



Core Knowledge

Performance Skills

Performance skills are divided into physical, vocal, and spatial choices. Examiners look for how an actor uses these to communicate a character's intentions or feelings.



Vocabulary	Definition
Articulation	The clarity or distinctness with which words are spoken.
Inflection	The rise and fall of the voice during speech to change meaning or emphasize feelings.
Tone	The emotional quality of the voice (e.g., sarcastic, warm, aggressive).
Pace	The speed at which lines are spoken or physical actions are performed.
Pitch	How high or low a voice is.
Projection	Directing the voice loudly and clearly to ensure the entire audience can hear without straining.
Proxemics	The spatial relationship between actors on stage, used to show power dynamics or relationships.
Gait	A character's manner of walking, which can convey age, confidence, or physical health.
Gesticulation / Gesture	Using hand or arm movements to express an idea or meaning.
Posture	The position or alignment of the body (e.g., slouched, rigid), indicating a character's state of mind.



Core Knowledge

Lighting Design

Lighting creates atmosphere, indicates time of day, and draws the audience's attention to specific areas of the stage.

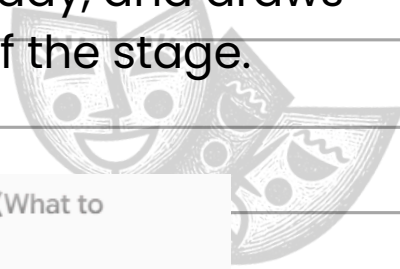
Vocabulary	Definition
Blackout	Turning off all stage lights simultaneously, usually to mark the end of a scene or play.
Cross-fade	Smoothly transitioning from one lighting state to another without an interim blackout.
Fade	Gradually increasing (fade up) or decreasing (fade down) the brightness of the lights.
Gobo	A thin metal plate with a cutout pattern placed in front of a light source to project a shape or image onto the stage (e.g., tree branches, window panes).
Gel	A colored plastic filter placed over a lighting instrument to change the color of the beam.
Spotlight	A powerful light source that projects a narrow, focused beam of light onto a specific actor or area.
Wash	A general, even fill of light covering the entire acting area.
Intensity	The brightness or dimness of the stage lighting.
Backlighting	Light coming from behind an actor, creating a silhouette effect and separating them from the background.



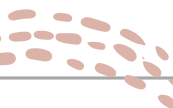
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Lantern Type	Key Characteristics & Use	AQA Exam Tip (What to write)
Fresnel (<i>pronounced freh-nel</i>)	Produces a soft-edged beam of light. You can adjust the size of the pool of light, and it features adjustable metal flaps called barn doors to shape the beam and stop light from spilling where it shouldn't.	Use this for general washes across the stage or naturalistic scenes where you need a soft, blended atmosphere.
Spotlight (Profile)	Produces a hard-edged, highly defined beam of light. It has internal shutters to create sharp shapes, and it is the main lantern used to project patterns via a gobo .	Use this to isolate a single character on stage during a monologue or to signify a stark shift in reality (e.g., a flashback).
PAR Can (<i>Parabolic Aluminized Reflector</i>)	A simple, highly durable lantern that holds a fixed bulb inside a cylindrical metal "can." It produces an intense, intense oval-shaped beam that is great for throwing rich color over large distances.	Excellent for dramatic special effects, live concert styles, saturated color washes, or punchy backlighting.
Floodlight	An open-faced lantern with no lens that produces a massive, completely uncontrollable spread of light . It cannot be focused or shaped.	Best used with a colored gel to light up a cyclorama (the large fabric backdrop at the back of the stage) to represent the sky or create a flat wall of color.





Core Knowledge

Sound Design

Sound design builds the auditory world of the play, enhancing the realism of a scene or highlighting a character's internal thoughts.



Vocabulary	Definition
Diegetic Sound	Sound that exists within the world of the play and can be heard by the characters (e.g., a doorbell ringing, a radio playing).
Non-Diegetic Sound	Sound that exists outside the world of the play, heard only by the audience to create atmosphere (e.g., a dramatic musical underscore).
Soundscape	A background layer of sounds combined to create a specific environment (e.g., birds chirping, traffic hums, wind blowing).
Amplification	Increasing the volume of a sound or voice using microphones and speakers.
Fading	The gradual increase (fade-in) or decrease (fade-out) of sound volume.
Echo / Reverberation	An effect where sound waves reflect off surfaces, creating a sense of space (e.g., making a scene sound like it's in a cave or empty church).
Transitions	Music or sound effects used to bridge the gap between scenes, often masking the sound of set changes.



Core Knowledge

Setting & Staging

Staging dictates where the audience sits in relation to the performance and how the scenery configures the physical world of the play.

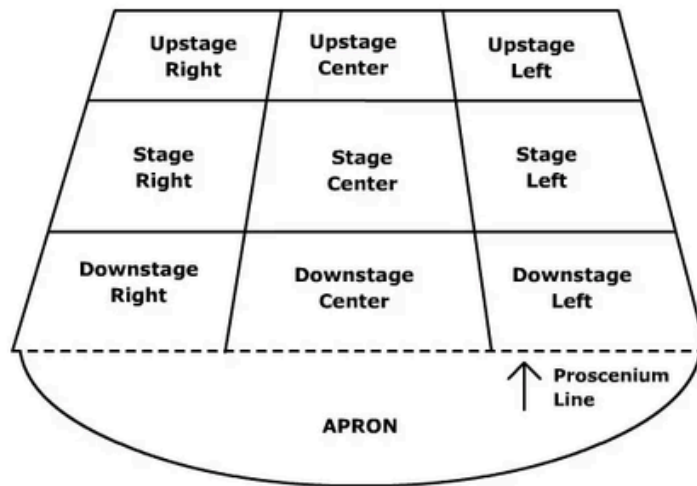
Vocabulary	Definition
Proscenium Arch	A traditional stage configuration where the audience sits directly facing the stage through a
In-the-Round	A stage configuration where the audience surrounds the acting area on all four sides.
Thrust Stage	A stage that extends forward into the auditorium so that the audience sits on three sides of the performance space.
Traverse Stage	A long, narrow acting area with the audience sitting on opposite sides facing each other (like a fashion catwalk).
End-On	Staging where the audience sits on one side of the acting area facing it directly, but without a proscenium arch.
Site-Specific	Theatre designed to be performed in a non-traditional venue that relates directly to the play's themes (e.g., an
Minimalist	A set design style that uses very few items or props, relying on the audience's imagination and the
Levels	Using different heights (via rostrums, steps, or platforms) to signify differences in power, status,



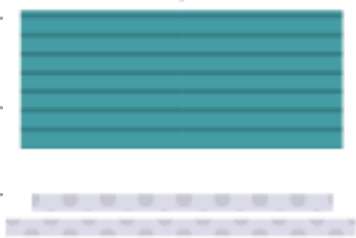
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End-on



Proscenium arch



Thrust



Traverse



In the round

