

## Candidate 2 evidence

Drama Advanced Higher Resource Sheet	
Candidate Name	Scottish Candidate Number
Question Selected	Q1
<p>Analyse the extract to which a theatre practitioner successfully made the audience engage in relevant social and political messages.</p> <p>"Theatre can help us build our future, rather than <del>just</del> waiting for it!"</p> <p>marginalised persons to express problems.</p> <p>Worked with Marxist Paulo Friere = PEDAGOGY OF THE OPPRESSED</p> <p>1971 <del>arrested</del> <sup>and</sup> exiled</p> <p>Military junta gone MP Rio de Janeiro 1993-1996</p> <p>Theatre when legislative theatre. Explain.</p> <p>Blaws - rights for old, disabled, mental health, g.a.</p> <p>1997 England RSC, performance London Country Hall 1998</p> <p>*Bar * Cardboard citizens "We present the problem, but the solution comes from you."</p> <p>Describe Setting, Costume, Sound and use of the Ballerina, angel</p> <p>BEARS PRAYER "legislative theatre holds a mirror up to <del>angel</del> nature to transform in ourselves do with "honest democracy, freedom, desire and good sense as they enter this solemn and symbolic session."</p> <p>Play 1 transport - what happened what joker did</p> <p><u>Speer-Actors</u> Acting 2nd run through - not engaged</p> <p>Play 2 Lane + ess <sup>sets</sup> - Story - Acting 2nd run through - engaged</p>	
Word count:	165 words

Answer  
Questions → do a conclusion

## Advanced Higher Drama Assignment

### Question 1

Analyse the extent to which a theatre practitioner successfully made the audience engage in ~~relevant~~ relevant social and political messages.

The performance can be contemporary or historical (20 marks)

"Theatre can help build our future, rather than just waiting for it."

This quote comes from Augusto Boal, a famous Brazilian Theatre practitioner who strongly believed that theatre had a purpose and responsibility to get the audience audience to engage on relevant social and political messages to make changes to their society. He wanted marginalized people to participate in theatre and express their problems. Boal worked in Brazil creating theatre inspired by Marxist Paulo Friere and his book Pedagogy of the oppressed. There were military coups in Brazil in the 1960s and his work was considered a threat and in 1971 he was arrested, tortured and exiled from his country.

He returned to Brazil after when the military junta was overturned and continued his work and was elected to be a member of Parliament for Rio de Janeiro from 1993-1996. In his new political role he used theatre techniques to bring attention to social issues through his position and wanted to create changes to reflect what the people wanted. This is what he defined as legislative Theatre. His efforts led to the passing of 13 Laws in Rio. The thirteen laws resulting from this process mostly dealt with rights for the people with disabilities, older people, mental health patients, gay couples - for example prohibiting discriminatory room-pricing for gay couples at hotels and banning electro-shock therapy.

The 1997 Boal was invited to England to work with the world-renowned Royal Shakespeare Company but he was more interested in creating a teaching performance presented in The London Country Hall in 1998. British actors and theatre groups (including Cardboard Citizens), as well as

non actors and community groups were invited to participate in a production. This "Unnamed" production was recorded here and Boal showed the techniques of the Legislative Theatre used in Rio by asking the participating groups to discuss issues affecting people living in London.

The whole performance space looks like a courtroom with tiered seating in the round and a central open area in front of raised ~~benches~~ benches with tall wooden seats. The audience are seated when organ music blasts out and Boal enters the space and takes the highest seat on the bench and removes a dust cover and sits down. This level seems to give him the seriousness ~~that~~ of a judge but he then speaks to the audience and explains the purpose of the performance. Boal 'We present the problem, but the solution comes from you,' to re-enforce that the political power comes from the people as they express their frustrations, create and propose legislation.

Before the play starts he explains what will happen. The performance will be presented twice and on the second run through the audience or spect-actors are invited to invade or take ownership of the "Sacred <sup>Space</sup> ~~space~~". As he speaks the percussionists seated either side of him rattle on marimbas and drums and this builds the ritualised atmosphere. He invites other people up to be the writers of the laws and the advisors to the people. These "Characters" wear lawyers gowns giving the whole event a sense of importance. However before the play starts the last "Character" Boal calls up is a "guardian angel" because he says he never felt completely comfortable in the parliament ~~in~~ in Rio. The actor stands up on Boal's right-hand side dressed in a full angel costume. I think this is because Boal wanted the atmosphere to be relaxed and comical as well ~~so~~ so that people could feel more at ease to get involved and express their desires and engage in the political and social messages.

Before the performance starts Beal reads out a kind of prayer and asks for the people of London to take the responsibility for their Community and that the "legislative theatre holds a mirror up to nature to transform ourself" He also asks that the audience are guided by ~~the~~ "honest democracy, freedom, desire and good sense as they enter this solemn and symbolic session" By calling the performance Solemn he is reminding the audience of the serious responsibility that they have to change society for the better

The Joker is like a narrator and also organizes the audience's inputs into the performance. The first part of the performance was exploring issues with transport in London. The protagonist has the dilemma of needing to travel a great distance for work ~~with~~ and struggles with the cost. The actor playing the protagonist presented her role in a naturalistic way and was frustrated and desperate at different points in the short play by late running public transport, unsympathetic bosses, sexual harassment on ~~the~~ the underground and her financial struggles. All the other characters were presented stereotypically with exaggerated voices and movements and multi-acted all the other characters. The actors made car noises and roamed around the space, making <sup>all</sup> the sound effects and only using a simple single item of costume to represent their role. Because of this acting technique the only character you really engage with was the protagonist

When the play was performed again it was speeded up and the Joker reminded the audience that they had to clap to intervene and "play the action" by becoming the protagonist and acting out alternatives. The Joker was dressed in a suit and was more like a chat show host or a teacher encouraging as he encouraged the audience to take part and in this part of the performance the audience were slow to get involved. Due to this the Joker allowed the audience to remain seated as they took the microphone and acted as the protagonist. After each contribution the whole audience clapped and this made the performance loose its flow and sometimes the Joker struggled to pass on the ideas to the law makers who were writing suggestions down during the show performance.

It seemed the audience were either not particularly concerned about the issue or were inhibited about the process of legislative theatre and getting involved.

However, this completely changed in the second half of the production which used the exact same process but explored a different idea, with a different cast and a different Joker. The second half of the performance explored the issue of homelessness. The protagonist found it difficult to claim benefits and support without an address, struggled to be presentable and clean at an interview and was turned away from hostels for not meeting a range of petty, selective criteria. Again, the characterisation of the interviewers and social workers was exaggerated and made them look grotesque. The actor who played the homeless man, made homeless after his marriage split up, managed to communicate his shame in his situation by shuffling his feet, avoiding eye-contact and speaking with his voice breaking at times with emotion. I think because his circumstances were more serious and because the audience had warmed up in the process the whole legislative theatre experience became more passionate.

This time spect-actors didn't have to be persuaded by the Joker to take part and often they marched into the central space, some even grabbing the microphone from the Joker. It was interesting to see the variety of alternative ways the spect-actors offered to deal with the door person of the hostel and the councillor. Some became aggressive and some offered reasonable solutions and asked for help. In one interesting scene the councillor - played by an actor was on a higher raised level than the homeless person - now played by a spect-actor woman asked him to come down on to her level to speak to her. The actor said that he couldn't so the spect-actor walked up the aisle and stood really close to the actor meeting his gaze. She asked what he would do if she was his sister and was homeless and the actor lost the harshness of his role. It was as if being directly in front of him and connecting with him on a human level he could not ignore the issue.

In this second part of the performance a real debate opened up about solutions to ~~help~~ homelessness and the street-actors could not fail to be about the issue. ~~By watching the performance, it has also engaged about the issue.~~ By watching the performance, it has also engaged me to think about my attitude to homeless people on the street, how I behave and interact if I see someone who is begging.

At first I thought that this production was very slow and dull, without interesting production skills and serious acting but by the end I was really interested in the process and thoughtful about the political and social messages and I think that this performance demonstrates the potential of Boal's theories to empower people to find strategies for personal and social change.