



St Swithun's
WINCHESTER

Sixth Form Assessment

DRAMA & THEATRE STUDIES

Past Paper

Time allowed: 1 hour

Please write on lined paper, writing on every other line. Use plain paper for your sketches and diagrams; attach them with a tag to your written answers.

DRAMA & THEATRE STUDIES

Here is an extract from a play called Kindertransport by Diane Samuels. The play was first published in 1995.

The play is inspired by the personal accounts of the journeys and lives of people directly affected by the Kindertransport programme which transported German Jewish children out of Germany, in the nine months before the Second World War (1939-1945). This saved the children from being taken with the rest of their families by the Nazis and sent to concentration camps. Almost 10,000 children were rescued in this way.

The play explores the cost of this survival and looks at what sort of future may grow out of a traumatised past. It is set in an empty storage room in Evelyn's house in an outer London suburb in recent times. The characters are as follows:

Evelyn: English middle class woman. In her fifties. (Does not appear in this extract)

Faith: Evelyn's only child. In her early twenties.

Eva: Evelyn's younger self. She starts the play at nine years old, as in this extract. Jewish German.

Helga: German/Jewish woman of the late 1930s. In her early thirties. Eva/Evelyn's mother.

Lil: Eva/Evelyn's foster mother. Now in her eighties.

The Ratcatcher: A mythical character who also plays a Nazi Border Official, the English Organiser, the Postman and the Station Guard.

Read the extract below carefully. You may make notes on the paper as you read. Complete the tasks set. Give details and/or examples to support your ideas in your answers.

The extract is from Act 1 scene 1 of the play and is set in a dusty storage room filled with crates, bags, boxes and some old furniture. Eva is dressed in clothes of the late 1930s and is on the floor, reading. The book is a large, hard-backed story book entitled (in German) The Ratcatcher. Eva is with her mother who has told her that she cannot pack her treasured mouth organ to take with her to England as the border guards will send her back if they find her with it. Faith is on stage too but is not noticed by Eva & Helga who in turn are 'invisible' to Faith.

EVA starts to play a tune on the mouth organ. She plays well.

EVA finishes playing. HELGA applauds.

FAITH pulls out small box. She opens and looks inside.

HELGA. Now it's time for bed.

EVA. Not yet. Let me stay up. It's my last night.

HELGA. We will carry on as we always do. Bedtime is bedtime.

EVA (*moaning*). Mutti.

HELGA. Which story do you want?

EVA. The Ratcatcher.

FAITH *pulls out a hard-backed children's story book identical to the one HELGA is holding.*

Pipe music.

FAITH. 'Der Rattenfänger'.

HELGA. Not that one, Eva.

EVA. You said I could choose.

HELGA. Choose something else.

EVA. I don't want anything else.

HELGA turns and picks up EVA's 'Rattenfänger' book.

EVA quickly sneaks her mouth organ into the case and closes it.

FAITH. The Ratcatcher?

EVA. What did you say an abyss was, Mutti?

HELGA. I hope you won't ask questions like this when you're in England.

EVA. Why not?

HELGA. Listen.

HELGA opens the book and turns its pages.

FAITH opens the book and flicks through it. She finds an inscription in the front of the book.

EVA sits close to HELGA.

HELGA. Beware little children. Take heed and learn the lesson of Hamlyn where one bad soul brought tragedy upon the whole town.

FAITH. Hamburg. 1939.

HELGA. Happy Hamlyn after the rats had been led away . . .

FAITH carefully looks at the first page.

HELGA. . . . A town teeming with life. Full to overflowing.
And every day, the good people counted their blessings.
Every single one . . . Eva?

EVA. I'm listening.

FAITH (*looking at a picture*). Counting their blessings for
being so lucky . . .

HELGA. They all knew how fortunate they were. All except
for one very wicked soul who was ungrateful and did not
count.

FAITH (*looking at another picture*). Mr. Ingratitude. Jesus.

HELGA. 'We are forgotten. We are lost. We are destroyed'
cried out all the uncounted blessings.

FAITH. The cloud . . .

HELGA. Then a cloud appeared in the clear, blue sky casting a
shadow down below.

RATCATCHER. Who is not counting?

HELGA. Whispered the shadow.

RATCATCHER. Who has forgotten their blessings?

HELGA. It hissed.

RATCATCHER. I will find you.

HELGA. It spat.

RATCATCHER. I will search you out whoever wherever you
are.

FAITH (*turning onto another page*). My God, and the shadow
growing legs . . .

HELGA. ' . . . and strong arms and spiky nails . . . '

EVA. And eyes sharp as razors.

FAITH. The Ratcatcher.

The shadow of the RATCATCHER hovers.

A train whistle blows. Sounds of a busy railway station.

HELGA remains stuck in bedtime story mode. EVA puts on her coat and hat and label with her number on it – 3362.

HELGA. The Ratcatcher searched for the ungrateful one. He searched and searched but all in vain.

RATCATCHER. Who will make up for the lost blessings?

HELGA. He raged.

RATCATCHER. If not the one guilty soul, then all.

HELGA. And he raised an enchanted pipe to his snarling lip, making a cruel promise to all the people of Hamlyn.

RATCATCHER. I will take the heart of your happiness away.

The RATCATCHER plays his music.

The sounds of the railway station become louder and louder.

Another train whistle.

EVA. Mutti! Vati! Hello! Hello! See. I did get into the carriage. I said I would. See, I'm not crying. I said I wouldn't. I can't open the window! It's sealed tight! Why've you taken your gloves off? You're knocking too hard. Your knuckles are going red! What? I can't hear you!

Sound of long, shrill train whistle.

Louder! Louder! What! I can't hear! I can't . . . I love you too . . . See you in England.

Sounds of train starting to move. EVA sits.

I mustn't stare at that cross-eyed boy.

Train whistle blows.

What if he talks to me?

The train moves faster.

I'll have to pretend I can't hear him.

The train is well on its way.

There's no point in crying.

The RATCATCHER music weaves around the train's chugging.

We'll see our Muttis and Vatis soon enough.

The music seems to take on the melody of a familiar play tune. EVA tunes in to it and sings.

Hoppe, hoppe Reiter
Wenn er fällt dann schreit er
Fällt er in den Graben
Fressen ihn die Raben
Fällt er in den Sumpf
Macht der Reiter plumpf.

(Hop hop hop hop rider / Do not fall beside her / If into the ditch you fall / The Ratman gets you all / And don't have the desire / To fall into the mire.)

We're all going to England, to England, to England . . .

The train slows down and stops.

Now answer these questions. There is a choice between 3 & 4

1)

What type of theatre (stage, scale, shape and size) would be most effective for this piece? Justify your choice in one paragraph.

2)

Make sketches or draw diagrams showing how you would stage this scene, indicating where your audience would be and labelling everything and everyone on the stage; show how the space could be used by the actors as well as essential props and set pieces. You may indicate movement with arrows or duplicate your basic set drawing but with different annotations.

Bird's eye view diagrams with bullet point notes are advisable.

3)

What sort of part is that of the Ratcatcher? What sort of effect should he have on the audience in your view? Describe how you would play this part, giving reasons for your ideas. Include vocal, physical and spatial factors in your answer.

OR

4)

As a director **or** designer, what would your overall 'production' **or** 'design' concept be for this piece?

In your answer, refer to your interpretation of the text, your desired audience response/s and describe how you might achieve it/them. Include references to what the audience would see, hear and feel in your answer.