

1. Zemlyanika does not panic and lies with ease and charm. As a **director**, discuss how a performer playing this role might demonstrate this in this extract *and in the complete play*. You must refer to **voice, physicality and stage direction/stage space**. [12]

I would want the actor to use a sweet tone of voice when talking, and to have a small smile. When Zemlyanika talks about patients having to 'barely step in' before they cured, I would want the actor to chuckle **softly**. I would have the actor do this because he is trying to seem as kindly and friendly to Khlestakov as possible, and trying to make himself and the hospital seem much better than they are. His voice and mannerisms would contrast those of the first scene in the play, where he appears leering and sinister, showing he finds lying easy. This sudden change would also create humour for the audience as they can see how much he is lying to impress **Khlestakov**.

Commented [BS1]: Nice detail. Could you add what kind of chuckle – add a sinister edge? Bit creepy for audience but is not noticed by characters on stage.

I would want the actor to stroll casually across downstage whilst describing the hospital and use large sweeping gestures as he illustrates the scene to Khlestakov. I would want the actor to do this to show Zemlyanika is confident and relaxed, very much in authority. When Zemlyanika is walking, I would want him to be downstage and at all opportunities to be upstaging the **Mayor**. This would show the audience how he is painting lies to boost himself up whilst making the **Mayor** look bad, as he continues to do throughout the **play**. He would use broad sweeping gestures so that it seems to the audience as though he is painting a scene to Khlestakov, giving the impression the hospital is very grand.

Commented [BS2]: Strong justification with reference to this scene and wider play. Clear grasp of character.

I would have Zemlyanika drape an arm around Khlestakov's shoulders and use a slow, drawling pace and low pitch. I would do this so that it seems like Zemlyanika is conspiring with Khlestakov, showing that he is calm and unhurried around him. This shows the audience Zemlyanika is very charming when he wants to be, and shows how Khlestakov is easily being convinced by Zemlyanika's lies, due to the comradery between **them**.

Commented [BS3]: Great idea.

Commented [BS4]: Interesting.

12/12 - Excellent detail on each element and clear justifications given which signify a knowledge of character and the wider play. Well done.

2. The Mayor and Zemlyanika battle for authority. As a **performer** give three suggestions of how you would use **performance skills** to play the Mayor during this scene. [6]

I would use a very loud volume when trying to interrupt Zemlyanika to try and bring attention back to myself, showing I believe I am more important than him. On the line “not just a hospital” I would pause and turn my head to look pointedly at Zemlyanika to show I am trying to belittle him and his authority. I would physically upstage Zemlyanika to show that I am attempting to draw more power and attention to myself, and am trying to block Zemlyanika from talking to Khlestakov.

6/6 – Great suggestions. Highlights show additional valid justification.

3. There are specific choices for **designers** in this extract. Discuss how you would use **sound** to enhance the production for your audience. [14]

In the beginning of the scene when two policemen crash into each other, I would play a pre-recorded loud cymbal crash. I would do this to add humour to the scene, as this loud noise would draw attention to the event, showing the Mayor is doing a very poor job of hiding the corruption in the town. It would also make the police force seem incompetent. Using this sound would heighten the farcical nature of the play, despite Gogol wanting the play to be performed using a naturalistic style.

When the actors step into the Mayor’s home, I would have some classical violin music playing at low volume. This tells the audience the Mayor is very wealthy, sophisticated and privileged. It also creates a large contrast from scenes about the town, where I would use sounds to create a rowdy atmosphere, highlighting the Mayor’s greed as he himself is wealthy whilst the townspeople are not. It also communicates to the audience the 1800s time period.

Throughout this scene, the Mayor and Zemlyanika are trying to paint the town in the best possible light to Khlestakov. In the Mayor and Zemlyanika’s monologues, I would have a pre-recorded sound of a choir singing playing underneath. This would add humour as it shows the audience the extremeness of their exaggerations. It would make the town they’re describing seem more

Commented [BS5]: Good detail with subject terminology.

Commented [BS6]: Good justification and link to both style and theme. Also nice reference out to playwright. Good practice but (oddly) not specifically requested in this question.

Commented [BS7]: Research what this song/composer might be so that you can detail specifically as a sound designer what you would be playing. It means you can sue it every time in the Mayor’s house.

Commented [BS8]: Good justifications – also reference to contrast helps with your reasoning.

Commented [BS9]: Ha! Brilliant – did Teachers give you this idea? Would this be played over the music though – or are you stopping that – be specific.

heavenly by having an almost choir of angels playing, which could not be further from the truth. As Zemlyanika and the Mayor try to one up each other with their glorified descriptions, I would gradually increase the volume of the music to show them competing with each other and how they're each trying to make themselves seem as appealing as possible. Towards the end of the Mayor's final monologue, I would increase the choir to a level where he has having to raise his voice over it, adding comedy for the audience as it shows the absurdness of his declarations.

Commented [BS10]: Good.

Commented [BS11]: Very good.

12/14 - An excellent first attempt at this sound question. Well done.

There are some simple yet effective ideas that would work in performance and don't overwhelm the scene. Some details can be added such as song titles/direction of sound and when they start/stop to help lift the response even more.

Great reference to style/character and audience to justify your choices.