**Director’s Notebook**

Students at HL and SL independently choose a published play text, read the text and record their personal responses. They then:

* research and record the cultural and/or theoretical context of the play and identify ideas the playwright may be addressing
* explore the play and record their own ideas regarding how this play may be staged for an audience
* explain their directorial intention(s) and explain how this will inform their staging of two particular moments of the play; these can be moments of atmosphere, emotion or tension or which communicate the meaning(s) of the play; they must demonstrate an understanding of how performance and production elements function together to create these moments
* reference live performances they have experienced and how these have influenced, inspired or informed their directing of these moments. The live theatre performances must not be productions of the same play text selected for study in this assessment task.

This process is recorded and presented in the form of a director’s notebook (20 pages maximum) which is made up of visuals and words.

This is a theoretical exercise. The play text is **not** actually staged as part of the assessment task though a student may choose to work practically as part of the process of exploring the play or examining particular moments. Students are not permitted to edit, make additions or alterations to the play text selected for study. All sources must be acknowledged following the protocol of the referencing style chosen by the school.

Perspective—candidates should approach this task from the perspective of director.

Aim—the aim of this task is for students to explore the processes involved in transforming a play text into live action by developing a directorial vision for staging the play text.

Understandings—through this exploration students will understand:

* the importance of research into the context of a play text and how this can inform directorial intentions for staging the play text
* the artistic processes required to transform text into action
* how meaning is communicated on stage and how to create moments of atmosphere, emotion and tension
* how performance and production elements function together to create an intended impact for an audience
* how live performances they have experienced influence, inspire and inform their work as directors.

**Task details**

**Selecting the play text**

* Students choose a published play text that they have not previously studied, which they are interested in practically exploring as a director and which would allow them to successfully fulfill the assessment requirements and criteria of the task. Students should have little or no previous experience of researching or practically engaging with the published play text they select for study.
* It is expected that students will consult and refer to a number of play texts prior to their final selection. It is important for teachers to allow students to select their own play text. The key to success in this task is for students to select a text that excites their imagination and that they would be passionate about transforming into action.
* The play text must remain unaltered. Students are not permitted to edit, make additions or alterations to the original printed work. They may, however, in communicating their vision for the staging of the selected play text, add as much additional action or introduce additional elements of design if this will help them to realise their vision for the staging. In every case this should be appropriate to the play text and students must clearly identify and justify these additions.
* The play text does not necessarily have to be set within the original practice or style for which it was originally intended. Students may wish to set the play in a contrasting practice or style in order to bring out a particular idea or theme appropriate to the work.
* Students are permitted to work with play texts written in any language. Any descriptions of plot or direct quotations, however, must be translated into the language in which they are being assessed.

**Discussing live theatre performance**

* Students are required to discuss and make links to live theatre performances they have experienced as a spectator during the theatre course. Students should identify performances that have influenced, inspired or informed them and should pay particular attention to how directors employed production and performance elements to create effective moments of atmosphere, emotion or tension or moments that communicated meaning in the live theatre performance experienced.
* The live theatre performances identified must not be productions of the same play text selected for study in this assessment task. Students are not permitted to write about productions in which they have had involvement, for example school plays in which they helped backstage or local productions in which they performed.

**Use of sources**

* As well as the more obvious sources (books, websites, videos, DVDs, articles) valid research may also include the student’s own practical explorations of the play. Students are also required to refer to theatre experiences they have had as a spectator. All sources consulted must be acknowledged following the protocol of the referencing style chosen by the school and be presented in a bibliography and as footnotes, endnotes or within the body of the text of the director’s notebook.

**Structuring the director’s notebook**

The director’s notebook, which can be up to 20 pages in length, should be a combination of creative ideas, presented in both words and visuals, along with detailed ideas and explanations. The director’s notebook should be written in the first person and present the student’s personal interpretations, responses, ideas, discoveries and intentions for the proposed staging of their selected play text. Students should be as precise and specific as possible when discussing performance and production elements. The use of subject specific terminology may help to give a sense to this precision.

Students may use any relevant illustrations, annotated text, charts, mind maps, visuals, diagrams, designs and so on. These must be clearly annotated and appropriately referenced to acknowledge the source, following the protocol of the referencing style chosen by the school. When students include any of their own photographs or images, these must also be identified and acknowledged in the same way. There is no lower limit on the number of pages that students can submit for this task and teachers are encouraged to remind students that their work will be assessed on how it best fulfills the assessment criteria for the task and not judged on how many pages are submitted.

The director’s notebook should contain a table of contents (which is excluded from the page count) and all pages should be numbered. The main body of the director’s notebook should be structured using the following subheadings:

1. The play text, its context and the ideas presented in the play
2. My artistic responses, creative ideas and explorations and my own experiences of live theatre as a spectator
3. My directorial intentions and the intended impact on an audience
4. How I would stage **two** moments of the play

Students are required to submit a separate list of all sources cited.

**Formal requirements of the task**

Each student submits for assessment:

* a director’s notebook (20 pages maximum) which includes:
  + the student’s research into the published play text, its relevant contexts and the ideas presented in the play
  + the student’s artistic responses and explorations of the entire play text as a director, referencing live performances they have experienced as a spectator that have influenced, inspired or informed them
  + the student’s ideas regarding the staging of two specific moments from the play and how these would create the desired impact on an audience
  + the student’s presentation of their final directorial intentions and the intended impact of these on an audience
* a list of all sources cited.

The size and format of pages submitted for assessment is not prescribed to enable students to be creative with how they record and present their work. Submitted materials are assessed on screen and students must ensure that their work is clear and legible when presented in a digital, on-screen format. To ensure that examiners are able to gain an overall and legible impression of each page without excessive scrolling, students are recommended to use common page sizes (such as legal, A4 or folio). Overcrowded or illegible materials may result in examiners being unable to interpret and understand the intentions of the work.