Act 4 Example response—Lighting

As a designer there are a number of things that I would like to communicate to the audience using lighting. Firstly I would like to communicate the setting. I would do this by using a sidelight from stage left which casts light on the floor downstage right. With the use of a gobo I would add the shape of prison bars to clearly indicate that the scene takes place in a Salem jail cell. I would also want to indicate the timing of the day. As the extract is very early in the morning I would start the sidelight on a low intensity around about 15%. Throughout the duration of the extract this light would fade up very gradually reaching 100% on the line 'He bids her confess'. As well as mimicking the rising of the sun this would also symbolise the glimmer of hope that Danforth has that Elizabeth Proctor will confess. My choice of lantern here would be a profile spotlight to ensure the sharp, clear and defined edge nec- Floodlight — Provides light to a essary to create the desired shape.

In addition to the increasing intensity of the sidelight I would a parcan as a backlight to create a silhouette of Tituba and Sarah Good. Herrick would also appear as a silhouette initially. My intention here would be to create an eerie atmosphere to lead the audience into act 4. This sense of uncertainty would reflect the mind-set of both Tituba and Sarah as they have both lost their sense of reality. At the beginning of the extract the sidelight would fade slowly up to 15% then the backlight would slowly fade up to 40%. On the line 'Sarah, wake up...' The sidelight would continue to fade up and the backlight would fade out gradually. Another addition to this crossfade would be a yellow high front light which would gradually fade in to create enough light for the audience to see the characters but still giving a murky atmosphere. Gels I would keep this at 35% to ensure the gobo effect of the prison bars could still be seen. My choice for this lantern would be parcan to give more of a gentle wash of light across the stage space.

To add further to my design on the line 'Take me home Devil, I would have a downlight shining directly on to Tituba and Sarah who are upstage left. This pool of light will create a separation from downstage right where Danforth enters but also gives an unnerving atmosphere as time moves forward and urgency deepens. For this effect I feel the best choice of lantern would be a soft edged spotlight. This would allow a defined space without the outline being too crisp. The red light will fade out as the women exit leaving the sidelight and yellow high front light.

Soft edged spotlight—Enable the lighting of specific areas but can also blend with other lighting states.

Profile Spotlight - Sharp clear and defined edge.

Symbolism

High Front Light—High front light and downlight are the most common position for lighting, placing the lamps above and in front of the performers. This provides a clear and natural effect, which imitates similar angles we have become used to (such as the sun or streetlight). Additionally, if a downlight is placed directly above a performer, it can create mysterious shadow effects.

Backlight/silhouette

Backlight can be used to create shadows and, at times, obscure the audience's view, creating a very mysterious effect. It can also effectively imply morning or evening, where a low sun often reduces visual clarity.

Up-light

Position/Angle

An effectively used up-light can direct shadows and create high levels of suspense, making its use perfect for building tension or horror scenes.

Side light

Lighting a scene from the side can produce an abstract effect. It may imply a different location off-stage as with backlighting, can use shadow to give a feeling of mystery.

Time wide area Direction Different types of Lantern Parcan—a versatile lamp that has a narrower focus than a floodlight. Lighting Intensity Colour Location Mood

Gels are sheets of coloured plastic that can be placed in front of a lantern to alter the colour of the light. These can be cut to the required size and shape. A gel holder holds the gel in place.

A **state** refers to which lights are being used at any one time.

Effect

A fade brings in or takes out alighting state gradually. The exact amount of time required for a fade can be pre-determined and programmed into the lighting desk. Therefore, a fade can be fast or it can happen very gradually over a long period – for example, to represent a sunrise over a whole scene.

Atmosphere

A blackout (all the lights going out at once) can be a strong signal to the start or end of a scene, the act or the whole play. Blackouts can also create a sudden moment of tension, leaving the audience in total darkness. However, they should be used sparingly so they do not disrupt the pace and flow of the performance for the audience.

Gobo

Gobos are small discs that are placed in front of a light. Patterns and shapes cut into the discs are projected onto the stage in the form of shadows. This helps to convey a sense of location and adds extra depth to a lighting design.

> Similar to a fade, a **cross fade** occurs when one lighting state gradually fades out while the next lighting state fades in. This allows smooth transitions between different lighting states.

A cue is the indicator of when the next lighting state should take place. Often, the cue will be a specific line the performer says or a move the performer makes.

A snap is where the lighting suddenly changes from one state to another. A snap can be used effectively to create tension or to signify a change of situation in a performance; for example, when a character goes from being part of a scene to directly addressing the audience.