



Reading

- 1 **10.4.2** Read the text and decide if each statement (1-8) is *T* (true), *F* (false) or *DS* (doesn't say). Give reasons for your answers.

- 1 A mask can help the audience understand the character's feelings.
- 2 Ancient Greek actors made their own masks.
- 3 There were no female characters in Greek drama.
- 4 In Italian Commedia dell'Arte, actors wrote the script.
- 5 Commedia dell'Arte didn't allow women to act.
- 6 Commedia dell'Arte actors always wore the same masks.
- 7 Japanese Noh performers did not move on stage.
- 8 Only specially trained actors took part in Japanese Noh plays.

(8x2=16)

- 2 **10.3.1 10.3.4** Choose the correct response.

- 1 A: What did you think of that play?
B: a For me, it was quite boring.
b Sure, that's interesting.
- 2 A: In my opinion, the musical was fantastic!
B: a Not a problem.
b Yes, you're right.
- 3 A: Van Gogh's paintings are really expensive!
B: a That's great!
b I couldn't agree more.
- 4 A: Don't you agree?
B: a Sometimes I am.
b Yes, you have a point.
- 5 A: If you ask me, that play was horrible!
B: a No, I don't think so.
b You won't regret it.

(5x2=10)

Masks on Stage

Masks have been used for centuries all across the world in many theatrical performances. Masks help the audience to focus on the action and the characters' emotions rather than the performers. Behind a mask, an actor can truly become a character! Let's look at some traditional forms of theatre that used masks.

The ancient Greeks were well known for their love of theatre. Actors would wear masks on stage with exaggerated expressions which clearly showed the fear, anger or sadness of the characters. Only men were allowed to act at that time, so a quick change of mask allowed them to play the roles of both men and women in the same play.



Masks were also featured in Italian Commedia dell'Arte of the 16th century. This theatre was performed by travelling comedy troupes of actors and actresses. There were no scripts and performers improvised their lines. Each performance featured the same characters with their own particular mask. The masks had bold features, such as bushy eyebrows and long noses, which along with the characters' exaggerated movements created the comedic performance for which the Commedia dell'Arte was famous.



Japanese Noh plays from medieval times also used masks so the actor had to use gestures and movement to bring the character to life. Masks were mostly used to portray female roles and non-human characters such as animals and monsters. The masks were made with a neutral expression so that no emotion could be seen. The performer then had to slightly tilt their head up or down at different angles in the stage lights to express emotions of fear or sadness. The resulting effect was truly theatrical.

