

KUO PAO KUN'S

# KOPITIAM

THE UNDERSTUDY  
DRAMA & THEATRE RESOURCES

## UNIT 1 MOURNING





# UNIT 1

## MOURNING

### READING



Pages: 15-17  
Lines: 1-60

### DISCUSS



What creative opportunities for design are created by the opening stage directions? What are your initial ideas about these?

What mood is created in the opening moments? How might you bring this mood to life?

What is the family story? How are they all connected?



What do we learn about Grandpa's attitude to life?

How is Jia Cai different to Grandpa?

# VOCABULARY

THE UNDERSTUDY  
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1. Gong Gong: Grandpa
2. kopi: coffee with milk
3. teh o: tea without milk
4. towkay: boss
5. erhu: two-stringed Chinese musical instrument
6. Baba: father
7. kiasu: literally, afraid to lose out

From notes on page 24



### THE EMERGENCY (Line 127)

A state of emergency was declared in Singapore on 24 June 1948, a week after emergency was launched in the Federation of Malaya following a spate of violence by the Malayan Communist Party (MCP). During the Emergency, the MCP in Singapore carried out numerous acts of violence and sabotage including murders, assassinations and arson attacks in the early 1950s. It sabotaged British-owned interests and companies in order to tie down British resources in Singapore. Communist hit squads carried out numerous assassinations in Singapore, including an attempted assassination on then Governor of Singapore Franklin Gimson.

("Emergency Is Declared in Singapore - Singapore History")  
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# UNIT 1

## MOURNING



# Quick STARTER

Gather quotations that tell us something about the character you have.

Each person should have one quotation but they should all be different within your group.

Combine your individual work into a group piece.



**GESTURE**  
**VOCAL EXPRESSION**

Divide into **2** groups

One group should focus on Grandpa.

One group should focus on Jia Cai.

The other group then comments on what they notice about your character based on your performance.



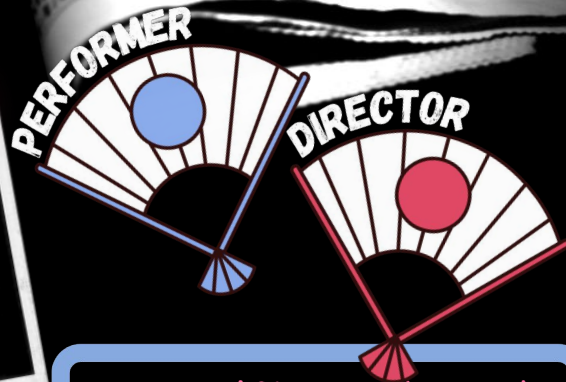
# UNIT 1

## MOURNING



# PRACTICAL

## Exploration



You can add Directors where needed for numbers

1.

Decide what your section is revealing about each of the characters.

2.

Rehearse your section, exploring ways to bring out those characteristics.

3.

Share your work in order so you get a sense of the whole section of script.

4.

Discuss what each performance revealed about the different characters.



# UNIT 1

## MOURNING

# DESIGN TASK

## Set and Lighting Design

[Darkness. Silence.  
Poignant music is heard.  
Spotlight reveals a kopitiam  
banner pasted over with a  
white paper cross. Shouts by  
shop assistants are heard

ordering drink and snacks;  
they get louder, then  
gradually fade.  
Light falls on Gong Gong  
sitting by a marble-topped  
kopitiam table.  
Total silence.]

Create a moodboard for the set  
design for Kopitiam.



Draw a sketch with  
your initial idea in terms  
of how you might make  
it all work on stage.

DESIGNER

# UNIT 1

## MOURNING

# SECTION B

(25 marks)



Section B of the exam will be on Extract 2 (Kopitiam).  
You will need to answer two questions:

A 10 mark question (no choice)  
on directing, design or  
performing.

A 15 mark question from a choice  
of 2 questions on directing,  
design or performing.



TAKE  
NOTE!

We do not know what they will focus on, so you need to be prepared for anything. Last year, they had questions on all three aspects, sometimes combining more than aspect, so we will practise all kinds of questions.

We jump straight into  
**10 MARK QUESTIONS**  
here in this pack!



# UNIT 1

## MOURNING

# WRITING TASK 10

Mark  
Question

THE UNDERSTUDY  
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In the sample answers they have an answer as short as 260 words that gets 9/10. But they have longer answers of about 400 words too. Depends how efficiently you write. They give you a page in the exam booklet (about 25 lines) as guidance.

150 minutes  
~~~~~  
80 marks

LESS THAN  
2 MINUTES  
PER MARK!

Read the passage from line 1, [*Darkness. Silence.*] to line 109 [*...he was only 20.*] As a director, how would you advise the actors to show the familial relationships portrayed in this passage? [10]

10 marks = 20 mins



### MOOD:

The atmosphere or feeling of a performance, often created by the music, setting or lighting.  
(CIE)



HELP!

Top  
tip

The challenge here is actually fitting it all in. It's hard to cover everything you want to say in 20 minutes, so better to make a few bullet points about your main ideas to create the mood, then select elements of the text that might be useful in illustrating those ideas.

## UNIT 1 MOURNING

# 10 Mark Question

## THE QUESTION

Read the passage from line 1, ['Darkness. Silence.'] to line 109 ['...he was only 20.']. As a director, how would you advise the actors to show the familial relationships portrayed in this passage? [10]

What is being asked? Analyse the question.  
HOW to advise actors to show FAMILIAL RELATIONSHIPS.



## Quick PLANNING

with bullet points



- Relationship: loving, honest, respectful but both unmoving
- First lines spoken establish position
- Grandpa almost sulky (36)
- JC Affectionate but honest (65)
- Repeated 'Gong Gong'
- Pragmatic vs emotional / old vs new
- Brings up Father's death as a fault of old ways
- Both use Father as a 'weapon'



Read the passage from line 1, [*Darkness. Silence.*] to line 109 [...he was only 20.] As a director, how would you advise the actors to show the familial relationships portrayed in this passage? [10]

The relationship between Grandpa and Jia Cai is clearly full of love and respect, but each are committed to their own perspective in terms of their attitude and beliefs about progress vs tradition. They respectfully disagree with each other throughout the scene and I would want each of them to show that their desire to persuade the other comes from a place of love. Each must be utterly convinced that he is doing the right thing for the other by trying to win him over. Jia Cai will have been taught to respect his elders in a traditional way, but he has also been changed by his time in the West and he feels it's his responsibility to help Grandpa let go of the past.

Each character establishes their perspective in their first lines spoken to each other as Grandpa states, "I have always hoped you would one day take over from your father," while Jia Cai reminds him to "Be practical, Gong Gong." I would have Grandpa look directly into Jia Cai's eyes to almost guilt him into his expectations as he immediately brings up Jia Cai's recently deceased Father. Jia Cai will hold his gaze as he stands his ground, speaking his line softly, but firmly. I notice that through the passage, they both bring up Father's death as a kind of weapon to guilt the other one. Jia Cai blames his father's death on his refusal to see a 'Western doctor' while Grandpa keeps reminding him that the kopitiam was 'his life.' I would have them speak lines about Yin Guan carefully, gently, but with an insistence that shows that they are not giving in to the other.

Read the passage from line 1, [*Darkness. Silence.*] to line 109 [*...he was only 20.*] As a director, how would you advise the actors to show the familial relationships portrayed in this passage? [10]

I also notice that Jia Cai uses the term 'Gong Gong' a number of times throughout the passage: whenever he holds his position, or disagrees with Grandpa, it is often punctuated by an affectionate, "Gong Gong," at the beginning or end of a sentence. I would have him say this term with love to keep reminding his grandpa that he is still his grandson, even though he has grown up into his own man.

Grandpa seems to play a bit of a game with Jia Cai, becoming almost sulky at times with lines like, "White haired old men bidding goodbye to blackhaired young men," as if there might be a subtext that he is suggesting that the new ways of Jia Cai's generation are what lead to premature deaths. It's not explicit, but it could be implied by him giving a sideways glance to Jia Cai to see if he picks up on the underlying meaning.

I would want to build the pace and tension from around line 80 as they each become increasingly heated and insistent on their point of view. I would have them build pace and volume and emotion right up to the line, "You never stop!" Grandpa could then feel that he needs to calm down to explain his generation and shift into the past as we move towards the flashback with Yin Guan.

[509 words in 20 minutes: 5 planning; 13 writing; 2 checking.]



# UNIT 1 MOURNING

## 10 Mark Question

### THE QUESTION

Read the passage from line 1, ['Darkness. Silence.'] to line 109 ['...he was only 20.']. As a director, how would you advise the actors to show the familial relationships portrayed in this passage? [10]

What is being asked? Analyse the question.  
HOW to advise actors to show FAMILIAL RELATIONSHIPS.



## Quick PLANNING

with bullet points



- Plan here...

First establish mood, then say how.

# UNIT 1

MOURNING

# 10

Mark  
Question

YOUR ANSWER

Read the passage from line 1, [*Darkness. Silence.*] to line 109 [*...he was only 20.*] As a director, how would you advise the actors to show the familial relationships portrayed in this passage? [10]

Write here...



UNIT 1

MOURNING

10

Mark  
Question

YOUR ANSWER

Read the passage from line 1, [*Darkness. Silence.*] to line 109 [*...he was only 20.*] As a director, how would you advise the actors to show the familial relationships portrayed in this passage? [10]

Write here...

## UNIT 1 MOURNING

# MARK SCHEME

Read the passage from line 1, [*‘Darkness. Silence.’*] to line 109 [*‘...he was only 20.’*] As a director, how would you advise the actors to show the familial relationships portrayed in this passage? [10]

|      |                                                                                                                                                         |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9-10 | Offers <u>insight</u> into the passage and provides a <u>detailed and perceptive discussion</u> of how to direct it to show the familial relationships. |
| 7-8  | Offers <u>some insight</u> into the passage and provides a <u>range of practical ideas</u> of how to direct it to show the familial relationships.      |
| 5-6  | Offers <u>understanding</u> of the passage and provides <u>some specific examples</u> of how to direct it to show the familial relationships.           |
| 3-4  | Offers <u>some understanding</u> of the passage and provides <u>a simple suggestion</u> of how to direct it.                                            |
| 1-2  | Offers <u>basic understanding</u> of the passage and a <u>general comment</u> on how to direct it.                                                      |
| 0    | No creditable response.                                                                                                                                 |



# Free SAMPLE

This is a taster of our full set of (editable) slides and many other outstanding resources available at [www.the-understudy.org](http://www.the-understudy.org)

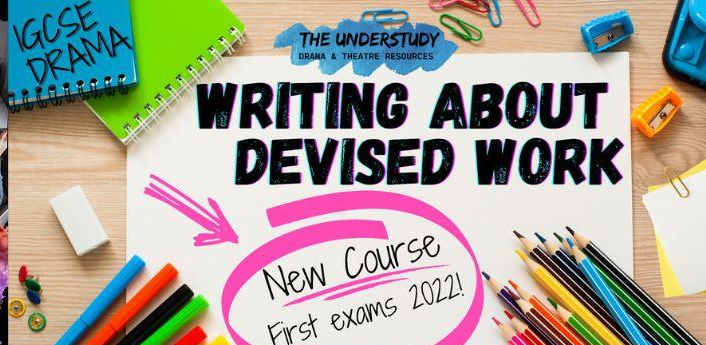
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