

Grade 12 English A  
Paper 2 Mock Examination

*The Taming of the Shrew, The Importance of Being Earnest, and A Streetcar Named Desire*

Drama—

1. In everyday usage the word "theatrical" often means extravagant or is used to describe behavior that exhibits exaggerated emotion. To what extent, and in what ways, do at least two of the plays you have studied exemplify this definition of "theatrical"?

Wednesday, March 19, 2014

## Farce in The Importance of Being Earnest and The Taming of the Shrew

The term "theatrical", as a synonym to extravagant, or behavior that exhibits exaggerated emotion, can be used to describe plays that are full of energy, ~~absurdity~~ ~~exaggerations~~ that are often described as "over the top". This definition of "theatrical" closely resembles farce, which usually consists of character disguise, unlikely coincidences, ~~exaggeration~~ ~~absurdity~~ as well as physically expressed extravagance such as slapstick comedy. The Importance of Being Earnest (IOBE) and The Taming of the Shrew (TOTS) are two comedies that are particularly rich in farce, thus exemplifying extravagance and exhibiting exaggerated emotion consistently throughout by ~~character disguise~~ means of farical elements such as character disguise, coincidences, exaggeration, absurdity, and in the case of TOTS, even slapstick.

IOBE is a comedy of manners; farce is one of its most primary techniques for mocking the Victorian high social class, and is exemplified a lot throughout the play by means of character disguise and unlikely coincidences. In fact, character disguise plays such a central role in IOBE that it is given a name: "Bunburying". Jack, IOBE's protagonist, pretends to have an imaginary friend in town by the name of Ernest, and that his "name is Ernest in town and Jack in the country". This ~~allows~~ allows him to escape from the country to spend time in town (and vice versa) whenever he fancies. Character disguise at its plainest is extravagant simply because it's impractical and involves "pretending", which adds to the exaggerated tone of the play. ~~Furthermore~~, However, the extravagance does not stop here; Algernon pretends to be Jack's imaginary friend "Ernest" in order to make Cecily's acquaintance. With the addition of this paradox involving character disguise, ~~IOBE~~ the whole play is given an exaggerated and ~~unrealistic~~ and thus exaggerated mood. IOBE still richly employs character disguise and unlikely coincidences as farce which contributes to its resemblance of the term "theatrical". ~~TOTS also resembles the TOTS also~~

good explanatory connection

exemplifies the term "theatrical" by means of similar farcical elements, perhaps even more richly.

Similarly to IOBE, TOTS mocks the high class society's standards and values, using character disguise and unlikely coincidences as tools to achieve farce and <sup>portray</sup> an extravagant tone. More specifically, TOTS makes use of character disguise in three different situations. ~~The lord from the induction~~ For a start, the lord from the induction has all of his subjects disguise themselves, as well as disguise Sly, so that Sly thinks he is a noble lord. The ~~lord~~ lord has a group of ~~performers~~ ~~for~~ players perform ~~The Taming of the Shrew~~ a play for Sly. ~~The play itself is~~ ~~the acting of~~ The stage/setting of the play itself is surrounded by disguised characters. ~~Not only this,~~ In addition, the ~~the~~ performance itself is rich with character disguise. As examples, Hortensio and Lucentio disguise themselves as school ~~teachers~~ teachers, and Tranio disguises himself as Lucentio. ~~The~~ The "over-use" of character disguise makes every aspect of TOTS surreal and over-expressed. ~~To add to the intensity,~~ ~~TOTS~~ TOTS also has unlikely coincidences which contribute to the play's unrealistic and extravagant sense. For example, ~~the~~ Events such as the lord stumbling upon Sly <sup>and</sup> a group of players conveniently presenting themselves to the lord at the same night ~~give~~ ~~the~~ play help present the play as idealistic in terms of coincidence, ~~resulting~~ ~~in~~ which gives the ~~play~~ play an extravagant tone. TOTS ~~does not only~~ ~~create~~ creates farce by <sup>over-use of</sup> character disguise and unlikely coincidences; ~~it~~ it also ~~uses~~ makes use of some slapstick comedy ~~as~~ as a topping to the farcical tone.

TOTS implements some slapstick comedy which plays the essential role of expanding the scope of the ~~farce~~ farce presented. ~~More specifically~~ ~~As an example,~~ The most significant example of this is when ~~Hortensio~~ Petrucio beat Grucio after Grucio's deliberate misinterpretation and disturbance

when he exclaims, "knock sir! Whom should I knock? Is there any man has rebu'd your worship?" Slapstick, in contrast to other forms of comedy and farce, is physical rather than verbal. This added dimension allows the audience to experience ~~the farce~~ exaggerated emotion not only as a result of ~~coincidences and~~ disguises, ~~and~~ coincidences, which are ideas, ~~but~~ but see the extravagant and exaggerated energy of stage with an overly expressed physical acting.

In comparison, both ~~IOBE~~ IOBE and TOTS make use of farce primarily by character disguise. They also both depend on unlikely coincidences to create an unrealistic feel. ~~IOBE~~ Character disguise is a lot more frequent in TOTS, where as it is a central (but less frequent) element in IOBE. TOTS incorporates slapstick comedy which gives its farce and extravagance a physical dimension, which is absent in IOBE. ~~In the~~ In conclusion, both plays are similar in their ways of ~~achieving~~ exemplifying the term "theatrical", with only a few differences.

Excellent essay. Well-done!

A	B	C	D	E
5	5	5	5	5

25/25