

VICTORIAN CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY



**Victorian Certificate of Education  
2011**

**DRAMA**

**Solo performance examination**

**Monday 10 October to Wednesday 2 November**

## 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 and VCAL Administrative Handbook*.
3. The performance venue is set annually by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.
4. The solo performance will be presented as a single uninterrupted performance and last not more than **seven minutes**.
5. If a performance goes over the **seven minutes** time limit the student will be asked to stop. A timing device will indicate when the **seven minutes** are over.
6. A total of ten minutes per student will be allocated for preparation, performance and clearing the space. **No additional time is allowed**. When preparing stagecraft for the solo performance, students should be mindful of these restrictions.
7. The performance will use a single clearly lit space. No changes to the lighting grid are allowed.
8. One table and two chairs will be provided in the examination room for students to use in performance if they wish. Any additional props, if required, must be carried in and out of the examination space by the student **alone**, and within the allotted time.
9. Students are **not** permitted to bring any objects or substances deemed hazardous or illegal into the performance examination venue. All actual and imitation weapons are prohibited. The use of such items is **not** permitted in the performance.
10. The use of open flames including candles and matches is not permitted in the performance.
11. Students must ensure that any props, costumes (including footwear) or other aspects of their performance do not, in any way, damage the performance space.
12. Only the panel of assessors and any personnel authorised by the VCAA will be allowed in the examination room with the student during the examination.
13. Students may choose to perform to the assessors as audience or to an imagined audience, or both.
14. Students must not walk behind and/or touch assessors during the examination.
15. The assessors' table is for assessment purposes. Students are not to place objects on the assessors' table or to use the table in any way as part of their performance.

### Statement of Intention

1. A pro forma for the 2011 Statement of Intention is published on page 17.
2. Immediately prior to their 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:
  - explanation/clarification of decisions made in their interpretation of the prescribed structure
  - give reasons for choices made (for example, for 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 nine prescribed structures. Marks will not be awarded for performances that do not use one of the prescribed structures.
2. Each prescribed structure is made up of the following: character, stimulus, performance focus, performance style, theatrical convention, dramatic element, reference material. The following explanations should be used when preparing the solo performance.
  - **Character** – the main character to be depicted in the performance.
  - **Stimulus** – the source of information which **must** be used in the development of the character and be referenced throughout the performance.
  - **Performance focus** – information about the character that must be portrayed in the performance. This information is given in opening sentences which:
    - give background to the character
    - indicate where and when the performance takes place
    - identify the audience
    - provide insight into the emotional state of the character,
 and three dot points:
    - DP1** always begins with the word **re-creates** and requires students to present material researched directly from the stimulus
    - DP2** usually begins with the word **creates** and requires students to invent material which might or could have happened
    - DP3** requires students to move beyond the stimulus and to respond laterally using imagination and creativity.

### All aspects of the performance focus must be included in the performance.

Each aspect of the performance focus does not have to be given equal emphasis during the performance. Unless otherwise indicated, aspects of the performance focus may be performed in any order.

- **Performance style** – the prescribed performance style(s) is explained in the Terminology section of the examination paper. The prescribed style(s) must be used throughout the performance.
  - **Theatrical conventions** – the following theatrical conventions **will be assessed in all performances**: disjointed time sequences, transformation of character, transformation of place, transformation of object. In addition, one theatrical convention will be specifically **prescribed** for each character and it must be used during the performance. Additional conventions may be added as appropriate.
  - **Dramatic elements** – one dramatic element will be specifically **prescribed** for each character and it must be used during the performance. The dramatic element to be prescribed will be selected from the following list: climax, conflict, contrast, language, mood, rhythm, sound and symbol. Students may use additional elements as appropriate. **Focus, space, tension** and **timing** are dramatic elements that are essential to, and must be present in, every performance.
  - **Reference material** – resources are provided as recommendations. This list is not exhaustive and students should undertake research in developing their character(s) for performance. **Please note**: if a resource is listed under **Stimulus**, it **must** be used in the development of the performance.
3. The emphasis in performance must be on action rather than narration; doing rather than telling.
  4. A Terminology section is provided. Students should consult this for explanations of performance styles and theatrical conventions as prescribed in the examination.

**Notes for Drama Solo Performance examination 2011**

- Schools should check local availability of required stimulus material and resources prior to beginning Unit 4. Some materials may not be immediately available.
- Students and teachers should be aware that websites, including Wikipedia, may contain information that has been altered since the publication of the examination paper.
- Where dot points in a particular structure ask for images/key events/experiences/vignettes or the like, at least **two** instances of the requirement must be evident in the performance.
- Students and teachers are reminded that, in addition to the one theatrical convention prescribed in each structure, **disjointed time sequences, transformation of character, transformation of place and transformation of object** must be demonstrated in **every** performance.
- When making performance choices, students and teachers need to note that all characters must be portrayed in the gender as identified in the prescribed structure.
- While the VCAA considers all the structures in this examination suitable, teachers should be aware that, in some instances, sensitivity might be needed where particular issues or themes are explored. Teachers should make themselves aware of the issues and themes contained in the structures prior to the commencement of Unit 4 so that they can advise students appropriately.
- All enquiries regarding the Drama Solo Performance examination should be forwarded to Claudia Cicuttini, Project Manager Assessment, telephone 9225 2356.

## PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 1

### Character

The Sheriff of Nottingham

### Stimulus

The Graphic Novel *Outlaw: The Legend of Robin Hood*

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of The Sheriff of Nottingham.

The Sheriff, frustrated with his demotion and King Richard's perception of him as a weak-willed listener to idiots, threatens his PR manager with unspeakable agony unless something is done to improve his image. He

- re-creates an example of how Prince John and/or Guy of Gisburn cruelly misinterpreted his instructions
- creates a montage of dramatic images that show him as a popular, responsible statesman: universally admired by the barons and the peasantry
- shows how a powerful man in the 21st century will suffer the same lack of understanding and sympathy, despite his deep concern for the ordinary citizen.

### Performance style

Non-naturalistic

### Theatrical convention

Satire

### Dramatic element

Conflict

### Reference material

*Outlaw: The Legend of Robin Hood* written by Tony Lee, illustrated by Sam Hart and Artur Fujita, published by Walker Books, 2009

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sheriff\\_of\\_Nottingham](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sheriff_of_Nottingham)

<http://www.boldoutlaw.com/robbeg/robbeg4.html#sheriff>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forbes\\_Magazine's\\_List\\_of\\_The\\_World's\\_Most\\_Powerful\\_People](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forbes_Magazine's_List_of_The_World's_Most_Powerful_People)

## PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 2

### Character

Modesty Blaise

### Stimulus

The Modesty Blaise comic strip *Dossier on Pluto*

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of Modesty Blaise.

With her trademark panache, Modesty enthralls Sir Gerald Tarrant of the British Secret Service with details of her latest adventure and fills in some of the gaps in his knowledge of her past. She

- re-creates a montage of dramatic images which show how the dolphins were saved from the clutches of the ‘barking-mad’ villains
- creates a scene which shows how she took control of the criminal gang in Tangier which became known as ‘The Network’
- dramatically explores how an espionage method has changed from the 1960s to the 2000s.

### Performance style

Non-naturalistic

### Theatrical convention

Freeze frame

### Dramatic element

Conflict

### Reference material

*Dossier on Pluto* as found in *Modesty Blaise: The Lady Killers* by Peter O’Donnell, published by Titan Books, 2009

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modesty\\_Blaise](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modesty_Blaise)

[http://www.martinfrost.ws/htmlfiles/art\\_spying.html](http://www.martinfrost.ws/htmlfiles/art_spying.html)

<http://www.eyespyimg.com/spyintro.pdf>

## **PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 3**

### **Character**

Vincent Anton Freeman

### **Stimulus**

The film *Gattaca*

### **Performance focus**

Create a solo performance based on the character of Vincent Anton Freeman.

Grappling with security forces on his return from Saturn, Vincent finally reveals his true genetic make-up. He

- re-creates a scene which shows how his deception was almost discovered in the weeks prior to the launch
- creates a scene from his childhood which shows the genesis of his steely determination
- creates a parallel from history which shows that discrimination based on genetic factors can result in widespread persecution.

### **Performance style**

Non-naturalistic

### **Theatrical convention**

Pathos

### **Dramatic element**

Symbol

### **Reference material**

*Gattaca* directed by Andrew Niccol, 1997, [PG]

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gattaca>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scientific\\_racism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scientific_racism)

## PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 4

### Character

Zhu Xiao-Mei

### Stimulus

The picture book *The Red Piano*

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the person Zhu Xiao-Mei.

During her performance for members of the French Institut des Beaux Arts on Bastille Day 2011, Zhu Xiao-Mei champions the cause of contemporary Chinese artists. She

- re-creates an example of the hardships she faced as a young girl in Zhangjiake Camp 46–19
- creates a scene which explores a significant moment in her life after she was released from the camp
- shows how another world-renowned artist or performer overcame political restrictions to build a career in the arts.

### Performance style

Non-naturalistic

### Theatrical convention

Heightened use of language

### Dramatic element

Symbol

### Reference material

*The Red Piano* written by Andre Leblanc and illustrated by Barroux, published by Wilkins Farago Pty Ltd, 2010

[http://www.wilkinsfarago.com.au/Teachers\\_Notes\\_Red\\_Piano.pdf](http://www.wilkinsfarago.com.au/Teachers_Notes_Red_Piano.pdf)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural\\_Revolution](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_Revolution)

People such as Jung Chang and her family, Rudolph Nureyev, Kurt Weill



## **PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 5**

### **Character**

The Household Appliance

### **Stimulus**

[http://www.skwirk.com.au/p-c\\_s-14\\_u-189\\_t-505\\_c-1863/home-appliances/nsw/home-appliances/australia-social-and-cultural-history-in-the-post-war-period/the-impact-of-changing-technology-on-everyday-life](http://www.skwirk.com.au/p-c_s-14_u-189_t-505_c-1863/home-appliances/nsw/home-appliances/australia-social-and-cultural-history-in-the-post-war-period/the-impact-of-changing-technology-on-everyday-life)

### **Performance focus**

Create a solo performance based on the character of a Household Appliance named in the stimulus.

Refusing to step onto the conveyor belt of death, the Household Appliance defiantly challenges the notion of planned obsolescence and urges other appliances to do likewise. The household appliance

- re-creates a scene depicting its evolution
- creates a montage of dramatic images which show its impact on family life
- creates a scene which explores 'planned obsolescence' as a driver of the 21st century global economy.

### **Performance style**

Non-naturalistic with aspects of Physical Theatre

### **Theatrical convention**

Satire

### **Dramatic element**

Sound

### **Reference material**

[http://www.skwirk.com.au/p-c\\_s-14\\_u-189\\_t-505\\_c-1863/home-appliances/nsw/home-appliances/australia-social-and-cultural-history-in-the-post-war-period/the-impact-of-changing-technology-on-everyday-life](http://www.skwirk.com.au/p-c_s-14_u-189_t-505_c-1863/home-appliances/nsw/home-appliances/australia-social-and-cultural-history-in-the-post-war-period/the-impact-of-changing-technology-on-everyday-life)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Planned\\_obsolescence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Planned_obsolescence)

## PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 6

### Character

The King of Horror

### Stimulus

The careers of Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the person Boris Karloff **or** Bela Lugosi.

At the wrap-up party for the 1939 film *Son of Frankenstein*, Bela or Boris blatantly monopolises the attention of an up-coming director in an attempt to secure the lead role in the next horror film. He

- re-creates a scene which shows the acting skills he uses to portray his favourite and most scary monster
- creates a scene from an unreleased film which shows his rival for the title King of Horror as incompetent and not at all frightening
- shows how people in the 21st century will become desensitised to the real ‘monsters’ in their midst.

### Performance style

Non-naturalistic with aspects of Gothic Horror

### Theatrical convention

Exaggerated movement

### Dramatic element

Symbol

### Reference material

<http://hubpages.com/hub/Boris-Karloff-and-Bela-Lugosi-Classic-Kings-of-Gothic-Horror>

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000472/bio>

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000509/bio>

<http://modernfolktales.com/modern-monsters/hello-world/>

## PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 7

### Character

Elizabeth Bennet

### Stimulus

The novel *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of Elizabeth Bennet.

While despatching a horde of zombies disturbing an afternoon tea party at Longbourn, Elizabeth persuades her father that she is happy to accept Mr Darcy's offer of marriage. She

- re-creates a turning point in her relationship with Mr Darcy
- creates a montage of dramatic images which show her training under Pei Liu of Shaolin
- shows how her descendant, Liz, will deal with the white-collar zombies stalking the streets and offices of 21st century Melbourne.

### Performance style

Non-naturalistic

### Theatrical convention

Exaggerated movement

### Dramatic element

Climax

### Reference material

*Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* by Jane Austen and Seth Grahame-Smith, published by Quirk Books, 2009.

*World War Z* from the newspaper column *All Men Are Liars*, published in *The Age*, 5 December 2010 and found at: <http://blogs.smh.com.au/executive-style/allmenareliars/2011/01/18/zombies.html>

## PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 8

### Character

Baldrick

### Stimulus

*Blackadder Goes Forth* TV Series 4

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of Private S Baldrick.

Rushing backwards and forwards as he gathers the ingredients for *Rat au Van*, Baldrick divulges to Captain Edmund Blackadder his latest ‘cunning plan’ to avoid death. He

- re-creates his view of life in the trenches on the Western Front
- creates a scene which compares his cunning plan with one used by his ancestor, transported Villain S Baldrick, to outwit Governor William Bligh in the colony of New South Wales
- dramatically warns future generations of the dangers of blindly following the orders of ‘lunatic generals’.

### Performance style

Non-naturalistic with aspects of farce

### Theatrical convention

Caricature

### Dramatic element

Climax

### Reference material

*Blackadder Goes Forth* TV Series 4, 1989 [PG]

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blackadder>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rum\\_Rebellion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rum_Rebellion)

## **PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 9**

### **Character**

The Diva

### **Stimulus**

The life and times of Florence Foster Jenkins

### **Performance focus**

Create a solo performance based on the person Florence Foster Jenkins.

While going through her warm-up regime immediately before going on stage at Carnegie Hall, Florence demonstrates for the stage manager how her 'larger than life' persona ensured her success. She

- re-creates a significant moment from her rise to stardom
- creates a scene which depicts her inadvertent involvement in illegal activity at the Cotton Club
- demonstrates how a future female celebrity will follow her lead in being both entertainer and entrepreneur.

### **Performance style**

Non-naturalistic with aspects of comedy

### **Theatrical convention**

Exaggerated movement

### **Dramatic element**

Rhythm

### **Reference material**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florence\\_Foster\\_Jenkins](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florence_Foster_Jenkins)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cotton\\_Club\\_\(New\\_York\\_City\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cotton_Club_(New_York_City))

[http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m0DTI/is\\_5\\_32/ai\\_n6023844/](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0DTI/is_5_32/ai_n6023844/)

## **TERMINOLOGY**

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

### **Non-naturalistic**

This term is a broad category for all performance styles that are not dependent on the lifelike representation of everyday life. Non-naturalistic performance styles are not dependent on naturalistic characteristics to establish meaning. In non-naturalistic performance, the actor does not attempt to re-create, on the stage, life as it is lived. Non-naturalistic performance is characterised by a manipulation of character, time, place and object as well as the narrative elements of the drama.

### **Create**

To enact for an audience situations and conversations that may be informed by material other than the stimulus, such as reference material. The emphasis in the creation must be on action rather than narration; doing rather than telling.

### **Re-create**

To re-enact situations and conversations which are informed by the stimulus. The emphasis in the re-creation must be on action rather than narration; doing rather than telling.

### **Caricature**

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

### **Climax**

The moment of highest dramatic tension in a performance when things change, or reach a crisis point, and may lead to a resolution.

### **Comedy**

A dramatic style associated with such notions as amusement, jollity, gaiety, fun and humour. May include complex and sophisticated techniques sometimes referred to as 'high' comedy, or 'low' comic aspects such as slapstick and bawdiness.

### **Conflict**

A struggle within a character and/or between characters. Conflict may be between a character and some obstacle.

### **Contrast**

Highlight differences through the juxtaposition of dramatic action and sound.

### **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.

### **Exaggerated movement**

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

**Farce**

A style of comedy which aims to entertain by means of unlikely and extravagant, yet often possible, situations, disguise and mistaken identity. It is usually characterised by witty repartee, broad satire and improbable or absurd situations based on coincidence and misunderstanding. Farce uses rapid shifts in action and emotion, verbal humour and timing that often culminates in an elaborate chase scene.

**Freeze frame**

A freeze frame is a frozen moment of a scene. During a performance the actor freezes action and sound at a premeditated time to enhance dramatic tension and/or to highlight an important moment in a scene. It can be compared to pressing 'pause' on a video at a significant moment in the narrative.

**Gothic Horror**

Gothic Horror combines elements of horror and romance and features melodrama and parody. Stock characters include tyrants, villains, Byronic heroes, persecuted maidens, femme fatales, monsters and demons. The excesses, stereotypes and frequent absurdities of traditional Gothic Horror make it rich for satire.

**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 enhance the dramatic statement. Intended meaning is enhanced through the use of non-conventional and non-naturalistic dialogue.

**Montage**

In contemporary theatre a montage is a juxtaposition of dramatic images, often presented in rapid succession. The dramatic images are closely linked and presented to create an overall impression, and/or a summary of events/actions, and/or an introduction to events/actions.

**Pathos**

Pathos is a state which evokes a feeling of pity or sadness in the audience, for example the power of stirring tender or melancholy emotion. Pathos may be associated with comedy and tragedy.

**Physical theatre**

Physical theatre is a style of performance that pursues storytelling through physical means. The primary focus is on the physical work of the actor through the use of the body. It is a highly visual form of theatre. While text is one component of physical theatre, non-textual components can include mime, acrobatics/circus skills, mask, commedia, visual theatre and dance.

**Rhythm**

Rhythm is a regular pattern of sounds, words or actions.

**Satire**

Satire is the use of wit and comedy to attack, denounce or deride a target. Satire exposes or questions the presence of vice, folly, abuse or pretence. It can be achieved through the manipulation of language, caricature, parody, parable or other comedic theatrical conventions. The satirist laughs at, punishes or questions a target and/or an audience. The target may be an individual or a system.

**Sound**

The use of voice, recorded/live music or noise in order to create an effect or aural accompaniment to action.

**Symbol**

Something that suggests something else. Actors may use a prop symbolically or may make a symbolic gesture with their body or voice.

**Transformation of character**

The actor manipulates expressive skills to create characters in performance. A change in character therefore requires modification of the focus and manner of use of expressive skills by the actor. The addition of mask or costume may enhance the character transformation but does not constitute transformation unless accompanied by communicable changes in the use of expressive skills.

**Transformation of object**

An object(s) is endowed with a variety of meanings by the actor.

**Transformation of place**

The actor creates more than one place or setting during the performance and does so without the use of scenery. The actor can communicate transformation of place to an audience through the context they create for the performance and through the use of objects and space in symbolic ways. Transformation of place can be achieved through the transformation of properties (real and imagined) and/or through the use of expressive skills alone.

**Vignette**

A short scene or sketch based around a character.





# VCE Drama

## Solo Performance Examination 2011

### STATEMENT OF INTENTION

---

Student number

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Prescribed structure number

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:*

- *explanation/clarification of decisions made in your interpretation of the prescribed structure*
- *give reasons for choices made (for example, for use of costume, prop, accent, symbol)*

**DO NOT SIMPLY REWRITE THE PERFORMANCE FOCUS**

*These comments should not exceed 100 words*

**3 copies of this completed form must be handed to the assessors on entering the examination room.**

