acting skills are being discussed.

In the ghost scene, the actor portrayed both Hamlet and the ghost of his father. This involved very sophisticated use of physical skills. When playing the ghost, he would put on a large overcoat and change his posture, becoming very upright and rigid, seeming to grow before our eyes. He would use slow, powerful gestures, such as pointing where Hamlet had previously stood. He also made piercing eye contact with some members of the audience, suggesting his pain and the urgency of his demands. When becoming Hamlet again, the actor would throw off the coat and appear to shrink, his posture becoming hunched and his gestures tentative and fluttering. The transformation was accomplished very quickly, so that the audience was amazed by this virtuoso display of physical skills. At the end of the sequence, Hamlet collapsed to the floor as if exhausted.

# Analysing costume design, including hair and make-up

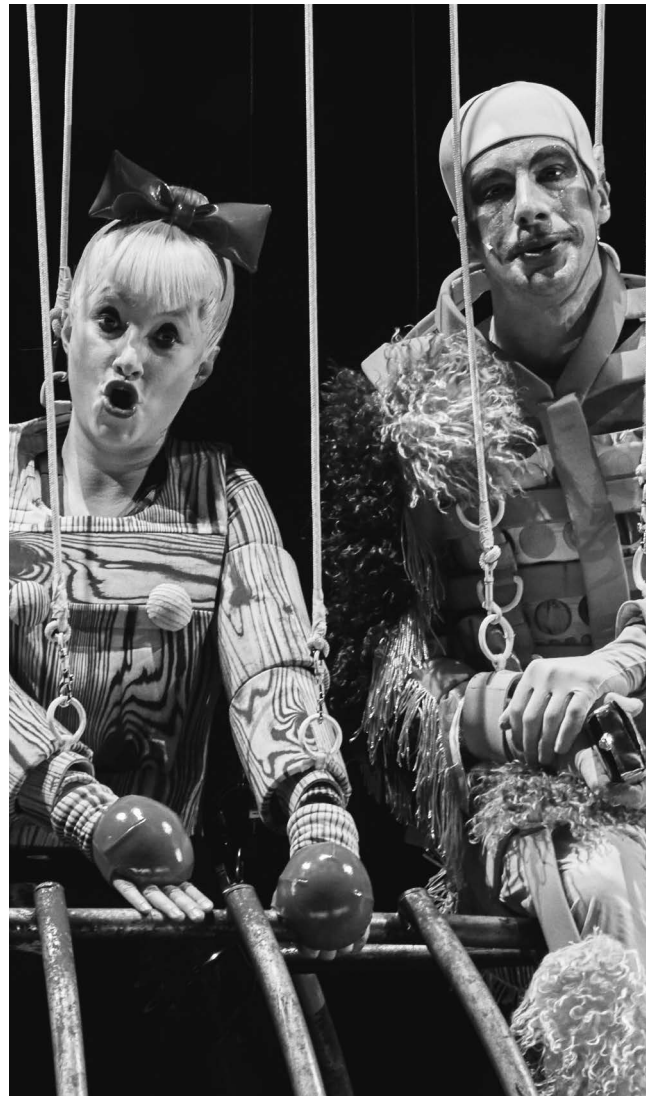
## Task C14

Look at the photographs below and annotate them with as many points as you can about:

- Fabric
- Colours
- Texture
- Silhouette
- Make-up
- Style
- Context
- Hair
- Accessories
- Condition and fit



June Moon, Williamstown Theatre Festival



The Magic Flute, Staatsoper Unter den Linden, Berlin



Dental Society Midwinter Meeting, Williamstown Theatre Festival

## How set design contributes to action, style and context

### Task C23

Read the following samples of candidate-style responses about two set designs for two different productions.

Note any examples of:

- Description (D)
- Analysis (A)
- Evaluation (E).

The set of *Summer and Smoke*, designed by Tom Scutt, was not the naturalistic type of set many associate with the work of playwright Tennessee Williams. Instead, the design was minimalistic and stripped back, showing the bare brick walls of the theatre and a plain floor. Two steps up from the main acting area was a semi-circle of nine pianos around the acting space. These pianos were used by the actors to create music, but also to represent Alma's love of the arts. This choice was highly effective because it removed the clutter which often accompanies naturalistic plays and put the focus on the characters, particularly Alma. The pianos also added excitement to the staging, as actors would perch on top or walk across them or sit down to play them, creating a soundtrack.

The set of *Sunset Boulevard* recreated Hollywood of the early 20th century. The designer had the difficult task of creating a range of complex sets which had to be moved quickly into place to suggest new locations. Also, as this was a touring production, the set had to fit a wide range of theatres. Norma Desmond's house, with its grand staircase and yellow velvet sofa suggested an earlier era which contrasted with the bright casual diner set where the studio workers met and partied. This made clear the choice Joe would have to make – the dark past with Norma or the bright future with Betty. One element of the design which divided opinion was the use of an incomplete prop-type car. While some didn't like it as it distanced them from the impending tragedy, I felt it worked well because it reflected Norma's inability to separate fantasy from reality. The use of projected films, including Norma as a young girl, was also successful as it reinforced the play's preoccupation with film-making and the distance between Norma as a young woman and how she now appeared.

## How lighting contributes to a play's action, style and context

### Task C27

Read the following samples of candidate-style responses about two lighting designs.

Note any examples of:

- Description (D)
- Analysis (A)
- Evaluation (E).

The lighting had an important role to play. The set was minimalistic, so the lighting established the location, time of day and mood of each scene. Instead of employing a general wash of light across the stage, the designer used a combination of profile and fresnel lanterns to focus attention on particular areas of the stage. Barn doors were used on the fresnel lanterns to restrict the spill of light and shape the illumination into tight rectangles, which suggested the claustrophobia of the cabin's rooms. The lighting added to the mystery and tension of the play, as you never knew where you would need to look next. One particularly effective section was the scene when a gentle white light streamed in diagonally from upstage left to suggest the light from a kitchen window as a woman washed dishes. The mood was calm. Then, suddenly, a pinspot high-intensity green light snapped onto a strange woman's face outside the window, which made us jump with surprise.

Colour was important in this lighting design. This was particularly noticeable in the fight scene when red filters were introduced and increased in intensity and brightness as the gangs approached each other. When the physical altercation occurred, a strobe was employed. The effect was to plant a series of suspenseful still images in the audience's mind which occurred so quickly we could barely take them in. There would be a flash of light and we would see the group in a huddle, with Joe's arm outstretched. The next flash revealed a knife. Another showed the group pulling away from the centre. The last revealed Joe, apparently dead, on the ground centre stage, in the pool of an intense white spotlight beaming directly down from the lighting rig in the flies. Although it was undoubtedly an exciting use of light, I felt that using red to show violence was a little clichéd, but judging by the audience silence at the end of the sequence, it was clearly effective for others.



## How sound design contributes to action, style and context

### Task C30

Read the following samples of candidate-style responses about sound design in two different productions.

Note any examples of:

- Description (D)
- Analysis (A)
- Evaluation (E).

In this production of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* by Bertolt Brecht, the sound designer used sound to contribute to the epic style of the play. Brecht believed that the audience should not think they are watching real-life and used the alienation effect to remind them they were in a theatre watching actors. The sound design supported this, by showing the actors setting up microphone stands and testing microphones as the audience came in. In the scene by the river, an actor placed a general-use microphone on a low stand next to a bowl of water and created the splashing noises next to the actors enacting the scene. This added to the artificiality of the play's style. Additionally, all the actors played instruments (guitar, drums, tambourine, violin) and sang music which had been specially composed for this performance. This was always done in view of the audience, with the musicians either at the centre of the action or sitting downstage, watching the action. The music was more modern (rock rather than folk) and relevant to the audience than the style more usually associated with Brecht's plays.

In this play, set in an Internet chatroom, music played a vital role. The audience was immediately startled when the characters entered to a recording of the Oompa Loompa song from the 1971 *Willy Wonka* film. The volume was loud, with speakers at the front of the stage blasting the song out as the actors, dressed in ordinary contemporary clothes, but moving rigidly in time with the music, entered. The effect was odd, making the audience laugh and preparing them for a play which would surprise them repeatedly. The song snapped off and the actors seamlessly began their dialogue. To reinforce the setting, the sound design incorporated a range of recorded notification 'pings' and 'whoosh' sound effects to punctuate the characters' online debates. At the end of the first scene, there was loud burst of Prodigy's 'Firestarter' song, approximately 20 seconds, which accompanied the actors' 'chairography' as they positioned the chairs for the next scene. This use of sound and music made the production seem modern and relevant, as well as keeping the pace high. Additionally, the choice of 'Firestarter' added a sense of danger.

## Theatre production



## TEST YOURSELF C2

Read these responses to different productions and identify whether they are about **performance**, **sound**, **lighting**, **costume** or **set**. Also consider if they describe, analyse or evaluate.

1 The use of a revolve contributed greatly to the excitement of the party scene. As it slowly turned, the set revealed a new room in the house. As the party continued, the rooms became more and more cluttered, suggesting that the party was getting out of hand.

4 The uniform established the character's status, as well as his appeal to the women of the town. The close-fitting scarlet jacket, with gold braid trim, made him stand out from the other characters who were generally dressed in muted greys, greens and browns.

8 Whenever the children entered, a gentle piece of piano music accompanied them, making their scenes seem almost dream-like.

11 Columns of lights descended from the fly space. The mystery of the effect was increased by the use of a haze machine, making the light seem thick, like mist.

2 From the actor's first entrance, the audience was captivated. To create the recklessness of his character, he hurtled onto the stage, appearing to be wild and, judging by the bottle he was holding, drunk. He suddenly stopped and smiled slyly, enjoying the impression he had made on both the other characters and the audience.

5 The actors' German accents were truly impressive.

9 The audience jumped at the unexpected explosion at the end of Act 1. The speakers were positioned all around the auditorium, creating the effect that we too were caught up in the blast.

12 A speaker at the back of the auditorium was used to project the sound of a car driving along a gravel drive.

3 The use of music from the 1950s highlighted the period of the play.

6 A pinpoint spotlight, or pinspot, closed in on the actor's face, showing her distressed expression, followed by a sudden blackout that left the audience shocked.

7 As a major theme was women's beauty, the designer had made the three-storey set resemble a beauty counter: white smooth reflective, curved surfaces, racks of pastel products and a large white surface upon which advertisements could be projected.

10 The outfits were stylised and extravagant: primary colours, exaggerated silhouettes and rich fabrics and decorations.

### Technical vocabulary



#### TEST YOURSELF C3

Match the correct definition with the technical production term.

**TERMS**

		<b>Pinspot</b>	<b>Prosthetics</b>
<b>Theme or motif</b>	<b>Acoustics</b>	<b>Fade</b>	<b>House lights</b>
<b>Truck</b>	<b>Set dressings</b>	<b>Colour palette</b>	<b>Corsetry</b>
<b>Reverb</b>	<b>Cross-fade</b>	<b>Wash</b>	<b>Trapdoor</b>
<b>Composer</b>	<b>Cyclorama</b>	<b>Fly system</b>	<b>Trim</b>
			<b>Black hole</b>
			<b>Drapes</b>

**DEFINITIONS**

<p><b>1</b> A spotlight so tightly focused that it lights only a very small area, such as a single object or an actor's face.</p>	<p><b>2</b> Curtains or other hanging fabric.</p>	<p><b>3</b> A distinctive recurring section of music, often associated with a particular character or mood.</p>	<p><b>4</b> The range of colours used.</p>
<p><b>5</b> Additional pieces of make-up that can be attached, such as false noses, artificial wounds or horns.</p>	<p><b>6</b> A large semi-circular stretched curtain or screen, usually positioned upstage.</p>	<p><b>7</b> The sound quality in a given space, such as whether or not a theatrical space affects sound making it clear, echoing, warm or muffled and so on.</p>	<p><b>8</b> A means of raising and lowering scenery or other items onto the stage using a system of ropes and pulleys.</p>
<p><b>9</b> The lights in the auditorium that are usually up when the audience arrives and before the play begins.</p>	<p><b>10</b> Undergarments such as corsets, girdles and bustles used to shape a body and alter its silhouette.</p>	<p><b>11</b> Someone who writes music.</p>	<p><b>12</b> A lighting transition involving changing lighting states by bringing up the new state while reducing the old state.</p>
<p><b>13</b> A platform on wheels upon which scenery can be mounted and moved.</p>	<p><b>14</b> An area of the stage which has accidentally been left unlit.</p>	<p><b>15</b> Items on the set not actually used as props, but that create detail and interest, such as vases or framed paintings.</p>	<p><b>16</b> Additional decorative items such as fur on a collar or cuffs or a fringe on a jacket, dress or skirt.</p>
<p><b>17</b> An echoing effect, sustaining the sound longer than usual.</p>	<p><b>18</b> Gradually turning sound or lighting up or down.</p>	<p><b>19</b> Lighting that covers the entire stage.</p>	<p><b>20</b> A door in the floor of a stage allowing objects or performers to be dropped, lifted or lowered.</p>

## LEARNING CHECKLIST: SECTION C

Tick each aspect of 'Live theatre production' if you are confident of your knowledge and ability.

If you are unsure of anything, go back and revise.

**Do you know...?**

The specialisms you could choose to write about

The genre, style and period of the play you have seen and how they might affect the acting and design choices

How to make detailed notes about the production you have seen

How to select key moments or sections to write about

How to describe, analyse and evaluate

The technical terminology appropriate for different specialisms

Which characters you might choose to discuss if writing about performance

How to plan an answer to a question about a production you have seen

How to evaluate if the acting or designs are effective

Which examples you could discuss to demonstrate your knowledge of design skills

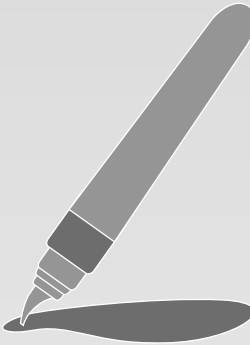
How to describe the impact of the acting or design choices on the audience

## LEARNING CHECKLIST: EXAMINATION PRACTICE

Tick each aspect of exam preparation if you are confident of your knowledge.

If you are unsure of anything, read through this section again.

**Do you know...?**



How to look for  
key words in the  
questions

The difference  
between your  
Section B and  
Section C texts

How to avoid  
running out  
of time

How to include  
detail and refer  
to specific  
examples

How to plan  
an answer



How to use  
discursive markers

How to include  
technical  
terminology

The range of  
questions you  
could be asked