Love and Information (2012)
by Caryl Churchill

Background

This play by Caryl Churchill is a compilation of seven sections and many scenes and characters, that can be performed in a number of different combinations and varying order. The text was originally written to be performed on a proscenium stage theatre. Find out three facts about how the text would have been performed, and write them below:

1. 
2. 
3. 

Next, you should consider how the original performing conditions were different from what can be found in contemporary performance. Find three differences and write them below:

1. 
2. 
3. 

Here are some of the main themes of Love and Information:

• politics  • uncertainty
• communication  • belief
• freedom  • knowledge
• class  • institutions
• technology  • love

You should remember these, especially when thinking about how you would create a production of the text. You will be encouraged to think practically about the questions in the exam paper for Component 3. This means that you will need to focus on three aspects of performance:

• Acting
• Directing
Designing

You have already explored some Design elements for this component. Now you can focus on the practice of Acting and Directing for *Love and Information*.

**Acting**

*Love and Information* has over 100 characters, but they are not named. There are 57 scenes that seem unconnected at first. This offers a significant challenge to a company of actors. They will need to create characters in a short time, and succeed in conveying these to an audience.

Caryl Churchill has always written with the aim of challenging an audience, hoping to make them think. Her audiences have to work quite hard while watching a performance. In order to research the play and its context, find out about other plays by Churchill. Then, as you work through the play, use the character charts on pages 7–12 to write any information that you find about the characters from the text and from your practical work. Below are some ideas on how to work practically on individual characters.

**Recluse**

Look at Three, ‘Recluse’. After you have read it, answer the questions below:

In as few words as possible, how do the characters feel at this moment?

_____________________________________________________________________

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What does the dialogue tell us about the characters’ feelings at this point?

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_____________________________________________________________________
Write a list of the key words within this section.

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What do these key words add to our knowledge of the characters?

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Think of three different ways of performing the section. Each way should emphasise a different emotion.

1. _____________________________________________________________________

2. _____________________________________________________________________

3. _____________________________________________________________________

**Perform the lines from the extract using one of the emotions above.**

Evaluate your performance, thinking in particular about the emotions in the speech and how the audience perceives the characters. You could refer to your tone of voice, pitch, emphasis, and movement at key moments.

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Next, try to use movement and mime to communicate the characters’ feelings and state of mind at this point.

Think of a song or a piece of music that reflects the mood in this section. Why do you think so?

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Lab

Next, turn to One, ‘Lab’, and read the entire section. You are going to work on the characters in this scene.

What type of people are the characters?

________________________________________________________________________

Describe their moods at the beginning of the section.

________________________________________________________________________

How do they react to each other?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What is their state of mind in this section?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
What are their motivations in this section?


Perform the section, concentrating on your vocal skills.

Try the section quietly; then quickly; then with a mounting sense of rage; then as someone defeated; then finally, with curiosity.

Which of the options felt most appropriate? Why?


Read the section aloud, and perform it using these different ideas and moods. You are:

- depressed
- hyped
- melancholy
- in a rush
- ecstatic
- in deep thought
- confiding in a friend
- sly

Which emotion helped you most when performing, and why?

What does the section tell us about the characters?

What kind of movement would be appropriate for the characters in this section? Why?
CHARACTER MAPS

For this play you can choose which scenes and characters you would like to study in detail. Use the following maps to write your ideas about the characters’ motivation, objectives, movement, voice and interaction. Then you can build on these sketches when you are thinking about how you would portray the characters on stage.

Scene name _______________________________________________________

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<th>Motivation – main objectives</th>
<th>Voice</th>
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Directing

In this section your role as director will be to achieve the following:

• move characters on stage
• discuss their interaction
• discuss their proxemics
• discuss their motivation
• discuss creating mood and atmosphere.

Look at Two, ‘Glass’.

What are the motivations for both characters in this section?

On what type of stage would you stage this section?

What are your ideas for the characters' movements in this section?
What is the mood and atmosphere during this section?

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Now look at Six, ‘The Child who didn’t know pain’.

What are the motivations of both characters in this scene?

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What are your ideas for the interaction between the characters?

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What movements would you have in this section? Why?

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How would you create tension between the characters?

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You can use the same questions for different sections of the play, in order to deepen your knowledge of the way the text could be directed.

Additional material can be accessed in the set text notes.