

2015 VCE Drama examination report

General comments

The 2015 Drama written examination was based on the *VCE Drama Study Design 2014–2018*.

The examination was assessed out of 50 marks and comprised two sections:

- Section A – questions assessing students' skills in analysing the development and presentation of a solo performance (Unit 4, Outcomes 1 and 3) and an ensemble performance (Unit 3, Outcome 2)
- Section B – questions assessing students' skills in analysing and evaluating a production from the 2015 Drama Playlist (Unit 3, Outcome 3).

Areas of strength and weakness

High-scoring examination papers demonstrated:

- a high level of skill in analysing and evaluating a performance from the 2015 Drama playlist
- a clear understanding of non-naturalism
- a thorough understanding of how the actor–audience relationship can be deliberately manipulated to be consistent with specific non-naturalistic performance styles
- a high level of skill in analysing the ways in which conventions, dramatic elements, stagecraft, expressive skills and performance skills can be manipulated
- a thorough understanding of the ways in which the conventions of transformation of character, time, place and object can be manipulated by the actor(s)
- clear and concise responses
- pertinent examples to support responses
- appropriate use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Low-scoring examination papers demonstrated:

- a limited or inadequate understanding of a performance from the 2015 Drama playlist
- a definition rather than an explanation of how a key concept would be used
- inadequate understanding of the techniques that can be used to demonstrate transformation of character, time, place and object
- confusion about how symbolic use of object would be demonstrated; simply saying that the object is symbolic does not mean that it is, it needed to be clearly demonstrated to the audience
- misunderstanding of keywords or concepts
- confusion about the differences between dramatic elements, stagecraft, play-making techniques and conventions
- an inability to allocate time appropriately
- an over-reliance on work prepared in detail prior to the examination
- inappropriate or irrelevant examples used to support responses
- perfunctory responses
- limited or incorrect use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Advice for students and teachers

The following advice has been included in previous examination reports and is still appropriate.

- Students should have a clear understanding of non-naturalism as described in the study design.
- Students should ensure that they know the differences between play-making techniques, dramatic elements, stagecraft, expressive skills and performance skills.
- Students need to have a clear understanding of ways in which the conventions of transformation of character, time, place and object can be manipulated by an actor; for example, through use of morphing expressive skills, symbolic gesture, snap transitions, use of an action and reaction, use of a sound or word, giving and receiving, hiding and revealing, repetition of dialogue, and the symbolic use of stagecraft.
- Students must understand the difference between analysing and evaluating. When analysing, students need to examine in detail to discover the meaning of something. When evaluating, students need to make a judgment about or critique something.
- Student responses should be clear and concise. The space provided on the examination paper and the marks allocated should be used as a guide to the length of the required answer.
- When using the extra space provided at the end of the question and answer book, students should carefully label their response as being continued at the back of the question and answer book.

Specific information

Note: Student responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.

This report provides sample answers, or an indication of what the answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

The statistics in this report may be subject to rounding resulting in a total more or less than 100 per cent.

Section A

Question 1

For Question 1, four images, an extract of text and some contextual information were provided in the detachable insert as stimulus material to develop and present the character of The Citizen for a non-naturalistic solo performance. Students needed to draw on the key knowledge and skills acquired through the development and evaluation of their own solo performance work in Unit 4, Outcomes 1 and 3. Within this solo performance, students were required to transform between two characters and places. Students needed to ensure that their discussion was focused on a single actor performing as more than one character, rather than multiple actors performing, so there was no confusion about it being a solo performance.

Question 1a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	2	15	83	1.8

Students were asked to describe how one idea from the stimulus material would be used in the development of the solo performance. This idea could have been conceptual, thematic or literal; a description of an element from one of the images or accompanying text; or some more complex lateral thought. The focus of this question was on how this idea would be used to develop part of

the solo performance; for example, narrative, character(s), theme(s), performance style(s), conventions(s), dramatic elements(s), stagecraft, etc.

Most students were able to discuss how one idea from the stimulus material would be used in the development of the solo performance. Students who discussed ideas not related to the stimulus material or the context of the solo performance were not awarded any marks. High-scoring responses were characterised by a discussion that incorporated ideas about symbolism and/or mood and/or character/narrative development inspired by the stimulus material.

Low-scoring responses merely described something in the stimulus, usually the images, or explained how the idea would be used in the presentation rather than the development of the solo performance.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

I will involve inspiration from stimulus 5 in order to help develop my solo performance. The mood that I get from this stimulus is very miserable and I believe the character in this picture is feeling like 'woe is me'. Therefore I will involve this miserable mood in my solo performance by the character of The Citizen, by giving him a miserable mood like personality. I will develop this idea through the play-making technique of improvisation, by improvising different ways to develop this mood in my character. Such as body posture of being hunched and facial expression of being sad.

Question 1b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	1	11	44	43	2.3

This question asked students to discuss how the actor would use voice and rhythm to present the character of The Citizen. Most students understood how to explain the use of voice, discussing vocal techniques such as pitch, tone, accent, projection and diction, use of song and the creation of vocal sounds. Many students found it difficult to describe the application of rhythm. High-scoring responses described how voice and rhythm would be applied in unison through the application of a regular pattern of sounds, words or actions, the pace of line delivery and/or the use of body percussion, stomping, clicking fingers, whistling, etc., to create a particular effect. Low-scoring responses made limited or perfunctory reference to voice and/or rhythm, and/or gave a general description of the character or narrative for The Citizen.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Voice – matter of fact, scientifically educated by use of varying intonation and pitch frequently medium/loud projected volume to show confidence and a curt but warm tone, and a relaxed pace of delivery without stutter.

Rhythm – to show order, when waiting he would use rhythm of gesture of checking watch, shaking foot, straightening his tie – to show repetitive rhythmic mannerisms.

Question 1c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	4	22	43	32	2

Students were informed that during this solo performance there would be a dramatic moment when The Citizen must deal with the unexpected appearance of The Alien. Students were required to explain how the play-making technique of improvisation would be used to explore the change in mood that occurs in this moment.

Students who scored highly took inspiration from the stimulus material and made thoughtful choices about who the character of The Alien would be; for example, a hypothetical or fictional being from another world. They included clear examples of how the actor would use improvisation activities such as hot-seating or role-play to explore what the most appropriate change in mood would be.

Low-scoring responses included generic ideas or a definition of improvisation rather than an explanation of how improvisation would be used. A common error was to provide narrative ideas without explaining how the change in mood would be explored. Some students discussed the final presentation rather than development of the solo performance.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

I would decide that the Alien appears when the Citizen opens a door (Stim 2). However, I would explore, through improvisation, the mood in which this occurs, experimenting with slapstick for comedic positive mood, or with the Alien being afraid to evoke a sadder, more sympathetic mood as well as other reactions improvised.

Question 1d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	2	2	13	27	27	20	9	3.8

Students were informed that, in another scene, there would be a transformation of character and place when The Citizen leaves the world they inhabit and enters the contrasting world of The Alien. Students were asked to explain how the actor would apply one transformation technique, symbolic use of object and non-naturalistic use of sound to create the transformation and emphasise the contrasting world of The Alien.

In Unit 4 students are expected to study a range of techniques or methods of transformation as part of their study of ways of manipulating the conventions of transformation of character, time, place and object. Many responses discussed the use of snap and morph/meld transitions. Other popular methods of transformation that students discussed included the symbolic use of stagecraft or gesture, use of dialogue, use of sound, use of an action, calling and answering, hiding and revealing, and action and reaction.

High-scoring responses demonstrated a clear sense of how a seamless transformation of character and place would be performed. They succinctly explained how the actor would create the transformation and indicated an understanding of how this would emphasise the contrasting world of The Alien. They also contained imaginative ideas about how the transformation of character and place would have an impact on other aspects of the performance such as the narrative resolution, themes and dramatic elements (such as tension and contrast).

A number of responses discussed only the transformation of place or character. Some responses had no real sense of how the transformation would occur, instead providing an outline of how an object and sound would be used in two different ways or places. Low-scoring responses demonstrated confusion about how symbolic use of object would be shown, and tended to discuss the moment after the transformation rather than how the actor would create the transformation.

A number of students discussed the application of lighting, which posed a challenge when explaining how the actor would apply it in the context of a solo performance. Other common mistakes made were poor choices about the symbolic use of object, discussing multiple actors within the scene, providing a filmic narrative rather than an explanation of how one actor would perform the scene, and confusion about how non-naturalistic sound would be used.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

The Citizen enters the world of the Alien through the same door that the Alien first came from (Stim 2), with a loud creaking sound made by the actor. The hollow circle of dark plastic previously used as a brief case by the Citizen would be spun around the wrist of the actor to symbolise the travel as well as the journeying out of the routine set world. This travelling would be accompanied by a mouth-made soundscape of whirring and swallowing noises as if the Citizen is trying to breathe, tying in with the fish-like design of the Alien inspired by Stimulus 3 and 4. These swallowing 'glub-glub' noises and the spinning of the circle would slow as they enter the Alien's world, transforming the 'glub' of the soundscape into the speech of the Alien, with its intermittent 'glubs' throughout his dialogue and using the circular prop as an extension of his hand like symbolising the characters fin-like hands. The fluid movements of the Alien would then snap transform back into the rigid ones of the Citizen, symbolising his out of place nature in the new contrasting, fluid world and gripping the circular prop lightly as he clings to the old world, slowly loosening his posture and grip as the solo goes on and the Citizen enjoys the Alien world.

Question 1e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	4	8	30	39	20	2.7

Students were instructed that the climax of this performance would occur in the world of The Alien where The Citizen was forced to make a difficult choice. Students were asked to explain how the actor would use space and timing to create the climax and refer to what impact they intended this moment to have on the audience.

High-scoring students understood that this scene was the final dramatic moment of the solo performance and used pertinent examples to explain what impact the climax would have on the audience. They explained how the actor would integrate non-naturalistic qualities such as the use of tableaux, symbol and sound production to evoke pathos from or to shock the audience.

Low-scoring responses often neglected to refer to what impact this moment would have on the audience. Some students' depiction of the scene was anti-climactic, often culminating in the actor falling to the ground. Common errors made by students included lack of clarity that this was a solo performance, a generic response that did not relate to The Citizen being forced to make a difficult choice and describing a scene in which the intention/message would be unclear for the audience to understand.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

I will use a split stage to delineate the two worlds. Ritualistic movement will be used by The Citizen to show his mind fighting to decide what is right – happiness in The Alien's world or normality back in the Citizen's world. This will occur centre stage between the two worlds to denote his struggle to decide. Song will be used to create tension, a climactic tribal beating increasingly getting louder and faster as the Citizen's movements get faster building to the climax where he must decide. Finally he stops and says, 'I will stay on the Alien's planet' but he can't survive without oxygen and dies. This will create pathos for the audience through the use of sympathetic music as The Citizen dies in slow motion, finishing with a tableaux.

Question 2

This question required students to consider how they would use the stimulus material provided in the detachable insert to develop and present a devised non-naturalistic ensemble performance. The stimulus material contained several images, pieces of text and contextual information about an ensemble group who were to devise, develop and present an ensemble performance called 'Menagerie'.

The images, text, themes, scenario and characters provided evoked particular moods and implied styles. Most students embraced these ideas and wrote about concepts and situations that were clearly linked to the stimulus material. Many students were able to relate to, and empathise with, the themes of the material: animals' relationship with humans, freedom versus captivity, the rights of the individual versus the needs of the group, and finding a real home.

Conventions from three specific non-naturalistic performance styles – Brecht's Epic Theatre, Grotowski's Poor Theatre and Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty – needed to be used in the ensemble performance. Information pertaining to the study of these non-naturalistic performance styles is on pages 11–12 of the *VCE Drama Study Design 2014–2018*. The study design states that 'Non-naturalism is a broad term for all performance styles that are not dependent on the life-like representation of everyday life' and is based on the work of Artaud, Brecht and Grotowski. Across Units 1–4 students should study the work of these practitioners but also study a broad range of other non-naturalistic forms such as pre-naturalistic styles or non-Western styles.

Students needed to draw on the key knowledge and skills acquired through the development, presentation (Outcome 1) and evaluation stages (Outcome 2) of their ensemble performance in Unit 3. Students needed to consider the whole question before they began responding in order to identify the relationship between the questions. It should be noted that non-naturalistic performance styles and techniques used by drama practitioners to develop non-naturalistic performances are part of the key knowledge for Unit 3, Outcomes 1 and 2. Students, therefore, needed to have a thorough knowledge of these concepts.

Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	3	17	81	1.8

Students needed to select one of the listed characters as their focus in the ensemble performance and describe how they would use one symbolic gesture to clearly demonstrate this character's role. Most students handled this question well.

High-scoring responses were characterised by a description of how the symbolic gesture would be used to communicate the character's role, reference to the character's relationship with the audience and/or character status and ideas inspired by the stimulus material.

Some students described a symbol that was not gestural, or did not discuss a symbol and instead wrote a narrative about their character's role. Other students described only the gesture without explaining the character's role. Some students mistakenly described other characters' reactions to the main character's role, or described animal movements, such as ruffling feathers, rather than the symbolic gesture an actor would use to demonstrate this.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

The Manipulator – Every time they need something that someone else has or can do something that benefits them, the manipulator points to that person first then walks towards them. Used each time the manipulator's loyalties change. When they reach their target, they finish the gesture by pointing to themselves, showing why they're really there.

Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	4	17	44	36	2.1

Students were instructed that the opening scene would explore the different reactions the animals have to the news that the Echuca Exotic Animal Sanctuary was being closed down. They were

asked to explain how the group would use one play-making technique to explore the conflict the characters experience as they try to solve their problem. Most students correctly identified a play-making technique; the most common choices were researching, brainstorming and improvisation.

Students who scored highly explained specific activities from their selected play-making technique that they would use to explore the characters' conflict; for example, mind-mapping character relationships to establish alliances and enemies, hot-seating characters' reactions to the news and role-playing potential roles that could create conflict with each other. These students made thoughtful choices about how conflict would be explored and clearly linked their ideas to the specified scene. They understood that conflict can be shown in a variety of ways; for example, through physical, verbal or psychological means, and that conflict may be internal or external – between characters and their environment.

Students with low-scoring responses struggled to explain how conflict would be explored or did not explain the conflict in the context of the specified scene. Some students outlined a general conflict that the animals may have or merely provided a narrative of the scene. Others were confused about what a play-making technique is, gave only a definition of a play-making technique or discussed multiple play-making techniques.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

I will develop a script between the animals to properly express their conflict to the viewers/audience. This script will involve certain characters showing their aggression in dialogue due to this conflict, 'Well where the hell are we supposed to go now?' as an example. Then to express characters trying to solve this problem, I would include dialogue such as 'There's a zoo down the road we could go to until they find us another place.'

Question 2c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	8	17	38	37	2.1

This question required students to select one of the listed themes that the group would explore in presenting the social and/or political message of the performance. Students were then instructed to discuss how the group would use one convention of Brecht's Epic Theatre to convey the social and/or political message of this theme in the ensemble performance.

Most students correctly identified an appropriate convention of Epic Theatre and understood how to demonstrate the selected theme. However, quite a number of students did not link their discussion back to the social and/or political message of the performance.

High-scoring responses demonstrated a good understanding of the conventions used to alienate the audience. They understood the didactic nature of Epic Theatre and made thoughtful choices about a convention that was relevant to both the performance style and the theme to be explored.

Low-scoring responses tended to discuss the theme or the convention, rather than both. The most common errors were to discuss more than one convention, to discuss a dramatic element instead of a convention or to discuss a convention that was not relevant to Epic Theatre; for example, using the fourth wall or creating pathos for the audience. Many did not discuss a theme in the ensemble performance or the social and/or political message of the ensemble performance.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Freedom versus captivity - The group would use reversible signs/placards around each of their necks near the beginning of the show saying 'Echuca Exotic Animal Sanctuary.' In one scene they would turn these signs around to reveal their country and habitat of origin and briefly and animatedly explain the sensory experience of being there. After this they would then flip the sign back to the sanctuary logo and repeat 'glass, plastic, the street', the view taken from Stimulus 6.

This points out to the audience the imprisoned nature of the captive animals and the negative effects of that captivity as opposed to where they were free.

Question 2d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	12	16	33	26	13	2.1

Students were instructed that in the next scene, various interested humans arrive and offer a range of solutions to the animals' problem and that the scene would be presented in the style of Grotowski's Poor Theatre. Students were required to analyse how the group would use one area of stagecraft and transformation to present this scene in the style of Grotowski's Poor Theatre. Some students did not attempt to answer this question.

Students with high-scoring responses had a clear sense of the style of Poor Theatre and how this scene might be portrayed to help to convey other elements of the narrative such as pathos, tension and the intended actor–audience relationship. They clearly understood that the emphasis of this performance style is the use of minimal stagecraft and the actors' use of transformation. Some students also made reference to the positioning of the audience within and around the acting space.

A common error was a response that was too narrative-driven without including reference to the use of stagecraft or transformation. Discussing the use of elaborate lighting schemes was not appropriate, given that this performance style relies on a bare stage with an evenly lit space so that the focus is primarily on the actors' skills. Low-scoring responses struggled to explain how the group would use transformation or missed the instruction to reference the particular scene of various interested humans arriving and offering a range of solutions to the animals' problem.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

A convention of Poor Theatre is minimalistic prop use and so the group would share one prop whilst conveying different humans arriving and offering solutions. The prop would be that of a thin ruler. For the Know-it-all, the ruler would be held against the actor's neck as if it were a tie, symbolising intelligence and power and often adjusting when suggesting something. From these adjustments the actor could then look move the ruler into the hand and look down at it, interacting with it as if it were a phone to portray the Tech-head. The Tech-head would raise the ruler to their hand to speak into it but then it would continue moving and cover the eye of the Manipulator, who transforms the ruler into sunglasses, only looking over them when the character hears something in their favour.

Question 2e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	13	7	17	27	23	12	2.8

Students were instructed that the final scene would explore who has ultimate control: the animals or the humans. Students were asked to explain how the group would use one convention of Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty to manipulate tension in this scene. They were also required to discuss what impact this convention would have on the actor–audience relationship.

Popular choices discussed by students were shocking the audience, assaulting the senses, visual poetry/stylised movement, visceral and confronting imagery, and surrounding or encircling the audience. A number of students gave a general discussion of how tension would be manipulated without linking it to the performance style. Some students did not attempt this question.

High-scoring responses provided a clear sense of how the actors would manipulate tension through the application of one convention of Theatre of Cruelty. They explained tangible ways that

the actors would manipulate the actor–audience relationship; for example, through eye contact, movement and dialogue, and positioning within the acting space, and the impact that this would have on the audience. They often discussed the nature of and motivation behind the chosen convention; for example, the impact on the audience when the actors assaulted the senses.

Low-scoring responses were often filmic narratives that would have been very difficult to translate into a live performance. A common error made by students was to speak in general terms about Theatre of Cruelty without giving any specific examples in the context of the required scene. Some students also seemed to miss the instruction that this was the final scene of the ensemble and that there should be a sense of finality to the performance.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Assaulting the senses – the actors will perform around the audience and in between their seating. The actors will all transform into the animals and come close to the audience, as though they are the humans, invading their personal space. The actors will produce loud screeching sounds to intimidate the audience. This will build tension as the audience will wonder what the actors are going to do. The loud noises and invading personal space by the actors as animals will position the audience to feel uncomfortable and out of control in the situation. This will imply to the audience that the animals are in control. Tension will be enhanced through the increasing proximity and closeness of the actors and the increasing noise. The audience will also question the thoughts and desires of the animals as they are positioned as the captors and the animals are finally free. This will manipulate the audience into identifying with the animals previous position as the tables are turned and the humans are now captive.

Section B

Play chosen	none	<i>Reception: The Musical</i>	<i>Black Diggers</i>	<i>Team of Life</i>	<i>Cut Snake</i>	<i>I Call My Brothers</i>	<i>Beautiful One Day</i>
%	1	11	11	2	37	34	4

This section related to the Unit 3 analysis of a play from the 2015 Drama playlist. Students were required to select one play from the list and answer the four parts of the question that related to their chosen play.

Question a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	2	14	29	55	2.4

Students needed to discuss how one actor used facial expression to portray a character in the performance. Most students handled this question well. Some students gave a perfunctory description of how one actor used facial expression or confused the actor with the character. Others mistakenly discussed multiple expressive skills and/or multiple actors. Some ignored the instruction about facial expression and instead discussed the actor's use of voice, gesture or movement. These students could not be awarded full marks.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Cut Snake

Catherine Davies used caricatured facial expression to portray Mrs Broccolini as old and scary in the eyes of Jumper and Bob. By squinting one eye and half-closing the other she gave the illusion of short-sightedness, emphasising age. Her teeth jutted outside her mouth and eyes frantically looked side to side to imbue the character with predatory connotations in order to evoke fear. Her choice to smile when Jumper made mistakes also emphasised the cruelty of the character.

Question b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	3	17	37	43	2.2

This question asked students to explain how one area of stagecraft was applied to convey a theme in the performance. Many students handled this question well. Students with high-scoring responses made a good choice of the area of stagecraft to discuss, clearly explaining how it was applied to elucidate a key theme in the performance. Students with low-scoring responses were either confused about what the areas of stagecraft were or did not discuss how one was applied to convey a theme. Some students mistakenly discussed multiple areas of stagecraft and/or multiple themes, or dramatic elements or conventions instead of themes.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

I Call My Brothers

Costume: consisted of tight layer clothing in neutral tones to reflect various skin colours and to highlight the theme of racial profiling. The anonymity of the costume made it difficult to classify or identify the characters emphasising to the audience the desire people have to classify people by appearance, therefore racial profiling. The tight layered clothing was accompanied by placing stockings over the heads of the amplifiers to further remove any identity and to demonstrate that despite our differing skin tones we're all the same and therefore cannot be classified by our race alone, conveying the theme of racial profiling.

Question c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	4	13	46	37	2.2

Students were asked to analyse how the actor–audience relationship was manipulated in the performance. Most students understood this question satisfactorily and identified aspects such as narration, direct address, alienating the audience, storytelling style, use of familiar idiom, breaking the fourth wall, use of the acting space, use of eye contact, eliciting an emotional response, use of pathos, use of comedy, use of flashbacks, split scenes or replaying scenes to provide multiple perspectives, etc. Students with low-scoring responses tended to discuss the narrative aspects of what one character did without explaining what impact this had on the actor–audience relationship.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

I Call My Brothers

Actor-audience relationship was established through Amor's initial narration to the audience, inviting them in through his friendly approach. This was further manipulated through the gradual lessening of Amor's direct address to the audience as his paranoia increased. The energy, intensity and aggressive mood that developed as the play progressed distanced Amor from the audience as they began to question his guilt, but after Amor's monologue that demonstrated his

paranoia at being perceived as a stereotype the audience felt empathy for Amor who was suffering. This empathy was heightened due to Amor's initial building of an amiable relationship with the audience.

Question d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	4	5	18	27	26	12	7	3.3

Many students wrote very strong analyses of the plays, but if they did not evaluate the performance they could not be awarded full marks. To 'evaluate', students needed to make a personal judgment about or critique the performance. They may have discussed the play's effectiveness, successes and weaknesses, or what worked and what didn't, etc. Students who scored highly referred to this in terms such as '*rhythm was used effectively to create a sense of the daily routine in the performance through...*' or '*the transformation of character was ineffective because...*'. Students who did not score highly demonstrated a limited understanding of the play in performance, used poor examples and used limited or incorrect drama-specific language and terminology.

Question 1d.

Students were required to evaluate how rhythm and transformation of character were manipulated in the performance of *Reception: The Musical*. Most students were able to correctly identify several moments within the performance where rhythm and transformation of character were used. High-scoring responses evaluated how the application of rhythm and transformation of character created shifts in the mood and pace of the performance. They also evaluated how effective the actor was in using a variety of techniques to transform and differentiate between characters to illuminate the themes of safety in familiarity, self-identity and belonging. Low-scoring responses reflected a limited understanding of the play in performance and made perfunctory references to the application of rhythm and/or transformation of character.

Question 2d.

Students were asked to evaluate how mood and transformation of place were manipulated in the performance of *Black Diggers*. Students who scored highly evaluated how successfully the space, lighting and sound were manipulated to create the transformations of place. They provided examples of the variety of techniques that were used to show that the location had shifted (for example, use of tableaux, snap transitions, slow motion, montages and split stage) and how this created shifts in the pace and conveyed contrasts in mood. Students who did not score highly struggled to identify how the mood was created in a variety of ways and demonstrated a limited understanding of how transformation of place occurred.

Question 3d.

Students needed to evaluate how symbol and song were manipulated in the performance of *Team of Life*. Students who scored highly demonstrated a thorough understanding of the performance, particularly the use of physical theatre, and the story of the Indigenous peoples' experience and the parallel story of refugees. They also clearly explained how the themes of the past and the present were conveyed through symbol and song. Students who did not score highly struggled to explain how song was used and had a limited understanding of how symbol was demonstrated in the performance.

Question 4d.

Students needed to evaluate how climax and transformation of time were manipulated in the performance of *Cut Snake*. Most students understood how climax was created in the performance,

although some found it more difficult to explain how the transformations of time occurred. High-scoring responses evaluated how effective the use of physical theatre was in creating the transformations of time and climax, and how this communicated the themes of the ordinary versus the extraordinary. Students who did not score highly showed a limited understanding of the play, in particular how the actors created tension to build to the climactic moments and how the transformations of time created shifts in the mood and pace of the performance.

Question 5d.

Students were required to evaluate how tension and transformation of place were manipulated in the performance of *I Call My Brothers*. Students who scored highly evaluated how effectively the timing, use of space, sound production and set pieces were manipulated to create transformations of place, and how this built tension in the performance. They demonstrated a thorough and insightful understanding of how the themes of racial profiling, identity and guilt versus innocence were conveyed in the performance. Students who did not score highly struggled to identify how tension was applied and demonstrated a limited understanding of how transformation of place occurred.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

I Call My Brothers

Transformation of place was often manipulated by transformation of object; in this case, the set. Whilst the grid walls were mainly stood up in order to represent Amor's fractured mind, during a dream sequence, a wall was placed flat on the ground for Amor to sit on and contemplate. While this showed a transformation from a physical place, it also blatantly highlighted the transformation of Amor's slowly deteriorating state of mind. This successfully allowed the audience to feel a great deal of empathy for Amor, which ultimately enhanced the strong and understanding actor-audience relationship.

During a flashback where Amor is being bullied, he is crouched on the ground and is concealed from the audience by the two bullies. A freeze frame was held and all three characters moved to another position, representing a transformation of place. This repeated for a third time, and each time Amor is blocked from the audience by the bullies. Through this forced separation of Amor from the audience, despite being disconnected from him, we understand his fear as the bullies block both his view and the audience's view of him. This successfully enhanced a deeply sympathetic actor-audience relationship.

Tension was manipulated through sound and narration. During a moment where Amor is angry, the non-diegetic sound of rumbling increased in volume as Amor's anger did, which effectively enhanced the fearful tension of the scene, which made the audience also feel extremely uncomfortable, further allowing them to empathise with Amor's frustrations.

Tension was greatly manipulated in the penultimate scene in which Amor narrates his fantasised destruction of the city. In the beginning of this lengthy monologue, it appears that this story may be factual, however, as it progresses, it becomes obvious that Amor is in an intense delusional dream-like state. Tension in this scene was created as the monologue progressed as Amor's voice became louder and faster, his eyebrows were raised, his eyes widened and he mimed the action he was describing. This heightened language and exaggerated movement increased the overall energy and tempo rhythm, which translated into tension the audience felt and they were able to empathise with Amor's delusions, thus effectively enhancing the powerful actor-audience relationship.

Question 6d.

Students were asked to evaluate how space and direct address were manipulated in the performance of *Beautiful One Day*. Most students handled this question quite well. Students who scored highly were able to explain how the two areas were integrated to support the verbatim style of the performance. They discussed the effectiveness of the actors' use of space and narration and how the multimedia projections were applied to differentiate between various characters' perspectives of the fateful event on Palm Island. Low-scoring responses reflected a limited understanding of the use of space and had trouble identifying how direct address was used to elucidate the key themes and create pathos.