

2015 VCE Theatre Studies examination report

General comments

The 2015 VCE Theatre Studies written examination comprised three parts:

- Section A – one extended-response question (10 marks) assessing students on their analysis of a play from the Unit 3 prescribed playlist (Unit 3, Outcome 3)
- Section B – one question in two parts (10 marks) assessing students on their analysis of a play from the Unit 4 prescribed playlist (Unit 4, Outcome 3)
- Section C – one question in five parts (20 marks) assessing students' skills in applying stagecraft (Unit 3, Outcomes 1 and 2) and one question in two parts (10 marks) assessing students on their skills in applying stagecraft to a monologue interpretation, developed through Unit 4, Outcome 2.

The examination was based on the *VCE Theatre Studies Study Design 2014–2018*.

High-scoring responses:

- provided clear, specific and detailed examples (e.g. from the prescribed plays and to illustrate their ideas in answering Question 3 and 4)
- used accurate theatrical terminology to explain ideas
- demonstrated an excellent understanding of key concepts and terminology from the study design (e.g. context, realise, exploring and/or trialling)
- answered questions directly, creating highly focused responses
- demonstrated an in-depth understanding of the nature and function of stagecraft and the collaborative nature of the production process.

Low-scoring responses:

- used general terms without providing specific examples
- used vague, inaccurate or unsophisticated language to explain ideas
- confused key concepts and terms from the study design
- relayed general information (as if the student were trying to write everything they knew about the topic) with little specific relevance to the question focus
- were formulaic, addressing the general concepts of the outcome without directly answering the question
- described the narrative of plays with little reference to how stagecraft was used (or could be used) to realise the playwright's intention or create an imaginative interpretation
- used vague or general terms about stagecraft
- were confused about the areas of stagecraft prescribed in the study design
- confused the 'actor' with the 'character' that the actor was presenting.

To better prepare for the examination, students are recommended to thoroughly:

- revise key concepts
- review the written playscript for the selected Unit 3 prescribed playlist play
- review key examples from the Units 3 and 4 prescribed playlist plays

- practise responding to a variety of prompts and stimuli, using previous examinations, the examination specifications and sample questions on the VCAA website
- in particular, students are advised to practise the different command or task words that could appear in an examination question, including (but not limited to) words such as analyse, evaluate, annotate and describe.

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 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

Play chosen	none	<i>Endgame</i>	<i>Kelly</i>	<i>The One Day of the Year</i>	<i>As You Like It</i>
%	1	64	17	5	13

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	1	1	4	9	14	16	17	15	11	7	4	5.8

This question required students to show:

- knowledge of the play in performance, demonstrated by specific examples from the performance
- knowledge of the written playscript, demonstrated by specific examples drawn from the script excerpt and other parts of the playscript
- understanding of 'context', including but not limited to: historical, cultural, social and political contexts. Context can refer to the world of the play or the world outside the play (including the original or contemporary performance context[s])
- knowledge of the nature and function of stagecraft in communicating ideas in the interpretation of the written playscript.

Students and teachers are reminded that directly quoting ideas presented in educational forums provided by theatre companies to support the study may not be relevant to the analysis required in a question. For example, quoting a member of the production team in terms of their intention is only relevant to the extent that it is a clear rationalisation for what occurred in the performance. Discussion of a production team member's process may not be relevant to the analysis of a performance. Students should avoid preparing answers prior to the examination.

Reference to the script excerpt could have included:

- the specific moment or part of the play (i.e. how the section of the play was staged)
- an idea, theme or image implied in the text (e.g. how the idea of being 'abandoned' in *Endgame* was realised through stagecraft application)

- verbal or non-verbal language (e.g. Alf's dialect in *The One Day of the Year*, the stage directions, etc.)
- reference to similarities and/or differences between the script excerpt and the performance.

Appropriate references to other parts of the playscript could have included:

- a direct quote(s) from the playscript (e.g. a line of dialogue, stage directions or relevant act/scene titles or numbers)
- a description(s) of the structural aspects of the playscript (e.g. the use of iambic pentameter and blank verse in the written script of *As You Like It*, the act and/or scene structure of the play, reference to a specific moment in the play)
- similarities or differences between the written playscript and the performance.

An appropriate reference to the play in performance could have included:

- specifics of stagecraft (e.g. a particular moment when lighting changed, a detailed description of a set piece or costume, etc.)
- a particular dramatic image (i.e. a vivid description that evoked how actors and other areas of stagecraft were presented during a specific moment).

High-scoring responses to this question:

- provided a detailed and thorough analysis of two or more areas of stagecraft that demonstrated a high level of understanding of context in the written playscript and performance
- reflected an excellent understanding of how two or more areas of stagecraft worked to create meaning in the interpretation
- provided detailed and specific examples from the script excerpt, other parts of the playscript and/or the play in performance, to discuss the play's context
- used sophisticated theatrical terminology throughout the response.

Low-scoring responses to this question:

- provided poor analysis of one or two or more areas of stagecraft, demonstrating a limited understanding of context in the written playscript
- reflected little or no understanding of how one or two or more areas of stagecraft worked in performance to convey meaning
- provided no examples from the script excerpt and other parts of the playscript, and/or the play in performance
- used little or no theatrical terminology throughout the response.

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

ENDGAME:

Set design and costume are employed in MTC and Sam Strong's production of Beckett's 'Endgame', to enhance the context of death, decay and hopelessness, contained in the original playscript. The sparse 'room' with its 'two high, small windows' was interpreted as a hemispherical 'bunker-like' room, the walls textured to resemble reinforced concrete panels, reminiscent of a bomb shelter. This worked to highlight the deliberately ambiguous literal context of the world of the playscript, while accentuating the themes of 'hunger, and cold, and death' by alluding to a post-nuclear fallout world, or one that is 'corpsed'. The rounded interior and two small windows were also intended to imply the characters were inhabiting the interior of a skull, or perhaps the 'father' of Death, further highlighting the context of the playscript as one about 'bleakness' and decay. These themes and the context of the playscript were also aided in interpretation by costume. Luke Mullins, portraying the subservient Clov, appeared in an unbuttoned shirt, loose trousers, suspenders hanging from the waist band, and slippers at the start of the play, and gradually added more garments in preparation to leave his 'father' Hamm. His trousers often fell down, causing him to hold them up at the waist, which, in conjunction with

his shuffling slippers, helped exaggerate his 'stiff, staggering' limp, and highlighted the broader context of the play; that even people in the 'corpsed' world are deteriorating. Furthermore, both Clov and Colin Friels' Hamm's garments are tattered and soiled to further allude to the dying world they inhabit. Hamm's frayed Navy dressing gown and 'stiff' hat are both near-rags, and Clov's clothes are also worse-for-wear, though slightly neater to communicate his failing desire to order a disordered environment. His hopefulness is also communicated through the bright salmon coat he dons right before he 'abandons' his 'father' Hamm, leaving him to call out to his fast approaching 'father', death.

Section B

Question 2

Play chosen	none	<i>Mother</i>	<i>Sweeney Todd</i>	<i>Antigone</i>	<i>Hamlet</i>	<i>The Weir</i>	<i>Adventures in the Skin Trade</i>
%	1	3	44	26	11	9	7

Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	6	15	32	27	21	2.4

In Unit 4, Outcome 3 in the study design, students are required to analyse the interrelationship between acting, directing and design. Students are also required to evaluate the interpretation by actors of a playscript.

This question asked students to focus on the work of one actor. They did not need to know the name of the actor. It was acceptable for a student to write 'the man who played Hamlet'. However, students were required to understand the difference between the actor and the character that the actor was portraying. Hence, it was inaccurate to refer to how 'Hamlet' realised the character (rather, 'Hamlet' was the character realised by the actor).

This question required students to show:

- a knowledge of the play in performance, demonstrated by specific examples from the performance
- a knowledge of the stagecraft of acting
- an understanding of aspects of design in the selected play, demonstrated by specific examples from the performance
- a capacity to show the relationship between acting and aspects of production design (e.g. how the design of a costume communicated ideas about a character and how the actor worked within that costume to accentuate these decisions).

The focus of this question was the interrelationship between design and the work of actors in a performance. Low-scoring responses spoke about design and acting without showing the interrelationship.

Students interpreted the notion of production design in numerous ways, including:

- the overarching design concept or directorial decisions relevant to design
- specific motifs or themes interwoven through design decisions
- the practical function of design in the performance space (such as the levels in set design)
- the historical context of design
- the mood created in design.

In the highest-scoring responses, students illustrated their understanding of production design by discussing the application of stagecraft, and how these design choices related to an actor's work.

High-scoring responses to this question:

- provided a thorough response, focused on how the actor's performance related to aspects of design
- used detailed and specific examples from the performance to illustrate their response
- used a sophisticated level of theatrical language in the discussion.

Low-scoring responses to this question:

- provided a basic description of either the design decisions and/or the actor's performance with no reference to how they were related
- used few or no examples from the performance
- used little or no theatrical terminology in the discussion.

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

ANTIGONE:

The design elements of costume were utilised by actor Jane Montgomery Griffiths, playing the character of the leader, to represent the face of the leader's control during her initial presentational address. The black pencil skirt, zipped jacket and tailored clothing of Griffiths, constricted her movement. Griffiths utilised this to convey a measured, modulated controlled interpretation of the leader. Her black gloves and clenched fist were used to show the unaltering façade of the leader and that her hands were 'clean'. Griffiths' movement was freed as her costume deteriorated during the leader's state of grief. At this stage, Griffiths ran outside the acting space defined through set design in raw animalistic shock, choking and spluttering. It was only when another put her clothing back on that she was once again controlled... utilising presentation voice.

Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	6	6	16	25	28	12	7	3.3

This question required students to show:

- a knowledge of the play in performance, demonstrated by specific examples from the performance
- a knowledge of the stagecraft of acting
- a knowledge of one (or more) of the characters (and associated characteristics)
- a capacity to evaluate the work of an actor in realising a character (i.e. providing a rationale for what was/was not effective about the realisation of character).

A common error in responding to this question was that students analysed rather than evaluated the performance. At a basic level, evaluation involves an identification of what was effective and what was not effective in the performance. A satisfactory level of evaluation involves some explanation of why an aspect of the performance was or was not effective. A thorough evaluation provides strong justification for why an aspect of the performance was effective (or not) and integrates evaluative terminology throughout the response.

When preparing for the examination, students and teachers are strongly urged to consider evaluating specific aspects of playlist plays. This could include, but is not limited to, considering the success or otherwise of the:

- fluidity of the action
- manipulation of the actor–audience relationship

- control of expressive skills
- focus and energy
- timing (e.g. of transitions, dialogue, moments of stillness and silence)
- clarity, cohesion and level of sophistication within the interpretation.

In their preparation for the examination, students could also develop a word bank of evaluative terminology. For example:

- evaluative terminology for successful aspects of performance, such as: 'clearly', 'subtly', 'controlled', 'dynamic', 'focused', 'skilfully', 'beautifully', 'poignantly'
- evaluative terminology for unsuccessful aspects of performance, such as: 'obscure', 'unclear', 'clunky', 'disjointed', 'awkward', 'confusing', 'monotonous', 'tedious'.

The term 'realised' in the question was drawn from the study design. High-scoring students understood this term to mean the ways in which an actor applied their skills to interpret a character in the performance. Low-scoring responses misinterpreted the word 'realised' in the question, discussing how the work done by one actor was used to enhance the characterisation of another actor's character. Other low-scoring responses described how one character had a conceptual realisation about another character. Many of these responses misunderstood the difference between actor and character, and reflected a poor understanding of key terms in the study design.

It was not relevant to discuss the rehearsal process undertaken by the actor. The question required students to evaluate the performance. Regardless of information about the actor's process that may have been provided to students in educational forums, this was not relevant to the discussion. Irrelevant or inaccurate information provided in a response precludes the response from being awarded full marks. Students are urged to ensure that they focus their response on what the question is asking, rather than providing general information about a play or performance.

High-scoring responses to this question:

- created a thorough evaluation of how the chosen actor realised one or more characters in the play
- showed a high level of understanding of how skills, including expressive skills, were used in the creation of character
- integrated a rationale for how and why the actor's skills were/were not effective in realising the character
- used a high level of theatrical terminology throughout the response
- used strong evaluative language throughout the response.

Low-scoring responses to this question:

- created a poor evaluation
- gave a description of the actor's acting skills
- gave a description of one or more characters in the play
- included an evaluation of an actor's work other than the actor identified in Question 2a.
- confused the actor with the character
- used few or no examples from the performance
- wrote an analysis with little or no evaluation about what was or was not successful in the performance
- used little or no theatrical terminology
- used little, if any, evaluative language.

The following example is a mid- to high-level student response. While the response evaluates the successful aspects of the performance, the student could have avoided the unnecessary repetition of the word 'effective' by drawing on a broader range of evaluative vocabulary.

ANTIGONE:

Griffiths realised the changing levels of power and control evident in the leader's character very effectively. She established the leader's initial sense of power and control very well as she employed a strong, elongated gait, a convex chest and clenched fists in physicalisation, along with her clear, precise, measured, modulated vocalisation. This effectively realised a desire to maintain power and authority. The lack of tonal variance or accent during this stage effectively realised a sense of manipulation evident in the leader's character. During her personal encounters with Antigone and Haemon, Griffiths effectively portrayed a softer sense of authority, as her relaxed shoulders and softer, more varied vocalisation implied a motherly tone effectively. During the leader's stage of grief and shock upon the death of Haemon, Griffiths realised the raw, animalistic unguarded state of the leader very effectively. This was shown as she fell to all fours... By re-establishing her earlier façade of presentation by play's end, Griffiths effectively realised the varying levels of the leader's control.

Section C

Question 3

This question assessed students' knowledge and skills developed through Unit 3, Outcomes 1 and 2. Students were asked to show how stagecraft can be applied across the stages of the production process to interpret the theatrical possibilities of a playscript for performance to an audience. Students were required to formulate and justify possible theatrical interpretations.

Students who study production management: publicity and marketing or stage management are urged to practise applying their selected area of stagecraft to this style of question. For example:

- publicity and marketing students might consider how motifs, images or ideas could inform a marketing campaign
- stage management students might consider the cuing of various areas of stagecraft to realise a particular effect.

Students are urged not to discuss unfamiliar areas of stagecraft in the examination.

Students were not required to refer to both areas of stagecraft (identified in the stem of the question). Some answered all parts of Question 3 referring to only one area of stagecraft, and this was valid. The option to use more than one area of stagecraft is intended to support students rather than limit them. However, if a student wrote about more than two areas of stagecraft, the third or subsequent area of stagecraft discussed was not assessed.

Question 3a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	0	5	29	41	25	2.9

This question required students to show:

- an understanding of one or two areas of stagecraft during the planning stage of production (i.e. the development of initial ideas and concepts for the production)
- a capacity to annotate (i.e. show how verbal or non-verbal language informs the application of stagecraft)
- a capacity to identify theatrical possibilities from a playscript (from the excerpt and contextual information provided – no knowledge beyond this was assumed).

Questions 3a. and 4a. required students to use an annotation-style response. Annotation is an activity commonly completed during the production planning stage in Unit 3, Outcomes 1 and 2. Annotation responses allow students to show how the verbal or non-verbal language of the playscript could influence the application of stagecraft. Effective annotations tended to highlight a word or phrase, through underlining, circling or using a highlighter. The highest-scoring responses

also clearly discussed how this word or phrase from the playscript could inform an interpretation. Further clarity was provided through a direct visual link between the word or phrase in the playscript and the annotation, using devices such as an arrow or a form of colour coding.

Some responses focused on when the dramatic moment occurred in the playscript without discussing how the objects could be transformed into gold, and this was a legitimate interpretation of the question.

High-scoring responses to this question:

- provided detailed and sophisticated annotations in two or more places in the script
- showed a strong understanding about how the verbal (e.g. dialogue) and/or non-verbal language of the play (e.g. stage directions) might inform the application of stagecraft
- demonstrated a high level of understanding of the themes and context of the play (e.g. the context of turning objects into gold or the theme of greed)
- demonstrated an excellent understanding of how one or both areas of stagecraft can be used to convey meaning
- provided highly detailed and specific examples to support and illustrate the initial concept
- used sophisticated theatrical terminology throughout.

Low-scoring responses to this question:

- included poorly detailed annotations in two or more places or wrote only one annotation
- made vague or general reference to the verbal or non-verbal language of the play
- demonstrated limited understanding of the themes and context of the play
- provided no examples or wrote in very general terms
- used little or no theatrical terminology throughout the response.

The following is an excerpt from a high-scoring response. The student provided two annotations although only one is provided below to illustrate the link between the verbal dialogue and stagecraft specific terminology.

DESIGN (SET)

[the student has underlined the dialogue in the excerpt 'Late at night, he stumbled back into the courtyard, laden with precious gold.' The sentence is numbered, and in the corresponding number to the right of the excerpt, the student has provided this annotation]: The courtyard is represented by flats that are flown in as he stumbles forth. The flats are decorated with ancient Greek geometric patterns (Stimulus 2), to reference Ovid's original context

Question 3b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	0	5	25	41	28	2.9

This question required students to show:

- an understanding of one or two areas of stagecraft during the planning stage of production (i.e. the development of initial ideas and concepts for the production)
- a capacity to justify possible theatrical interpretations using previously unseen stimulus materials
- a capacity to identify theatrical possibilities from a playscript (from the excerpt and contextual information provided – no knowledge beyond this was assumed).

High-scoring responses to this question:

- provided detailed and sophisticated ideas that demonstrated a high level of understanding of, and reference to, one or both of the selected areas of stagecraft
- drew from one or more of the stimulus images to develop their concept

- reflected an excellent understanding of how one or both areas of stagecraft could be applied to create the image of a pool on stage when there was no water
- clearly and coherently explained a sophisticated idea(s)
- provided detailed and specific examples to illustrate idea(s)
- used sophisticated theatrical terminology throughout the response.

Low-scoring responses to this question:

- detailed poor idea(s) that had limited reference to one or both of the selected areas of stagecraft
- made vague or general reference to one or more of the stimulus images or made no reference to a stimulus image
- reflected a limited understanding of how one or both areas of stagecraft could be applied to create the image of a pool on stage when there was no water or used water to create the pool
- demonstrated little or no link between the idea(s), the stimulus images or either of the selected areas of stagecraft
- provided no details or described concepts very generally
- used little or no theatrical terminology throughout the response.

Questions 3c. and 3d.

Question 3c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	2	12	37	34	16	2.5

Question 3d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	2	12	37	33	17	2.5

These questions required students to show:

- an understanding of one or two areas of stagecraft during the development stage of production (i.e. the ways that production aims and concepts are realised through explorations, experiments and/or trial approaches with stagecraft to achieve production aims)
- a capacity to develop an initial idea or concept from planning to development
- a capacity to identify theatrical possibilities from a playscript (from the excerpt and contextual information provided – no knowledge beyond this was assumed).

The concept of trialling includes both what is being trialled (such as, the colour of lighting) and how it will be trialled (for example, trying out different lighting gels, getting feedback from the director, testing the lighting against the colour of costume and set, etc.). The highest-scoring responses provided a description of a development process. Some low-scoring responses identified an aspect of the chosen area of stagecraft to be trialled without explaining how it could be tested. It was insufficient to simply say 'I will trial ...' without explaining an exploration process.

While some students discussed collaborating with other areas of stagecraft as part of the development phase, it was important that the focus of the response related to the student's chosen stagecraft area(s).

Students are reminded to read questions carefully.

High-scoring responses to this question:

- provided a detailed and sophisticated explanation of how the chosen idea from part a./b. could be explored/trialled with detailed and specific reference to one or both of the selected areas of stagecraft
- showed an excellent understanding of the production development stage through the use of highly detailed and specific examples of experimentation and/or trialling processes
- used sophisticated theatrical terminology throughout the response.

Low-scoring responses to this question:

- provided a limited explanation of how the chosen idea from part a./part b. could be explored/trialled, with little or no reference to one or both of the selected areas of stagecraft
- repeated or further explained an idea from part a./part b. with no discussion of a process of exploring/trialling
- developed an idea not mentioned in part a./part b.
- showed a limited understanding of the production development stage through the use of few or no examples of experimentation and/or trialling processes
- lacked detail about the connection between the idea and the processes of experimentation or trialling the idea
- used little or no theatrical terminology throughout the response.

The following is an example of a mid- to high-level response. The response could have been improved by incorporating more sophisticated theatrical terminology. Responses for Questions 3b. and 3d. have been provided to demonstrate the relationship between the initial concept (described in Question 3b.) and how the student could trial or explore the idea (in Question 3d.).

DESIGN (SOUND) & ACTING:

3b. The ripples in stimulus 3 could be incorporated through sound. The sound of moving, but not flowing water could help imply the pool. If the actor used large exaggerated steps accompanied by a splashing sound effect the sense of the pool would be there without the need for water.

3d. Taking the actors to an appropriate body of water so that they can explore how they naturally move and interact with it. This exercise would allow the actors to bring realism to the idea of mimed water. Also appropriate sounds could be recorded as the scene is rehearsed with the water so that sounds will respond accurately to the actor's gestures and movements.

Question 3e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	3	10	42	32	13	2.4

This question required students to show:

- an understanding of one or two areas of stagecraft during the presentation stage of production (i.e. bump-in, technical rehearsals, dress rehearsals, performances to audiences, stage management, stagecraft evaluation review and refinement, repair and maintenance, production team meetings, directorial feedback/notes, rehearsals/reworking as required, seeking and processing audience feedback, budget review, publicity and marketing, bump-out, reflection and final evaluation)
- an understanding of the effect of the selected area of stagecraft on the audience (i.e. the mood or feelings of the audience)
- a capacity to identify theatrical possibilities from a playscript (from the excerpt and contextual information provided – no knowledge beyond this was assumed).

The emphasis in this question was on the relationship with the audience as established and maintained through the application of stagecraft during the presentation stage. High-scoring

responses explored the changed emotional state for the audience. Lower-scoring responses referred only to the mood of the character with no reference (implied or stated) to the audience. Some responses inferred the 'change' of 'mood', and these sometimes lacked clarity about whether they were referring to the mood of the character or the mood of the audience.

High-scoring responses to this question:

- provided a detailed and sophisticated explanation of how the change of mood could be conveyed
- showed an excellent understanding of how one or both areas of stagecraft could be applied to convey a change in mood
- explained idea(s) clearly and coherently
- supported and illustrated explanations through the use of highly detailed and specific examples, making reference to one or more of the stimulus images
- used sophisticated theatrical terminology throughout the response.

Low-scoring responses to this question:

- provided a limited explanation of how the change of mood could be conveyed, demonstrating little or no understanding of the context
- provided a description of the mood with little or no reference to stagecraft
- provided a description of stagecraft with no reference to the mood of the audience
- referred to the mood of the character rather than the mood of the audience
- lacked connection between the idea of mood change and the use of the selected areas of stagecraft
- explained ideas poorly, with limited or no examples
- made little or no reference to a stimulus image
- used little or no theatrical terminology throughout the response.

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

DESIGN (SET) & LIGHTING

During the presentation stage, after... Midas' daughter turns to gold, the lighting system beneath the 'pebble-floor' of the pool could turn red, as in stimulus image 4. Up until this stage, the pool is lit by cool blues and greens; the sudden shift to vibrant red helps convey the urgency of 'Midas' realisation for the audience, changing their mood to one of alarm.

Question 4a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	3	4	14	34	29	15	3.3

Following Unit 4, Outcome 2 in the study design, this question assessed students' ability to apply skills in developing a theatrical treatment, outlining an interpretation of a monologue and prescribed scene, including its characters, themes, images, ideas, theatrical possibilities, theatrical styles and the ways in which selected stagecraft could be employed to convey an intended meaning(s). Students were provided with contextual information in the examination in order to answer the question.

This question required students to show:

- an understanding of how one area of stagecraft could be used to present a character
- a capacity to annotate (i.e. show how verbal or non-verbal language informs the application of stagecraft)
- a capacity to identify theatrical possibilities from a playscript (from the excerpt and contextual information provided – no knowledge beyond this was assumed).

Some students discussed how stagecraft was applied in the characterisation of another character and this was relevant to the extent that it assisted in the portrayal of Midas.

When discussing design stagecraft, the emphasis should be on design features and qualities. Some low-scoring design responses focused on naming set, properties or costume items, and wrote about the acting choices made in relation to the objects. If selecting design, students should discuss aspects of the design (e.g. the style, colour, shape, weight, materials used) and how these design decisions are informed by the verbal or non-verbal language from the excerpt.

High-scoring responses to this question:

- provided three or more highly appropriate, clear and detailed annotations of verbal/non-verbal language from the excerpt
- discussed how stagecraft decisions would be used to assist in the portrayal of the character of Midas
- showed a high level of understanding of the chosen stagecraft area
- demonstrated strong annotation skills
- used sophisticated theatrical language throughout.

Low-scoring responses to this question:

- provided some reference to stagecraft decisions that may or may not relate to the presentation of the character of Midas
- did not complete all parts of the question (e.g. fewer than three annotations or no reference to stagecraft or no reference to Midas)
- discussed additional areas of stagecraft
- showed a limited understanding of the chosen area of stagecraft
- showed a limited understanding of how to annotate a script with few appropriate examples of verbal/non-verbal language from the excerpt
- used little or no theatrical language.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response. The response included more than three detailed annotations. Two have been provided here to illustrate qualities of a high-level response.

ACTING:

[The student underlined the stage direction 'To his DAUGHTER' and drew a line connected to this annotation]: Rhythmic and measured sequence of turning, facing and addressing the daughter establishes Midas' powerful status whilst also employing Surrealist movement conventions. [The student drew a line under the annotation, separating this annotation from the next. The student used a '/' symbol to break up the phrase in the dialogue './...somewhere/...in.../somewhere'. They then drew a line from where they had scored the dialogue to this annotation.] Broken syntax highlighted in the surrealist manner

Question 4b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	9	11	26	29	16	8	2.6

This question required students to show:

- an understanding of theatrical style(s)
- an understanding of the selected area of stagecraft
- an understanding of how theatrical style informs the application of stagecraft
- a capacity to identify theatrical possibilities from a playscript (from the excerpt and contextual information provided – no knowledge beyond this was assumed).

Students referred to a variety of theatrical styles in this question, including Greek Theatre, Expressionism, Epic Theatre and Realism. The highest-scoring responses to the question identified conventions relevant to the style, and then discussed how these conventions would inform the application of stagecraft. Students who selected Realism or Naturalism often struggled to clearly identify the conventions relevant to the style and tended to speak in general or vague terms about the application of stagecraft being 'realistic' without discussing how or why.

High-scoring responses to this question:

- provided a thorough response explaining how the chosen theatrical style would inform the application of stagecraft referred to in part a.
- showed an excellent understanding of theatrical styles, usually referring to several relevant key conventions of the style that would inform the application of stagecraft
- used detailed and specific examples
- showed an excellent understanding of the relationship between theatrical style and application of stagecraft
- used a sophisticated level of theatrical language in the discussion.

Low-scoring responses to this question:

- provided a basic response that contained little or no reference to how theatrical style informed the application of stagecraft
- discussed stagecraft with little or no reference to style
- failed to answer all parts of the question and/or discussed a different stagecraft area from the one referred to in part a.
- showed a limited understanding of theatrical styles, speaking about style in vague, general or inaccurate terms
- provided few or no examples
- showed a limited understanding of the relationship between theatrical style and the application of stagecraft
- used little or no theatrical terminology.

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

STAGECRAFT: ACTING; CHOSEN THEATRICAL STYLE: EPIC

*In adopting an Epic theatrical style I could strongly reinforce Midas' superficiality and narcissism. I would use the conventional Epic technique of *verfremdungseffekt*, or alienation, in my acting by looking past the audience rather than addressing them directly, suggesting that I am self-absorbed. I would speak with loud, resonant projection and a grandiloquent tone, but then shift to a cruel, harsh and aggressive tonal quality when telling my daughter that she is 'driving me nuts'. This extreme shift in character forces the audience to question Midas' integrity and evokes a critical response to the action on stage, which is the aim of Epic Theatre.*