

CLASS XII
THEATRE STUDIES
SAMPLE QUESTION PAPER 2017-18
MARKING SCHEME

(The answers are a guideline, the student has to write proper answers as per the prescribed word limit.)

Q.No	Suggested Answers/ Expected Answers	Value Points
1.	Dimmer regulates the supply of energy to a lamp.	1 mark for correct meaning
2.	Konstantin Stanislavsky.	1 mark for correct name
3.	i. Person vs nature ii. Person vs self	0.5 for each correct answer
4.	In the early stage of developing a play.	1 mark for correct answer
5.	To conduct workshops and programs for adults and children.	1 mark for correct answer
6.	From modern, classical, folk and tribal theatre.	0.5 for each source
7.	Theatre existed even before any play was ever written. Even at that time, theatre was happening somewhere; perhaps a clearing in front of caves or elsewhere in a dark starry night around a burning fire, more for keeping wild animals at bay than entertaining the crowd gathered around the burning fire. There was no script, no story and no protagonist. However, it is clear that theatre happens in a particular and a designated place, which in modern times, consists of an auditorium for the viewers and a stage for the action to happen. Now the stage can be any place; a piece of land in the field, a street corner, a rising on the hill side, a raised mound somewhere, in front of a temple or a church or a wooden floor raised to some height, theatre is possible as long as there are actors and audience.	2 marks for correct answer.
8.	Documentation of various Folk and Tribal Art forms especially those which are rare and on the verge of vanishing, is one of the main thrust areas of the ZCCs. Under the National Cultural Exchange Programme (NCEP),	2 marks for correct answer.

	exchange of artists, musicologists, performers and scholars between different regions in the country take place to promote different tribal and folk art forms in different parts of the country, and thus a very useful expression of the concept of unity within diversity of our country.	
9.	The Theatre of Roots - as this movement was known - was the first conscious effort at creating a body of work for urban audiences combining modern European theatre with traditional Indian performance while maintaining its distinction from both.	2 marks for correct answer
10.	Costume designer (Provide relevant details)	
11.	<p>Choosing a play: Directors spend a great deal of time in choosing a play, because they realize that their judgment will affect the participation of actors, the potential audience and themselves. It is a responsibility not to be taken lightly and only the director can make the final decision. Choosing a play is an endless process for director, because he/she must not only read critically the current output of the play but also continue to broaden their background by reading the dramatic literature of all periods of theatre history.</p> <p>A good play should provide all theatre participants like actors, audience, technicians and director with an interesting, a worthwhile experience. It should involve all concerned with its emotional and intellectual content. A play should challenge the actors. Public taste cannot be altered overnight, nor can people be forced into changing them. Choosing a play cannot be done in a vacuum. It cannot be done satisfactorily by a group of people. It must be the decision of the director, who is duty bound, honour bound, to fulfil the responsibilities of a worthwhile educational theatre programme. While choosing the plays, a director focuses on various elements of the play:</p>	3 marks for correct answer
12.	<p>Make-up: Make-up, though regarded as necessary, its vast possibilities for effectiveness is generally under estimated, and thus not much heed or importance is given to make-up by directors and even actors.</p> <p>Basically there are two types of make-up: the straight make-up and the character make-up. Straight make-up is generally used to correct the actor's personal skin tone and to make him or her look little more attractive on stage and the objective of character make up is to change completely or partially actor's appearance. It is important for the actor and the director to think right from the reading of the play what they want is desired for make-up for a particular character. It is sort of developing a mental visual image of the look of the character. Most of them ignore the hairdo for a character, except when age has to be shown. But it may be necessary to choose a particular hairstyle, say a center parting etc for accentuating the style of hair a particular character needs. Sometimes, wigs may be required to create a style for a character from a period in history.</p>	3 marks for correct answer
13.	i) Realism (Stanislavsky's System) - Method Acting: Sense memory is	3 marks

	<p>the base on which the greatest part of the work depends. When the senses are trained to recall the things on stage, as they do in life, only then subsequent work can be done with a complete command of realism. An actor must work on his five senses - touch, taste, to hear, to see and to smell.</p> <p>Stanislavsky's 'System' is a systematic approach to train actors. Areas of study include concentration, voice, physical skills, emotional memory, observation and dramatic analysis.</p> <p>II) Emotional Memory: Stanislavsky's system also focused on the development of artistic truth on stage by teaching actors to "experience the past" during performance. Actors were instructed to use their own memories in order to express emotion. Stanislavsky soon observed that some of the actors using or abusing this technique were given to hysteria. He began to search for reliable means to access emotion, eventually emphasizing the actor's use of imagination and belief in the given circumstances of the text rather than his/her private and often painful memories.</p>	for correct answer
14.	<p>Since its inception the Akademi has been functioning as the apex body of the performing arts in the country, preserving and promoting the vast intangible heritage of India's diverse culture expressed in the forms of music, dance and drama.</p> <p>In furtherance of its objectives the Akademi coordinates and collaborates with the governments and art academies of different states and Union Territories of the Union of India as also with major cultural institutions in the country.</p> <p>The Akademi establishes and looks after institutions and projects of national importance in the field of the performing arts.</p> <p>The Akademi Awards are the highest national recognition conferred on eminent artistes.</p> <p>The Akademi also confers fellowships and scholarships, their numbers being restricted to 30 living recipients. To subsidize the work of institutions engaged in teaching, performing or promoting music, dance, or theatre, the Akademi gives grants-in-aid for research, documentation, and publishing in the performing arts.</p> <p>The Akademi maintains a reference library consisting of books in English, Hindi and some regional languages. The Akademi has a gallery of musical instruments in Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi, where more than 250 musical instruments are displayed.</p> <p>As the apex body specializing in the performing arts of the country, the Akademi also renders advice and assistance to the Government of India in the task of formulating and implementing policies and programmes in the field.</p> <p>(any three out of the above mentioned points)</p>	3 marks for correct answer
15.	<p>The World War I and World War II had a greater impact on the arts. The war effects were represented in theatre performances. The new ideologies</p>	3 marks for correct

	<p>were emerged. In that, Existentialism is important. Existentialism explains the existence of human beings. The actual life of the human being is governed by the “true essence”. Human beings, through their consciousness, create their own values and meaning to their life. Samuel Beckett and Eugene Ionesco are the important writers in the ‘Theatre of Absurd’. ‘Waiting for Godot’ is one of the well-known plays in the Absurd Theatre.</p> <p>Antonine Artaud’s works were in the 1960s. Artaud believed that the theatre should represent reality and its effect should reach the audience as much as possible. His work ‘The Theatre and Its Double’ were largely discussed. Artaud formulated his ideas in to a manifesto and named it the ‘Theatre of Cruelty’. His focus is to give a sensorial experience to the audience with a combination of design and performance skills.</p> <p>In the 1970s and 80s the new technology use took place in the theatre. At this time, many directorial works were visually high, non-realistic and director, came into main focus. During this period, the theatre slowly emerged as a performance art. The non-structured events took place, the mixed media materiel such as video and film were used as media for design, juggling, clown and dance movements were used for theatrical performance. The realistic drama remained throughout twentieth century and gave the basis for many non-realistic approaches in the twentieth century.</p>	answer
16.	<p>i) National School of Drama</p> <p>ii) Training in the School is highly intensive and is based on a thorough, comprehensive, carefully planned syllabus which covers every aspect of theatre and in which theory is related to practice. As a part of their training, students are required to produce plays which are then performed for the public. The syllabus takes into account the methods of great theatre personalities who have shaped contemporary theatre in all its variety. The systematic study and practical performing experience of Sanskrit drama, modern Indian drama, traditional Indian theatre forms, Asian drama and western dramatic protocols give the students a solid grounding and a wide perspective in the art of theatre.</p> <p>Besides its 3-year training programme, the School also explores new vistas in the areas of children’s theatre and decentralization of theatre training through workshops under the Extension Programme. The School has two performing wings: the Repertory Company and Theatre-in-Education Company.</p>	3 marks for correct answer
17.	<p>The Meisner Technique is one of the most popular approaches to acting. Learn how to unleash truthful, emotional performances; let go of self-consciousness; expand acting range; build self-awareness; develop the ability to act moment to moment.</p> <p>Improvisation: Improvisation simulates a scene-like situation. It is a key stage in the Meisner Technique; teaching how to defeat self-consciousness when alone on stage, how to prepare before your entrance.</p>	3 marks for correct answer

Relationships: This teaches how to add complexities and layers to the improvisation. The Actor will learn the nuances and subtleties available to him/her that moment with his/her partner, and how to set up an improvisation himself.



Text Analysis: An actor will also learn how to convert text, seemingly complex and full of options, into readings and performances that are strong, emotionally true and dynamic.

Character: After text-analysis, the actor will apply improvisation skills to find hidden depth to the character's monologue and his/her dialogues which will enable him/her to play them truthfully and deeply.

Scene Work: Scene work enables the combination of all the skills taught through different ways. The Actor will learn how to play a scene with his partner, rich in emotional colour and full of instinctive choices
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18.

Objectives of Lighting: When applied in a controlled manner light helps to establish visibility, highlight selected areas create the required environment

4 marks for correct

	<p>and create three dimension aspect of actors and objects.</p> <p>(A) Illumination: Theatre being an audio-visual art has, one of the primary objects of stage light i.e. to provide sufficient (adequate) illumination so that the audience may see the actors and be able to feel the environment easily visibility can be achieved through the installation of various kinds (types) of lightning equipments. Generally, the stage is divided into six or nine parts(down right, down left, down centre, centre left, centre centre, centre right, up left, up centre, upright), according to its dimensions, to design the lighting be used on stage. The visibility of an object depends upon three factors. A distance between the stage and audience, for proper visibility. In different theatres, different levels of illumination are required keeping in mind the distance between the stage and the audience.</p> <p>(B) Integrity of lights falling upon the stage: The number of lights to be used depends on the size of the stage, while designing the lights. The number of lights needs to be enough to illuminate the whole stage sufficiently, according to size, the number may increase or decrease.</p> <p>(C) Its contrast with the background: This can be viewed in the context of the distance between the actor-object with the background which it is placed in contrast to them. If the background color matches or is similar to the color worn by the actors then lights of greater utterly are required, whereas, if the color contrast then the object actor is established comparatively easily. For example if there is blue background as 'cyclorama' and the actor is wearing a red costume, then the character can be established easily.</p>	answer
19.	<p>(ANY FOUR)</p> <p>a) The Script/text: This is the starting point of the theatrical performance-the element most often considered as the domain of the playwright in theatre. The playwright's script is the text by which theatre is created. It can be simplistic, as in the 16th century, with the scenarios used by the acting troupes of the Commedia dell' arte or it can be elaborate such as the works of William Shakespeare. The script, scenario or plan is what the director uses as a blue-print to build a production.</p> <p>b) The Process: This is the coordination of the creative efforts usually headed up in theatre by the director. It is the pure process by which the playwright's work is brought to realization by the director, actors, designers, technicians, dancers, musicians and any other collaborators that come together on the script or plan.</p> <p>c) The Product:This is the end result of the process of work involved. The final product that results from all of the labours coming together to complete the finished work of script or plan in union with all of the collaborators in the process to create the final product. This is what the audience will witness as they sit in the theatre and view the work.</p>	4 marks for correct answer

	<p>d) The Audience: Theatre requires an audience. All forms of arts, public is essential. The physical presence of an audience can change a performance, inspire actors and create expectations. Theatre is a living, breathing art form. The presence of live actors on the stage in front of live audiences sets it apart from modern day films and television.</p> <p>e) Rehearsal Schedule: Always begin and end rehearsals on time. This not only shows that you are organized but it sets a schedule that the students can plan around. If students know exactly when rehearsals are going to be held, it helps them organize their time. It is important to have a copy of the rehearsal schedule available during auditions. Obviously, it is better for a student to back out of auditioning because of schedule and time conflicts, than to quit the show two or three weeks into rehearsals. A rehearsal schedule can take many shapes; however try to include as much information about each individual rehearsal as possible.</p>	
20.	<p>Modernism is closely associated with the idea of the 'avant-garde'. Avant-garde are people or works that push the boundaries of what primarily exists in the cultural realm. The concept of 'avant-garde' is to oppose the cultural values, thinking and to promote innovative ideas, technology, forms and experiments.</p> <p>The term 'modernism' is applied to various developments in all art's in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. These developments are happened against realism. The new innovations are emerged in all branches of theatre, including acting, stage design, direction and play writing. Stanislavsky, a Russian director, actor invented a 'method' in acting. This is widely accepted around the world. Later, the techniques of 'method acting' are become popular through film. In Germany Bertolt Brecht brought new dimensions to theatre. With the collaboration of Erwin Piscator, Brecht brought the concept of 'alienation effect' to performances. Brecht primarily rejected the concept of the fourth wall. In which actors were isolated from the audience. The fourth wall is a concept in which actors imagine an imaginary wall between them and audience so that the audience can get an illusion of reality. But Brecht rejected this idea. The 'epic theatre' proposes that the play should not cause the spectator to identify emotionally with the characters or action with the performance, but a play should provoke a rational self-reflection and a critical view of the action on stage. The epic theatre brought many new devices like film clippings, cartoons to the stage. The first major modernist movement in the theatre was 'symbolism'. Edward Gordon Craig introduced symbolic scenery to stage design. Adolphe Appia, on the other hand, brought three dimensional sets on stage and created integrity between actors and design. The World War I and World War II had a greater impact on the arts. The war effects were represented in theatre performances. The new ideologies were emerged. In that, Existentialism is important. Existentialism explains the existence of human beings. The actual life of the human being is</p>	4 marks for correct answer

	<p>governed by the “true essence”. Human beings, through their consciousness, create their own values and meaning to their life. Samuel Beckett and Eugene Ionesco are the important writers in the ‘Theatre of Absurd’. ‘Waiting for Godot’ is one of the well-known plays in the Absurd Theatre.</p> <p>Antonine Artaud’s works were in the 1960s. Artaud believed that the theatre should represent reality and its effect should reach the audience as much as possible. His work ‘The Theatre and Its Double’ were largely discussed. Artaud formulated his ideas in to a manifesto and named it the ‘Theatre of Cruelty’. His focus is to give a sensorial experience to the audience with a combination of design and performance skills.</p>	
21.	<p>Set Designer: The set designer's job is to design these physical surroundings to facilitate the action of that play. A good set design will have enough information for the audience to know the concept and approach of the director to that play.</p> <p>a) Like a good outfit or clothing, a set has to be functional as well as beautiful. The set is created for the play and needs to help in the movements of actors and overall action as envisaged by the director. It has to enhance the vision of the director by offering creative solutions to blocking or grouping of actors in each scene. Not only the set has to help the movement but it also needs to provide an un-obstructive flow of action during the performance. Overall, the set design would set the style and tone of each play as different from any other play.</p> <p>2) A good set gives clues, to the time and place of the action of the play. Whether the play is set in any particular historical period or contemporary times will be reflected in the design and décor of the set. The furniture pieces, properties, wall decorations etc. on stage will be selected with an intention of giving the audience sufficient detail to understand the time and place and help the action in the play.</p> <p>3) The set will also create the right kind of atmosphere and mood for the play to be received well by the audience. With intelligent use of lines, colours, textures and shapes a designer would create this mood keeping in mind the requirement of the play.</p> <p>4) Design of the lights too plays an important role in this aspect.</p> <p>Two qualities of a creative set designer; Good eye for materials, highly creative, good communication skill, creativity and imagination, excellent attention to detail ,team player, organisational skill, creative flair, problem solving skills etc</p>	4 marks for correct answer
22.	<p>The Playwright: The play writer is the only person who is responsible for the starting point of the theatrical event. A playwright works in the branch of literature dealing with the writing and producing of plays for the theatre. The literary composition is written specifically for the stage in play format by the</p>	6 marks for correct answer

	<p>playwright.</p> <p>How plays are written at any given time depends on :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The intended audience and purpose. 2. The playwright's current views about the human condition. 3. How the playwright perceives the truth around him/her. <p>A playwright must understand and know the established artistic and theatrical conventions of the theatre. A playwright must appreciate the working procedures, materials and technical aspects of a production, because the script is the starting point of the theatrical production. There are many ways to write a play. Sometimes a playwright starts with an idea. Another playwright may begin with a single character in mind. Some playwrights base their work on spectacle. Plays can be 'tightly structured' or 'episodic'. A playwright re-creates and re-states the human experiences and the universal mirror of mankind. The script is the heart of the theatrical event. It must be respected.</p> <p>Steps of the Playwright's Work: Playwriting and creating drama for each playwright is distinctively different. Plays can develop out of any combination of starting points and patterns. The processes by which drama is created for each playwright can be varied in the steps used to create the text.</p> <p>The following list in a progressive order, but the order can change depending on each playwright's characteristic style and preferences for writing.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coming up with thought/theme/ideas to be expressed through the work. 2. Determining the genre and style of the work 3. Outlining basic action of the work and creating a plot. 4. Establishing the structure of the play and overall framework 5. The development of characters presented in the work. 6. The creation of dialogue and the language of the characters. 7. Creating music: - This can involve the rhythm of the language or actual music composition and the lyrics of the songs. 8. Establishing spectacle: - The visual and environmental elements of the work. 9. Research of subject matter and relevant issues presented in the play. 	
23.	<p>Brechtian Theory: As a dramatist and poet Brecht was the master of social theatre. His work as a dramatist and as a director belonged together.</p> <p>Brecht and Stanislavsky: Stanislavsky was a great man of the theatre and so was Brecht. Both of them strove for truth on the stage. Stanislavsky, exclusively a director, naturally had a stronger interest in practicing the smallest dramatic details than has Brecht, who is mainly a playwright and must therefore proceed with larger strides. It is also not important to emphasize that Stanislavsky began to develop his system in co-operation</p>	6 marks for correct answer

with Chekhov during the epoch of naturalism, and that Brecht established his system when he recognized that the theatre must depict the world as something, which can be changed.

“Sometimes it’s more important to be human than to have good taste.”

Bertolt Brecht

Bertolt Brecht developed a set of theatrical techniques to subvert the emotional manipulations of bourgeois theatre. The Alienation Technique Effect (A-Effect): The aim of this technique, known as the alienation effect, was to make the spectator adopt an attitude of inquiry and criticism in his/her approach to the incident. The means were artistic. The alienation effect was Brecht’s principle of using innovative theatrical techniques to “make the familiar strange” in order to provoke a social-critical audience response.

The first condition for the A-Effect’s application to this end is that stage and auditorium must serve as space for expressing emotions i.e. everything ‘magical’. No ‘hypnotic tensions’ should be set up. This ruled out any attempt to make the stage convey the flavor of a particular place (a room at evening, a road in the autumn) or to create an atmosphere by relaxing the tempo of the conversation. The audience should not be ‘worked up’ by a display of temperament or ‘swept away’ by acting with tautened muscles; in short, no attempt was made to put it in a trance and give it the illusion of watching an ordinary unrehearsed event.


The first condition for that achievement of the A-Effect is that the actor must invest what he has to show with a definite gesture. It is of course necessary to drop the assumption that there is a fourth wall cutting the audience off from the stage and the consequent illusion that the stage action is taking place in reality and without an audience. That being so, it is possible for the actor, in principle, to address the audience directly.

It is a well-known that contact between the audience and stage is normally made on the basis of empathy, an A-Effect is the exact opposite of that which aims at empathy. The actor applying it is bound not to try to bring about the empathy in operation.

The actor does not allow himself/herself to become completely transformed on the stage into the character he/she is portraying. The actor is not ‘Lear’, ‘Harpagon’, ‘Schweik’; he/she shows them.

Once the idea of total transformation is abandoned, the actor speaks his/her part not as if he/she were improvising it, but like a quotation. In absence of total transformation in the acting, three aids may help to alienate the actions and remarks of the characters being portrayed:

Using the third person and the past tense allows the actor to adopt the right

	<p>attitude of detachment. Giving / reading the stage directions, a loud in the third person results in a clash between two different tones of voice, alienating the second of them, the text proper. This style of acting is further alienated by taking place on the stage after having already been outlined and announced in words. Transposing it into the past, gives the speaker a standpoint from which he/she can look back at his/her sentence. The sentence too is thereby alienated without the speaker adopting an unreal point of view; unlike the spectator, he/she has read the play right through and is better placed to judge the sentence in accordance with the ending, with its consequences, than the former, who knows less and is more of a stranger to the sentence.</p> <p>This composite process leads to an alienation of the text in the rehearsals which generally persists in the performance too. As for the emotions, the experimental use of the A-Effect in the Epic Theatre's German productions indicated that this way of acting too can stimulate them, though possibly a different class of emotion is involved from those of the orthodox theatre. A critical attitude on the audience's part is a thoroughly artistic one.</p> <p>The main advantage of the Epic theatre with its A-effect, intended purely to show the world in such a way that it becomes manageable, is precisely its quality of being natural and earthly, its humour and its renunciation of all the mystical elements that have stuck to the orthodox theatre from the old days. The new scientific discoveries in the modern times which have brought about far reaching changes in western societies, did not make any significant dent in the field of theatre till Brecht's advent who endeavoured to change the very function of the theatre and converted or transformed it into a product of scientific age in a new ' social space'.</p> <p>Brecht's theatre was a theatre of the common people. He wanted his spectator to develop an attitude of inquiry, a scientific attitude which can alter the spectators' state of affairs and prepare him/her for a better future.</p>	
24.	<p>(The Students can write about any Modern Western Writer of their choice from Unit-2 like given below)</p> <p>Anton Pavlov Chekhov</p> <p>Anton Chekov was a Russian playwright who is considered as one of the greatest playwrights in realistic plays. As a dramatist, he produced four classical. He is considered as the greatest short story writer in the world. His four classical works are <i>Seagul</i>, <i>Uncle Vanya</i>, <i>Three Sisters</i> and <i>Cherry Orchard</i>. These plays were performed all over the world in many languages and directed by renowned directors.</p> <p>Chekhov renounced the theatre after the disastrous reception of <i>The Seagull</i> in 1896, but the play was</p> 	6 marks for correct answer

revived to acclaim in 1898 by Constantin Stanislavski's Moscow Art Theatre, which subsequently also produced Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* and premiered his last two plays, *Three Sisters* and *The Cherry Orchard*. These four works present a challenge to the acting ensemble as well as to audiences, because in place of conventional action Chekhov offers a 'Theatre of Mood' and a "*submerged life in the text*." Chekhov was advised and praised by Dmitry Grigorovich, who was a well-known writer in those days with words such as "A real talent—a talent which places you in the front rank among writers in the new generation."

To understand Chekhov, it is important to understand the philosophy of his knowledge. The characters in Chekhov's plays do not have the ultimate truth. The relative, conditional nature of ideas and opinions, and of stereotypical ways of thinking and behaving; the refusal to regard an individual solution as absolute; and the baselessness of various claims to possession of the 'real truth': these are constants in Chekhov's world. In Chekhov's characters are often, experiences with melancholy and nostalgia.

Chekhov wrote about ordinary events and the relationships in small towns and villages. He used a variety of techniques, including choices of words, pacing and construction of a sentence which all lead to creating his characters and revealing their changing moods. In the letters that Chekhov sent to his writing contemporaries, as well as his family, he often discussed his work and ideas about story craft. His principle of writing is still relevant to this time. In May 10, 1886, his letter to his brother, Alexander, also a writer, Chekhov noted six principles of good writing.

- Absence of lengthy verbiage of a political-social-economic nature
- Total objectivity
- Truthful descriptions of persons and objects
- Extreme brevity
- Audacity and originality: flee the stereotype
- Compassion

Cherry Orchard: *Ranevskaya* returns after five years to her estate to find that it has been heavily mortgaged to pay for her extravagances and that it is to be auctioned. Generous and scatterbrained, she seems incapable of recognizing her desperate situation. Gaev, *Ranevskaya's* brother, makes some impractical suggestions, but his chief hope lies in an uncertain legacy or a rich marriage for Anya, *Mme. Ranevskaya's* young daughter. She, in turn, is attracted by the feckless student, *Trofimov*, and his dreams of social progress. The only apparently feasible proposal comes from *Lopakhin*, a merchant whose father was once a serf of the *Gaev* family. He suggests cutting down the famous cherry orchard and dividing the land into plots for summer cottages. The idea of destroying such beauty is rejected as a sacrilege, and with no specific plan in mind for saving the estate, the family drifts aimlessly, but hopefully, towards the day set for the auction. On that very evening, *Mme. Ranevskaya* gives a party that she can ill afford. In the midst of the festivities, *Lopakhin* arrives and happily announces that he has

acquired the estate and intends to carry out his suggested plan for cutting down the orchard. The estate and the orchard now gone, the family prepares to leave. Lopakshin fails to propose to Varya, Mme. Ranyevskaya's adopted daughter, who becomes a housekeeper for others. Forgotten in the confusion is the very old and ailing Firs, the devoted former family serf, and as the sound of an axe rings from the cherry orchard, he lies down, a symbol of the past.

OR

Three Sisters: *Three Sisters* is a play by the Russian author and playwright Anton Chekhov, perhaps partially inspired by the situation of the three Brontë sisters. It was written in 1900 and first performed in 1901 at the Moscow Art Theatre. *Three Sisters* is a naturalistic play about the decay of the privileged class in Russia and the search for meaning in the modern world. It describes the lives and aspirations of the Prozorov family, the three sisters (Olga, Masha, and Irina) and their brother Andrei. They are a family dissatisfied and frustrated with their present existence. The sisters are refined and cultured young women who grew up in urban Moscow; however, for the past eleven years, they have been living in a provincial town.

Moscow is a major symbolic element: the sisters are always dreaming of it and constantly express their desire to return. They identify Moscow with their happiness, and thus to them it represents the perfect life. However, as the play develops, Moscow never materializes and they all see their dreams recede further and further, meaning, it never presents itself and they are forced to seek it out for themselves.