

VICTORIAN CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY



**Victorian Certificate of Education  
2010**

**DRAMA**

**Solo performance examination**

**Monday 4 October to Wednesday 27 October**

## 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 must not last more than **seven minutes** and will be presented as a single uninterrupted performance.
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 can be 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.

### Statement of Intention

1. A pro forma for the Statement of Intention is published annually by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.
2. Immediately prior to performance students are required to present three copies of the Statement of Intention to the panel of assessors. The Statement should not exceed 100 words.
3. The purpose of the Statement of Intention is to highlight aspects of the student's interpretation that they would like to bring to the assessors' attention, for example:
  - 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 ten 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 conventions, dramatic elements, 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 and a series of dot points. **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 two theatrical conventions will be specifically **prescribed** for each character and they must be used during the performance. Additional conventions may be added as appropriate.
  - **Dramatic elements** – two dramatic elements will be specifically **prescribed** for each character and they must be used during the performance. The dramatic elements 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. When a prescribed structure includes the term **re-creates**, students are required to use material found in the stimulus.
4. The emphasis in performance must be on action rather than narration; doing rather than telling.
5. A Terminology section is provided. Students should consult this for explanations of performance styles and theatrical conventions as prescribed in the examination.

**Notes for Drama Solo Performance examination 2010**

- 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 two theatrical conventions 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 Kris Allen, Project Manager Assessment, telephone 9225 2356.

## PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 1

### Character

Mrs Lovett

### Stimulus

The story of *Sweeney Todd* as found at [http://www.trutv.com/library/crime/serial\\_killers/weird/todd/index\\_1.html](http://www.trutv.com/library/crime/serial_killers/weird/todd/index_1.html)

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of Mrs Lovett.

While at the height of her pie-selling success, Mrs Lovett seeks a suitable worker for her Bell Yard bakery. Carefully watching the reaction of the prospective worker, Mrs Lovett

- re-creates dramatic images which explore Sweeney Todd's life before she met him
- creates one or more scenes from her yet-to-be-published 'penny dreadful' titled 'Margery Lovett's Culinary Delights'
- dramatically celebrates a storybook villainess who achieves fame by starring in an animated film.

### Performance style

Non-naturalistic with aspects of melodrama

### Theatrical conventions

Exaggerated movement, caricature

### Dramatic elements

Language, conflict

### Reference material

[http://www.trutv.com/library/crime/serial\\_killers/weird/todd/index\\_1.html](http://www.trutv.com/library/crime/serial_killers/weird/todd/index_1.html)

<http://www.ultimatedisney.com/countdown4/index3.html>

## PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 2

### Character

The Valet

### Stimulus

The novel *Thank You, Jeeves*

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of the quintessential English Valet.

While delivering the Annual Junior Ganymede Club Whimsical Oration to a gathering of Gentlemen's Personal Gentlemen, the Valet gives insight into the art of manipulating the idle rich. To do this he

- re-creates one or more examples where Jeeves ingeniously saved Bertie Wooster from an altogether embarrassing and possibly dangerous moment
- creates vignettes which explore idiosyncrasies that typify the British upper class
- dramatically examines the vital role another fictional valet will play as personal attendant to his employer.

### Performance style

Non-naturalistic with aspects of farce

### Theatrical conventions

Heightened use of language, caricature

### Dramatic elements

Symbol, climax

### Reference material

The novel *Thank You, Jeeves* by PG Wodehouse, any edition

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

*Jeeves and Wooster*, TV series, 1990–1993 [PG]

## **PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 3**

### **Character**

The Hollywood Gossip Columnist

### **Stimulus**

The life and times of arch rivals Louella Parsons and Hedda Hopper

### **Performance focus**

Create a solo performance based on the person Louella Parsons **or** Hedda Hopper.

In an Academy-Award-worthy presentation to the Hollywood Walk of Fame committee, Louella **or** Hedda promotes herself as a more successful and influential gossip columnist than her arch rival and demands a more prominent position for her 'star'. To do this Louella **or** Hedda

- re-creates one or more scenes which depict a parallel career milestone achieved by herself and her arch-rival
- re-creates a montage of images depicting some of her controversial encounters with celebrities in the 'world of Hollywood'
- presents a vision showing how the relationship between 21st century paparazzi and celebrities can be a 'double-edged sword'.

### **Performance style**

Non-naturalistic

### **Theatrical conventions**

Satire, exaggerated movement

### **Dramatic elements**

Conflict, language

### **Reference material**

<http://www.ijpc.org/Hedda%20Hopper%20and%20Louella%20Parsons%20--%20Gossip%20Columnists.pdf>

<http://entertainment.howstuffworks.com/paparazzi9.htm>

<http://moviemorlocks.com/2009/03/16/louella-parsons-and-hedda-hopper-nobody-wants-sweetness-and-light/>

## **PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 4**

### **Character**

The Heroine

### **Stimulus**

The novel *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*

### **Performance focus**

Create a solo performance based on the person Miep Gies.

At a celebration of her humanitarian achievement after receiving a knighthood from Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands in 1997, Miep, in her self-deprecating way, reminds her friends of the resilience of the human spirit in times of adversity. To do this she

- re-creates two examples of hardship endured by Anne during her time in hiding in the secret annex
- creates a montage of dramatic images which show how she successfully avoided detection while assisting the Frank family
- creates a scene which depicts how, post 1997, an organisation or an individual will risk themselves by offering humanitarian aid to people who are being persecuted.

### **Performance style**

Non-naturalistic

### **Theatrical conventions**

Stillness and silence, pathos

### **Dramatic elements**

Symbol, contrast

### **Reference material**

The novel *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank, originally published in 1947, any edition

The film *The Diary of Anne Frank*, 1959, directed by George Stevens [G]

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/frank/miep.htm>



## **PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 5**

### **Character**

James O'Neil Mayne

### **Stimulus**

The life and times of the Mayne Family

### **Performance focus**

Create a solo performance based on the person James O'Neil Mayne.

At the ceremony to celebrate the 'turning of the first sod' for the new university at the St Lucia site, James examines choices made by his family throughout their turbulent history in Brisbane. To do this he

- re-creates a montage of dramatic images which explore the controversy surrounding the origins of his family's wealth
- demonstrates how unwavering he has been in contributing to the development of Brisbane despite never being fully accepted by 'Society'
- dramatically explores a vision of the first decade of the 21st century in which supposedly 'tainted' money is being used to benefit the community.

### **Performance style**

Non-naturalistic

### **Theatrical conventions**

Pathos, flashback

### **Dramatic elements**

Contrast, symbol

### **Reference material**

<http://adbonline.anu.edu.au/biogs/A100453b.htm>

<http://www.uq.edu.au/news/index.html?article=612>

The novel *The Mayne Inheritance* by Rosamond Siemon, published by University of Queensland Press (1997)

## **PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 6**

### **Character**

The Australian Mermaid

### **Stimulus**

The life and times of Annette Kellerman

### **Performance focus**

Create a solo performance based on the person Annette Kellerman.

During a performance entertaining Australian and American soldiers at Sydney's Hollywood Canteen in the 1940s, Annette once again uses the opportunity to shamelessly promote herself as a trail-blazing woman. To do this she

- re-creates a montage of dramatic images which explore personal challenges she faced and overcame
- explores the social implications of one or more of the choices she made
- creates one or more scenes which compare her achievements with those of either Emmeline Pankhurst or Amelia Earhart, both women considered to be ahead of their time.

### **Performance style**

Non-naturalistic

### **Theatrical conventions**

Exaggerated movement, song

### **Dramatic elements**

Mood, rhythm

### **Reference material**

<http://au.lifestyle.yahoo.com/marie-claire/features/life-stories/article/-/5887692/em-annette-em-em-kellerman-em-australias-forgotten-icon/>

<http://www.moreorless.au.com/heroes/pankhurst.html>

<http://www.acepilots.com/earhart.html>

## PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 7

### Character

Fleance

### Stimulus

The play *Macbeth*

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of Fleance.

In a ghostly visitation to Mary Queen of Scots on the eve of her beheading, Fleance assures her that she is descended from him and that, if Shakespeare can be believed, her line will continue through her son James. To do this he

- re-creates key events which motivated Macbeth to order the assassination of Banquo and Fleance
- creates a tale which shows the fulfilment of the witches prophesy to Banquo ‘thou shalt get kings though thou be none’
- creates a scene involving a 20th century head of state which shows how ‘vaulting ambition’ will lead to both greatness and destruction.

### Performance style

Non-naturalistic with aspects of Elizabethan Theatre

### Theatrical conventions

Heightened use of language, exaggerated movement

### Dramatic elements

Rhythm, mood

### Reference material

The play *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare, any edition

<http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fleance>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Head\\_of\\_state](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Head_of_state)

## PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 8

### Character

The Performer

### Stimulus

The documentary film *An Inconvenient Truth*

### Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of the Performer.

To kick-start the conference on climate change in Mexico in 2010, the Performer stuns global delegates with a performance of 'Climate Change: The Musical'. To ensure the environmental message is abundantly clear the Performer

- re-creates an interpretation of Al Gore's concerns about global warming in the opening scene titled 'Canaries in the Coal Mine'
- creates the 'Global Warming Tango' which explores the environmental tensions that exist between developed and developing countries
- presents, in the style of Bob Fosse, the rousing finale 'We are Resolved to . . .' which identifies the outcomes hoped for at the conference.

### Performance style

Non-naturalistic with aspects of Musical Theatre

### Theatrical conventions

Song, satire

### Dramatic elements

Symbol, climax

### Reference material

The film *An Inconvenient Truth*, 2006, directed by Davis Guggenheim [PG]

<http://www.answers.com/topic/bob-fosse>

The film *Broadway: the American Musical*, 2004, directed by Michael Kantor, Episode 5, *Tradition* [Not rated]

## **PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 9**

### **Character**

Eva Peron

### **Stimulus**

The life and times of Eva Peron

### **Performance focus**

Create a solo performance based on the person Maria Eva Duarte de Peron.

Following the huge success of her address to the 'Cabildo Abierto' in 1951, Eva confronts members of the military determined to oppose her running for vice president. She endeavours to convince them of the appropriateness of her nomination. To do this she

- re-creates one or more examples of the impact she has had on life in Argentina
- creates dramatic images of tactics she has used to gain power and influence
- dramatically compares her legacy with that of one or more future female political figures.

### **Performance style**

Non-naturalistic

### **Theatrical conventions**

Stillness and silence, pathos

### **Dramatic elements**

Climax, conflict

### **Reference material**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eva\\_Peron](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eva_Peron)

<http://www.fsmitha.com/h2/ch24u.html>

## **PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 10**

### **Character**

The Family Car

### **Stimulus**

The painting *The Car* located in the National Gallery of Victoria

### **Performance focus**

Create a solo performance based on the character of the Family Car.

As the winner of the 1994 International Year of the Family ‘Classic Cars Contest’, the Family Car takes pride in demonstrating its significant contribution to family life. To do this the Family Car

- creates a scene depicting the pivotal importance of the family car in the life of a typical Australian family in the 1950s
- creates dramatic images which show how cars have kept pace with changes in family structures
- creates a vision in which a future entrant in the ‘Contest’ displays not only a powerful personality but also features that address diminishing global resources.

### **Performance style**

Non-naturalistic with aspects of Physical Theatre

### **Theatrical conventions**

Heightened use of language, caricature

### **Dramatic elements**

Symbol, sound

### **Reference material**

The painting *The Car* by John Brack, 1955, located in the National Gallery of Victoria

The animated film *Cars*, 2006, directed by John Lasseter and Joe Ranft [G]

<http://www.aifs.gov.au/institute/pubs/dp11.html>

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

## **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 recreate, 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 recreation 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.

### **Conflict**

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

### **Contrast**

Highlight differences through juxtaposition. This may include dramatic action, sound, expressive skills and stagecraft.

### **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.

### **Elizabethan theatre**

Notable conventions of this style of theatre included blank verse using iambic pentameter, the play-within-a-play, the soliloquy, the aside, and the masque. Acting was stylised and gestured. The actors, known as 'players', often wore contemporary Elizabethan dress. Fixed scenery was minimal as the players relied more on easily portable props.

**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 fast-paced action that often culminates in an elaborate chase scene.

**Flashback**

A time-shifting technique that takes the narrative back in time from the current point the story has reached. It enables comparisons and/or contrasts between past and present perceptions of the same event. It can also be used to show developments in a character and/or to highlight the shifts in understanding that occur over time.

**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.

**Language**

The use of verbal and vocal sounds to enhance dramatic meaning.

**Melodrama**

This performance style presents an unambiguous confrontation between good and evil. Characterisation is often shallow and stereotypical; stock characters are used and there is clear definition of villains, heroes and heroines. The moral conflict is externalised, action is emphasised and the happy ending demonstrates the eventual triumph of good. Conventions such as overacting, asides, interaction with the audience, sound effects, and music can be used to heighten the dramatic mood.

**Montage**

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

**Mood**

The emotional feeling created in a performance.

**Musical theatre**

Musical Theatre is a form of theatre in which the emotional content of the piece and the story itself are communicated through music, songs, spoken dialogue and dance.

**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**

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**

A regular pattern of sounds, words or actions.

**Satire**

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.

**Song**

Musical interpretation of text using the actor's own voice at the time of performance (not pre-recorded).

**Sound**

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

**Stillness and silence**

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

**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. Additions 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.

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# VCE Drama

## Solo Performance Examination 2010

### STATEMENT OF INTENTION

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Student number

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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.**

