

VICTORIAN CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY



**Victorian Certificate of Education
2002**

DRAMA

Solo performance examination

Monday 7 October to Sunday 3 November 2002

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS

Performance examination conditions

1. The examination will be set and marked by panels appointed by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.
2. Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority examination rules will apply. Details of these rules are published annually in the *VCE Administrative Handbook*.
3. The performance venue is set annually by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.
4. The performance will use a single clearly lit space. No changes to the lighting grid are allowed.
5. Only the panel of assessors will be allowed in the examination room with the student during the examination.
6. Use of any objects or substances deemed hazardous are not permitted in the performance.
7. The solo performance will be presented as a single uninterrupted performance and last not more than seven minutes.
8. If a performance goes over the prescribed time limit the student will be asked to stop. A timing device will indicate when the seven minutes is over.
9. A total of ten minutes per student will be allocated for preparation, performance and clearing the space. No additional time can be allowed. When preparing stagecraft for the solo performance students should be mindful of these time restrictions.
10. One table and two chairs will be provided in the examination room for students to use in performance if they wish.
11. Students may choose to perform to the assessors as audience or to an imagined audience, or both.

Statement of Intention

1. A pro forma for the Statement of Intention will be published annually by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.
2. Immediately prior to performance students are required to present three copies of the Statement of Intention to the panel of assessors. The Statement should not exceed 100 words.
3. The purpose of the Statement of Intention is to highlight aspects of the student's interpretation that they would like to bring to the assessors' attention, for example:
 - clarify decisions made in their interpretation of the prescribed structure
 - give reasons for choices made (for example, the use of costume, prop, accent, symbol).
4. Students should not simply describe their character by rewriting the performance focus.
5. The Statement of Intention will not be assessed.

Prescribed structures

1. Students are required to prepare a solo performance using **one** of the following prescribed structures.
2. Students **must** select from the list of ten prescribed structures. Marks will not be awarded for performances that do not use one of the prescribed structures.
3. Each prescribed structure is made up of the following: character, stimulus, performance focus, performance style, theatrical conventions, dramatic elements, reference material.

Character: the main character to be depicted in the performance.

Stimulus: the source of information which must be used to begin the development of the character.

Performance focus: information about the character that **must** be portrayed in the performance. This information is given in an opening sentence(s) and a series of dot points. All of this must be included in the performance. The dot points do not have to be given equal emphasis during the performance, nor do they have to be performed in the same order as in the prescribed structure.

Performance style: the prescribed performance style is explained in the Terminology section of the examination paper. The prescribed style must be used throughout the performance.

Theatrical conventions: two theatrical conventions are given for each prescribed structure and they must be used during the performance. Additional conventions may be added as appropriate.

Dramatic elements: the following dramatic elements will be assessed in all performances: focus, space, tension and timing. In addition two dramatic elements will be specifically **prescribed** for each character. The dramatic elements to be prescribed will be selected from the following list: climax, conflict, contrast, mood, rhythm, sound and symbol.

Reference material: resource(s) are provided as recommendations. This list is not exhaustive and students should undertake research in developing their character(s) for performance. The World Wide Web can be used to research material for most of the characters. **Please note:** if a resource is listed under **Stimulus**, it **must** be used in the development of the performance.

4. When a prescribed structure includes the word **recreates** students are required to re-enact situations and conversations for an audience. The emphasis in the recreation must be on action rather than narration, doing rather than telling.
5. A Terminology section is provided. Students should consult this for explanations of performance styles and theatrical conventions as prescribed in the examination.

PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 1

Character

The Boaster

Stimulus

A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of Bottom the Weaver from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. After the performance of *Pyramus and Thisbe* at the Athenian court, the players relive their performance.

Bottom the Weaver boasts as he recreates

- highlights from his performance in *Pyramus and Thisbe*
- impersonations of fellow players
- experiences from his magical night with the Fairy creatures in the woods.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic

Theatrical conventions

Exaggerated movement, comedy

Dramatic elements

Mood, sound

Reference material

A Midsummer Night's Dream, Shakespeare, W. (Any version)

PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 2**Character**

The Survivor

Stimulus

The painting *Guernica* by Pablo Picasso, 1937

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on a person in the painting *Guernica*.

After escaping the bombing of the Spanish town Guernica in 1937, the survivor recreates for other escapees

- positive changes that occurred in his/her life when the Republic of Spain was proclaimed in 1931
- how he/she actively supported the republican cause against Franco's fascism
- efforts he/she made to survive and help others during the bombing of Guernica.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic

Theatrical conventions

Stillness and silence, disjointed time sequences

Dramatic elements

Conflict, contrast

Reference material

The painting *Guernica* by Pablo Picasso, 1937

<http://www.cc.emory.edu/PHILOSOPHY/ART/guesteer.html>

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PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 3

Character

The Olympic Spirit

Stimulus

The Olympic Games

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the Olympic Spirit.

At a meeting of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 2004, the Olympic Spirit, concerned by developments in the forthcoming Games in Athens, presents the IOC with dramatic images of

- the original values of the Games held during the Golden Age of Greece (477–431 BC)
- significant developments in the evolution of the Games during the twentieth century
- possibilities for the future of the Olympic Games.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic

Theatrical conventions

Transformation of place, lyrical

Dramatic elements

Rhythm, mood

Reference material

Wallechinsky, D., *The Complete Book of the Olympics*, Aurum Press Ltd., 2000

Greenberg, S., *Whitakers Olympic Almanac (An Encyclopaedia of the Games)*, The Stationery Office Ltd., London, 2000

PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 4**Character**

The Pesky Ghost

Stimulus

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone by J. K. Rowling

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of Peeves the Poltergeist.

While attempting to scare the 'Ickle Firsties', Peeves recreates

- how he died and ended up haunting the corridors of Hogwarts
- his first meeting with the Bloody Baron and a demonstration of the terrifying power of the Baron
- one of the most satisfying pranks he has played on pupils of Hogwarts.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic

Theatrical conventions

Exaggerated movement, disjointed time sequences

Dramatic elements

Sound, climax

Reference material

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, Rowling, J. K.

Note: This character does not appear in the film of the same name.

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PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 5

Character

The Last Pharaoh

Stimulus

The life of Cleopatra VII (69–30 BC)

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the person Cleopatra.

After Antony’s death and her audience with Octavian, Cleopatra meets with her children to impress upon them the importance of maintaining the Ptolemaic line.

To do this she recreates

- some of the dangerous situations she experienced as a young woman during her father’s reign
- tactics she used to gain Roman protection and to maintain Egypt’s political influence

and she demonstrates

- strategies that her children can use to ensure their survival.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic

Theatrical conventions

Character transformation, disjointed time sequences

Dramatic elements

Symbol, climax

Reference material

<http://interoz.com/egypt/cleopatr.htm>

PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 6**Character**

The Innkeeper

Stimulus

Song: ‘Master of the House’ from *Les Miserables*, the musical

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of Monsieur **or** Madame Thenardier.

In 1825, Monsieur and Madame try to sell their inn at Montfermeil.

To impress and entertain a potential buyer, Monsieur **or** Madame recreates

- his/her involvement in revolutionary intrigues
- how he/she manipulates and extorts customers
- impersonations of the French aristocracy during the Revolution.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic

Theatrical conventions

Comedy, caricature

Dramatic elements

Contrast, rhythm

Reference material

Any version of the song ‘Master of the House’ from *Les Miserables*, the musical. Music by Claude-Michael Schonberg; lyrics by Alain Boubil, Herbert Kretzmer and Jean Marc Natel

Les Miserables, Hugo, V. (any version). Part 1, Book IV – *To Trust is Sometimes to Surrender*; Part 2, Book III – *Fulfilment of a Promise*

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PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 7

Character

The Aussie Bloke

Stimulus

Digger Smith by C. J. Dennis

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of Digger Smith.

After his return from the war and while living on Dad Flood’s farm, he recreates for Bill (the Sentimental Bloke)

- aspects of life before the war which comment on Australian society
- some of his experiences of mateship at Gallipoli
- his struggle to regain his place in society as ‘arf a man’.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic

Theatrical conventions

Black comedy, heightened use of language

Dramatic elements

Contrast, mood

Reference material

Dennis, C. J., *The Complete Sentimental Bloke* (Ed. James, N.), Harper Collins, 2001
or any edition of the complete works of C. J. Dennis

PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 8**Character**

The Aussie Sheila

Stimulus

Rose of Spadgers by C. J. Dennis

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of Rose.

During her visit to Bill and Doreen, Rose recreates for Doreen

- images of her life in Spadgers Lane which comment on social customs of the day
- the circumstances leading up to the invitation to visit Bill and Doreen

and creates

- aspects of her future without Ginger Mick.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic

Theatrical conventions

Character transformation, heightened use of language

Dramatic elements

Rhythm, symbol

Reference material

Dennis, C. J., *The Complete Sentimental Bloke* (Ed. James, N.), Harper Collins, 2001
or any edition of the complete works of C. J. Dennis

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PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 9

Character

The Cartoon Character

Stimulus

The life and works of Walt Disney

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the cartoon character of Donald Duck.

Following his 1943 Academy Award, Donald meets with Walt Disney to demand increased screen time and more pay.

To justify his demands he demonstrates

- his diverse acting skills in a variety of screen roles
- how he has evolved through the animation process
- his marketing potential within the Disney empire.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic

Theatrical conventions

Use of fact, caricature

Dramatic elements

Conflict, mood

Reference material

Any text about Walt Disney and Donald Duck

PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 10**Character**

The Writer

Stimulus

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the person Jane Austen.

While struggling with characterisation in her first novel *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane recreates for her sister Cassandra

- the history of the courtship between Mr and Mrs Bennett
- experiences from her own life which inspired the character of Mrs Bennett
- observations of ‘society’ which are reflected in the character of Lady Catherine de Bourgh.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic

Theatrical conventions

Satire, character transformation

Dramatic elements

Symbol, contrast

Reference material

Pride and Prejudice, Austen, J. (any version)

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TERMINOLOGY

The explanations listed below provide direction for teachers and students in the development of the Drama Solo Performance examination.

Non-naturalistic

Non-naturalistic and non-realistic performance styles are not dependent on the life-like representation of everyday life. In non-naturalistic performance, the actor does not attempt to recreate life as it is lived on the stage. Non-naturalistic performance is characterised by a manipulation of time and space as well as the narrative elements of the drama.

Black comedy

The use of comedy with a dark and cynical tone. Laughter is used as a defense against the complexities of life. Humour is injected into situations that might otherwise be unbearable.

Character transformation

The actor plays more than one role during the performance, shifting from one to another without going off stage. Transformation is made through the use of the expressive skills of voice, movement and gesture. It may also be achieved through the use of costume and properties.

Disjointed time sequences

Dramatic structure that does not unfold chronologically. Past, present and future events in the plot are performed in a non-sequential order.

Transformation of place

The actor creates more than one place or setting during the performance and does so without the use of scenery. This can also be achieved through the transformation of properties (real and imagined) and/or through the use of expressive skills alone.

Heightened use of language

Heightened use of language is poetic and exaggerated use of language. It includes the deliberate choice of words whose syntax, alliteration and rhyming patterns lead to heightened delivery. Intended meaning is enhanced through the use of non-conventional and non-naturalistic dialogue.

Use of fact

Research is used to provide the basis for selective and informed scripting. The narrative should be shaped into a continuous piece and not consist of a lists of facts.

Exaggerated movement

Exaggerated movement includes action that is overstated, drawn larger-than-life; often for purposes of ridicule.

Satire

Satire is the use of sarcasm, irony and ridicule in denouncing, exposing or deriding vice, folly and abuse. Can be achieved through language, gesture and tone.

Caricature

Caricature is an exaggeration of character that is often ludicrous or grotesque. It is comic, at times derogatory, and with the intention of ridicule.

Comedy

Comedy is associated with amusement, jollity, gaiety, fun and humour. It may be ‘high’ comedy (such as irony),

or 'low' comedy (such as slapstick and bawdiness).

Stillness and silence

To be found where there is an absence of sound and absence of movement. Used to enhance dramatic effect.

Lyrical

Achieved by the use of verse, heightened dialogue, song or movement; including the use of poetic imagery.

END OF BOOKLET

Statement of Intention form appears on page 17.

VICTORIAN CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY



VCE Drama Solo Performance Examination 2002

STATEMENT OF INTENTION

Student number

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Name of character (from prescribed structure)

Comment Use the space below to highlight aspects of your interpretation that you would like to bring to the assessors' attention, for example:

- clarify decisions made in your interpretation of the prescribed structure
- give reasons for choices made (eg. for use of costume, prop, accent, symbol)

DO NOT SIMPLY REWRITE THE PERFORMANCE FOCUS

These comments should not exceed 100 words

This completed form must be handed to the assessors on entering the examination room.

