Staging the play – the importance of set and props

The entire play takes place in one room. To Rita this room symbolises something important but to Frank it is merely a room he uses.

1. In what ways is this room important or significant to Rita?

2. Take a large sheet of paper and, using the stage directions, draw a plan of how you see the stage.
   - Make sure you display the stage and props clearly. You will also need to leave enough room around it to make plenty of notes.
   - Leave room outside the window to write or draw what Rita can see.
   - Make sure you add all the props such as the telephone and the religious picture. As you read the play, you will need to add any other props.

3. At the end of each scene, re-read the stage directions from it and:
   - add any other props as they appear - don’t forget what Rita can see from the window
   - label the different parts according to how they are used or the actors’ movements around them. For example:

   A 1 S 1 - Rita struggles to get in. Symbolises Frank’s wish to keep an OU student out = his desire to avoid new experiences & responsibility.

   A 1 S 2 - Rita oils the hinges. Symbol of her desire to be educated. Also symbolises her desire to change Frank - make him let people into his life.

Essay question

What conclusions can you draw about the way the room and props are used to convey meaning to an audience? Remember to use evidence to support your ideas.