



National Certificate of Educational Achievement
TAUMATA MĀTAURANGA Ā-MOTU KUA TAEA

Exemplar for Internal Achievement Standard

Drama Level 3

This exemplar supports assessment against:

Achievement Standard 91516

Demonstrate understanding of the work of a drama or theatre theorist or practitioner

An annotated exemplar is an extract of student evidence, with a commentary, to explain key aspects of the standard. It assists teachers to make assessment judgements at the grade boundaries.

New Zealand Qualifications Authority

To support internal assessment

	Grade Boundary: Low Excellence
1.	<p>For Excellence, a student needs to demonstrate perceptive understanding of the work of a drama or theatre theorist or practitioner.</p> <p>This involves justifying, with insight, the application in relation to the intention of the work of a practitioner or theorist.</p> <p>This student has demonstrated an informed and perceptive understanding of the theories of Antonin Artaud by applying them to the play <i>My Heart is Bathed in Blood</i>. They hold a first meeting to discuss ideas for performance with her imagined actors.</p> <p>The student discusses ‘<i>inner beasts</i>’ and why Artaud considered them in his work and applies the ‘<i>inner beast</i>’ of Senga, the main character.</p> <p>The scene is played realistically and then with the physicalized ideas of the unleashing of the inner beast to show the contrast of applying Artaud’s theoretical ideas to the scene. The applied action and movement is justified insightfully as it relates to the internal state of the character. This is done in a perceptive fashion in relation to the whole play’s meaning.</p> <p>For a more secure Excellence, the student could apply Artaud’s ideas for technical placement of the audience for this scene. For example, the student could use ‘theatre in the round’ to bring the audience amongst the action but also to act as a physical restraint to further justify and explore the theme of social confinement in the play.</p>

	Grade Boundary: High Merit
2.	<p>For Merit, the student needs to demonstrate informed understanding of the work of a drama or theatre theorist or practitioner.</p> <p>This involves justifying the application in relation to the intention of the work of a practitioner or theorist.</p> <p>This student has demonstrated an informed understanding of Brecht's theory 'in role' as director and evidence shows moments of perceptiveness.</p> <p>The universal function of the actors Jussop, Grusha and the Monk have been explained in terms of Brecht's intention, and ideas to support these representations and the themes of the play on stage are evident (1).</p> <p>The student plans to apply the '<i>alienation effect</i>' to the scene by having actors play multiple roles and have them exchanging costume in front of the audience (2) and justifies this choice with some insight (3).</p> <p>The breaking of the fourth wall is applied and clearly justified (4).</p> <p>The choice to use mask is justified (5).</p> <p>The plan to use exaggerated physical action during the scene is justified (6).</p> <p>To reach Excellence, the student could further consider opportunities in the text to apply Brecht's theory. Use of narrators, music and singers need to be applied to the text, as they are clearly marked in this scene.</p> <p>Brecht's notion to ensure the audience sees the changeable and contradictory natures of the characters and situations are also vital aspects to be considered for the student to verify a perceptive understanding.</p>

Transcript of Seminar: In role as a theatre director.

Good morning cast. I'm here to talk to you about how I plan to direct the play, Caucasian Chalk Circle. I'll be focusing on scene three in this particular seminar and inform you all of the Brechtian Features I will use.

So, Bertolt Brecht was an influential theatre practitioner of the 20th Century and called his type of theatre, Epic Theatre. The themes in the play are social themes such as 'corruption in religion', 'avarice and greed for money', 'money vs love' and 'justice vs the law'. Brecht's intention is to prevent the audience from becoming emotionally involved with the characters, and to consider that bad things happen because of the choices and actions people make. Take Jussup's mother for example. Her desire for money is much larger than the concern she has for her son; she is representing the fact that society is losing the value of family over wealth.

The scene from Caucasian Chalk Circle that I am informing you about is Scene 3. In this scene, 'In the Northern Mountains' Lavrenti convinces Grusha to marry a dying peasant, Jussup. She reluctantly agrees. Guests arrive at the wedding–funeral, including the Singer and musicians and gossip endlessly. At this event Jussup returns to 'life' and it becomes clear he was never dead, only 'ill'. The purpose of this situation is to jolt the audience to think, or question how they are living their lives.

Grusha is a young girl who finds a child that was lost in the war and takes him in as her own. Grusha represents purity and the spiritual side of humanity in times of war. Taking a baby in shows courage and lets the audience think about how the inhumanity of war and the measures people go to keep others safe. This character is to be kind hearted, sweet, shy, softly spoken, and innocent and pure looking. Lavrenti, her brother looks out for her wellbeing and tries to protect her. Jussup is the harsh spoken, man that pretended to be dead so that he didn't have to go to war. Representing Jussup as a 'rebel' like character to those in authority. He shows himself as 'non brainwashed' as he has no willingness to go to war, or help his country. Brecht uses Jussup to make the audience think about his actions and opinions on the war and authority and allows them to question who is in power. He's a coward but acts like he's too good for everyone, especially Grusha. He'll speak with a low voice and have a confident stride when he walks. His mother, the mother in law's main motive is to present a good image of herself, by dressing well and socialising. Her second motive is to earn money. The function of her role is to demonstrate the theme of money vs love. The monk acts as the priest that marries Grusha and Jussup, however he is quite obviously drunk sneaking sneaky sips of alcohol on stage and even offering a bottle to the guests. This is to highlight the theme of corruption in the religious realm, and show that religion is not always as pure as it appears to be.

①

In this scene the features I aim to use are:

The Alienation effect – This is making a character or event unfamiliar or strange so the audience 'look again'. We use this convention when two women exchange characters in front

of the audience. Physically they swap hats or wigs and change the pitch and tone of their voices. For example lowering their voice, to portray they have 'transformed' into a new character. They will wear a blacks as the base costume so when they play another role, they add/change one item to signify a different character. This could be a hat or a wig etc. This is reminding the audience that what they are seeing is not real, it is all just a play and will help the audience identify change and new characters.

2

One of the purposes of epic theatre is for the audience to always be aware that they are watching a play and to observe rather than empathise. This leads the audience to be observers, watching characters behaviours, values and point of views. The story is being told to make a political point of religious corruption, money vs love, in times of war.

3

We will break the fourth wall to disrupt realism in this play. I will use this convention when the singer is narrating what is in the scene that follows. This is to pre-tell the story so that the audience focus on the ideas in the scene to come rather than the narrative. After the narration, Jussup and Grusha move into a series of tableaux that represent the core action in the narration rather than acting out the whole scene. This is a reminder that action on stage is a play and distances the audience from the emotions within the characters.

4

The third Brechtian feature I want to incorporate in this scene is simple staging. For example, the bath that Jussup gets in near the end of the scene will already be set up as well as the chairs for the guests, and his bed (rostrum) at the back. I want to use simple costumes, props, musical instruments and lighting. The stage is brightly lit so that the actors are in the same world as the audience. No special lighting effects will be used and the source of light will be visible. Musical instruments will be pots and pans that can be found round the house or in shops for a small cost. The music should contrast with the action on stage. Props will be involved in the story telling or used or symbolically.

Masks will be used to show ugliness and a character's true colours. Jussup will have a mask to reveal his negative qualities, and the monk will have one to contrast the private persona versus the public image.

5

The fourth convention feature is exaggerated physical action. For example, Jussup is bold and has a lot of emotion. He will show his anger and superiority to Grusha by taking big strides and using large arm gestures because this is a way to show his emotions and the way he is feeling without speaking words. This is a gestus in this scene with the social relationship of superiority and dominance contrasting with Grusha's inferior status and the social attitudes around this. Grusha's weak and fragile posture is juxtaposed with Jussup's authoritative stance.

6

So that concludes this discussion, I'll see you all at our first proper rehearsal next week, if you can't make it then please tell me as soon as a possible and with a note. Thank you! ☺

	Grade Boundary: Low Merit
3.	<p>For Merit, the student needs to demonstrate informed understanding of the work of a drama or theatre theorist or practitioner.</p> <p>This involves justifying the application in relation to the intention of the work of a practitioner or theorist.</p> <p>This student has demonstrated an informed understanding of Bertolt Brecht's theory, and application of ideas to draw out the themes of <i>Caucasian Chalk Circle</i> is evident.</p> <p>Justification is given in terms of the use of the singer to directly address the audience in the presentational style (1).</p> <p>The student has explained how the singer's function is to be a 'storyteller' that alerts the audience to consider the irony of human traits. Evidence for this idea is justified in terms of the role of narrator and the intention to interrupt the flow of the play (2).</p> <p>The student has also considered the technical elements in terms of the 'alienation' aspect of Epic theatre (3).</p> <p>The function of the roles of the Drunken Peasant and the Monk have been applied and justified in terms of alerting the audience to the themes of the play(4).</p> <p>The application of the actors being part of the audience when not on stage, and with the planned use of costume, props and scenery is evident (5).</p> <p>For a more secure Merit, the student could detail the justification with the same depth of clarity as evidenced for the function of the singer. Using specific terminology of Brecht's theory such as 'alienation effect' is also advisable.</p>

Transcript of Seminar: In role as a theatre director.

Good morning! Welcome to the first full cast and crew meeting of the season. Today we are going to look at the 'Caucasian Chalk Circle' by Bertolt Brecht as a whole and I'll quickly talk to you about how I intend to direct a specific scene. This will give you some idea of what I am looking for in the performance. It can be daunting when looking through the script for the first time without knowledge of what Brecht wanted his audience to feel; because he did want them to react a certain way.

Brecht wanted his audience to be uncomfortable; he wanted them to remember ALL the way through the play that those on stage were acting. That way the audience would forget about the individual characters and focus on the ideas he was presenting. I want to apply a number of these conventions to this play.

Caucasian Chalk Circle play is about law vs. justice and money vs. love, hypocrisy of religion and greed. My intention in directing this play is to highlight these themes by using the Brechtian conventions.

Now let's look at scene 3 and identify features in it. This scene starts on page 43, line 6 in the script and ends on page 51. If you could turn to page 44 in your scripts now, we'll take a look.

So on page 44, you'll see, near the bottom of the page, a character called The Singer. In this play Brecht uses this character as a narrator, setting the scene and telling the audience what will happen. This is a feature Brecht used in many of his plays which stopped the audience wondering what was going to happen and moved their focus to HOW things would happen, thus making them question the social ideas he presented.

①

For example, line 10 page 44 the singer says,

"The bridegroom was on his deathbed when the bride arrived.
The bridegroom's mother was waiting at the door telling her to hurry.
The bride brought a child along.
The witness hid it during the wedding."

These clear sentences are all statements of what will happen in the following scene. Once the audience knows this, they have an understanding of what is going to happen, so are not preoccupied with following a story. In this scene, once an audience knows the story, their eyes are opened to what is going on behind it. They can see that Brecht is portraying human weaknesses and ironies by having a wedding and a funeral combined. The double irony is while the Mother in Law is trying to have the wedding quickly before her son dies so she can earn money; her son is actually pretending to be ill so he can get out of being a soldier. By creating this irony, Brecht is showing his audience the human faults of greed and selfishness, but is painting them in a satirical way. This shows just how pathetic and self-serving our behaviour can be.

①

In our production, I really want to draw attention to the narrator, make her stand out and interrupt the flow of the play. I want her moving around the audience – talking to them and keeping them involved but also aware that the action was merely a play which the audience is observing. So, in this scene, when she speaks her line, I want her to speak with high volume and after finishing her line, to go and sit in the audience. This will make her lines slightly unnatural and reinforce the idea that she is a narrator stating facts, not one of the actors onstage. This will also help break up the scene and remind the audience that what they are watching is merely a story being told and not something to be emotionally involved in.

②

This is an example of breaking the 4th wall in this production – which is another Brechtian used to keep the audience involved. The fourth wall is, (in a typical theatre), under the proscenium arch. This forms a box around the stage – containing the actors, separating the audience – encouraging them to watch the play from a safe, comfortable distance. I will get the actors coming into the audience as often as possible and in this scene, when the musicians come on and begin to play at the funeral/wedding, they will sit in allocated seats in the audience.

Music is another way Brecht created ideas and emotion - he used it to interrupt the flow of the story and to wake the audience up. Songs were often contrasted to the action onstage by being opposite to the current emotion or by being played loud and off putting. On page 49, when the Drunken Peasant and the Monk sing their crude drinking song, I want this tune to be as loud and abrasive as possible. This is a contrast to the mood of the scene, which is somber because Jussup is on his deathbed. The music will break up the flow of the scene, and encourage them to question and consider. The audience should realise that the irony of a drinking song at a funeral sung by a drunken monk. This supports the themes of the play as a whole – how Grusha has paid to marry Jussup, not for the love of the child not the husband. Jussup's mother, in this scene, for instance, is complaining about the cost of a funeral supper while her son is dying. The audience are provoked to consider the themes.

4

We will place a row of seats at the very back of the stage, where the actors will sit between scenes when not 'onstage'. There is no backstage area; the actors will watch the onstage action. Everything is visible, lighting source/operator, stage crew, any mechanics associated with the set. I want the audience to move from a state of watching, to a state of consciously observing and considering the ideas. They cannot get lost in the story when there are so many reminders around. By not losing themselves in the emotion, the audience can calculate and consider the ideas of law vs. justice and how that affects their lives.

3

The intention of Brechtian theatre is to change people's opinions; politically and morally, (often the two were connected.) Today, because communism is no longer as viable as it was in Brecht's time, instead of seeing this play as a communist play, I want to take those ideas and bring them to a modern audience. In today's society there are wars over resources. This is the idea that the play hinges upon; love vs. wealth. It's about sharing resources with those in need and taking care of what you have. Brecht wanted to challenge his audience and make them question their values. That is my aim too. I want the audience to leave the theatre inspired.

Costume, props and scenery throughout the play will be kept to a minimum. In this scene, for example, I will use rostra as the 'deathbed' on stage right and have Jussup behind it. This means he is out of sight and the character playing Jussup can play other characters (as is the Brechtian style). I have also decided to use a small placard to label the deathbed to reinforce the minimalistic set design and also focus the audience.

5

I will have, stage left, a small table and four or five chairs for the guests to sit. That is really the entire set for this scene. The costumes for the entire play will be stage blacks with an item that represents each character. For example, in this scene, the old woman will have stage blacks and a shawl to reinforce her age and Jussup will wear stage blacks and a plain linen night shirt to reinforce the fact he has been in bed and 'unwell' for a long time. This minimalistic scenery and costuming again is a visual reminder that the important thing in this play is the ideas that are presented.

Thanks everyone for listening. There is a lot to think about in this one scene and I know that this play will be a huge task. My aim is to try and recreate the Brechtian style and keep the Caucasian Chalk Circle true to its roots. We want the audience to leave thinking about the ideas we've put in their head. Everyone take a 10 minute break before we begin the read through.

	Grade Boundary: High Achieved
4.	<p>For Achieved, the student needs to demonstrate understanding of the work of a drama or theatre theorist or practitioner.</p> <p>This involves applying the knowledge, and ideas or processes of a practitioner or theorist to communicate the intention of their work.</p> <p>This student has demonstrated an understanding of the theories of Antonin Artaud and applies them to an extract from <i>The Glass Menagerie</i>. Understanding is confirmed by the application of performance choices in their seminar to the imagined actors.</p> <p>The student applies animalistic qualities to the characters at a specific moment in the text. For example, use of space and voice skills when Amanda and Tom are arguing. Amanda's dialogue delivered 'like a whip' likened to a 'lion tamer'.</p> <p>A ritualistic approach is discussed in terms of how it could be used, and this is combined with large movements and sounds in a workshop situation.</p> <p>The idea of repetition is explained in terms of the scene. The feature of gibberish and movement with and without sound is applied and explained for a moment in the text.</p> <p>To reach Merit, the student could reference the '<i>animalistic</i>' term more specifically to the idea of '<i>inner beasts</i>'. The idea of the words being a whip could be developed and justified further in a wider context of Artaud's theory.</p> <p>They could connect the meaning of the setting with more explanation to the relationship of the characters and fully physicalize the ideas of ritual, gesture and movement to show an informed understanding.</p>

	Grade Boundary: Low Achieved
5.	<p>For Achieved, the student needs to demonstrate understanding of the work of a drama or theatre theorist or practitioner.</p> <p>This involves applying the knowledge, and ideas or processes of a practitioner or theorist to communicate the intention of their work.</p> <p>This student has applied Brechtian theory to a scene from the <i>Caucasian Chalk Circle</i> at a very fundamental level.</p> <p>Explanations to apply music (1), multiple roles and changing the actor playing a character (2), enlarged physicalisation (3), contrast (4), breaking the 4th wall (5) and lighting (6) are evident and reflect the ideas of epic theatre.</p> <p>For a more secure Achieved, the student needs to examine in more detail how they would apply Brechtian theory at these points in the text to communicate the practitioner's intention in regards to the purpose of the play.</p>

Transcript of Seminar: In role as a theatre director.

***Caucasian Chalk Circle* by Bertolt Brecht**

Using Music:

In scene three, I am making the character of the singer, sing her lines. I will use a very simple melody, as the music will be used to keep the audience's attention, and she is like a storyteller to inform them of what was going to happen next, foreshadowing. ①

The singer can move through the audience as she sings making direct eye contact with them, so she breaks the fourth wall and alerting the audience to important details they should be paying attention to. ⑤

Changing character:

I am using this idea as actors are going to play multiple characters. The cast are wearing a base of blacks and there will be identifiers to be worn to represent that role. For example, Grusha will carry a baby blanket, the Monk a hip flask, and the mother in law will wear a styled hair wig. These characters represent a universal type of character. For example: The drunken monk represents 'corruption in religion'. When our second actor takes over Grusha's role she will be given the baby blanket. ②

Alienation effect:

To apply Brecht's alienation effect I will direct the monk to use enlarged physicalisation and direct address. His speech will be directed straight at the audience and he will use large wide arm gestures and staggers in his walk contrasting with his stereotypical composed walk. ③

Contrast will also be used during the funeral dance. Instead of this being sad and gloomy it will be a spirited dance with the music being unexpectedly high pitched and uplifting. This is not the music expected at a funeral and is intended to make the audience do a 'double take' and think more deeply about what is happening with the drunken Monk. The Monk will also distort his voice during his speech and say the sad lines in a happy tone that conveys he is 'merry' from the alcohol. This will support the theme of corruption in religion. ④

Lighting will be simple. The lighting will be bright white and the lighting stands will not be hidden from the audience. Brecht wants the audience to 'open their eyes' and look at the world of human affairs as unjust and therefore changeable. ⑥

At times the actors will speak the stage instructions for the monk so the audience are not drawn into the story too deeply and stay detached.

	Grade Boundary: High Not Achieved
6.	<p>For Achieved, the student needs to demonstrate understanding of the work of a drama or theatre theorist or practitioner.</p> <p>This involves applying the knowledge, and ideas or processes of a practitioner or theorist to communicate the intention of their work.</p> <p>There is no student work available at this grade.</p> <p>A student would have received this grade if they had presented a seminar using a slideshow that mainly consisted of background information about Bertolt Brecht, his life and his epic theatre theories, and the synopsis of <i>Caucasian Chalk Circle</i>.</p> <p>There would be some information on the intentions of Brecht to make the audience think about the messages in the play.</p> <p>In the instances where the student applied Brechtian ideas to the text, they would be general and rudimentary.</p> <p>To reach Achieved, the student would need to demonstrate sufficient 'application' of Brechtian ideas to the text. Epic theatre devices such as breaking the fourth wall, contrast, music, multiple roles and exaggerated movement need to be 'applied' to the scene. The function of the role of the Monk would also need to be further developed and linked to the intention of the theorist.</p>