



GENERAL COMMENTS

The 2013 Drama written examination was based on Outcomes 2 and 3 of Unit 3, and Outcomes 1 and 3 of Unit 4 of the *VCE Drama Study Design*. All the key knowledge and key skills that underpin these outcomes were examinable. Teachers and students should note that 2013 was the last year of accreditation for the current *VCE Drama Study Design*. In 2014, the implementation of the new study design commences.

A total of 60 marks was available for the paper and the majority of students answered all questions. Students are reminded that responses should be clearly expressed using appropriate drama-specific language and terminology.

Teachers and students should note that the examination featured a wide range of drama-specific language and terminology that appears in both the study design and other sources such as past VCE Drama Solo Performance and written examinations.

General approaches in allocating marks

- If contradictory answers were given, full marks were not awarded.
- If a student crossed out parts of their response, that material was not assessed.
- If a question asked for a specific number of examples and a student provided more than the required number, only the required number in the order they were written could be assessed.
- Responses that did not address the subject of a question were not awarded any marks.

Areas of strength and weakness

High-scoring examination papers demonstrated

- a high level of skill in applying practical and theoretical knowledge from the study to the stimulus material presented in the examination
- a high level of skill in evaluating a performance from the 2013 Drama Playlist
- a clear understanding of the characteristics of the work of drama practitioners who use non-naturalism and non-naturalistic performance styles and the associated theatrical conventions
- a high level of skill in analysing the ways in which dramatic elements, theatrical conventions and stagecraft can be manipulated in non-naturalistic performances
- a thorough understanding of ways of manipulating the conventions of transformation of character, time, place and object
- a clear understanding of the difference between the ‘development’ and ‘presentation’ stages of performances
- a thorough understanding of ‘how’, rather than ‘when’, specific theatrical conventions, dramatic elements and stagecraft would be used in performances
- clear and concise responses to questions
- the ability to use effective and relevant examples to support answers
- sophisticated use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Low-scoring examination papers demonstrated

- a limited or inadequate understanding of how to apply practical and theoretical knowledge from the study to the stimulus material provided in the examination
- a limited or inadequate understanding of a performance from the 2013 Drama Playlist
- a misunderstanding of keywords or concepts; for example, discussing how a ‘dramatic element’ rather than ‘theatrical convention’ was used to convey a theme in a performance from the 2013 Drama Playlist
- a limited or inadequate understanding of aspects of the key knowledge, such as the differences between non-naturalistic performance style(s), drama practitioners and their associated theatrical conventions
- a definition rather than a discussion or explanation of how a key concept would be used
- inadequate understanding of the transformation techniques that can be used to demonstrate transformation of character, time, place and object
- confusion about the difference between dramatic elements, stagecraft, play-making techniques and theatrical conventions
- an inability to allocate time appropriately, according to the mark allocation for each question
- an over-reliance on work prepared in detail prior to the examination
- inappropriate or irrelevant examples used to support responses



- a limited use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Some common weaknesses displayed by students included

- not addressing key instructions in questions; for example, describing 'how' the two environments would be contrasting in the solo performance with limited or no discussion of 'how' the actor would transform the space to create the two contrasting environments
- difficulty in following the requirements of the question; for example, describing the dramatic moment when the actor would transform character without explaining how they would apply specific expressive and performance skills to demonstrate the transformation
- confusion or lack of knowledge about non-naturalistic performance styles and their associated theatrical conventions
- providing a list of expressive skills for performing two characters, rather than explaining how the transformation between the two characters would occur
- 'analysing' rather than 'evaluating' a performance from the 2013 Drama Playlist
- confusion about the difference between play-making techniques, stagecraft and dramatic elements
- misunderstanding key terminology in a question; for example, explaining how one area of stagecraft would be used as a symbol in the ensemble performance without explaining how it would be used to create the climactic moment.

Advice for students and teachers

- Students should not rewrite the question in their response.
- Students should read each question carefully.
- Students need to look carefully at the relationship between questions that are linked; for example, a question with multiple parts.
- Students should ensure they know the difference between non-naturalistic performance style(s), drama practitioners who use non-naturalism, theatrical conventions, play-making techniques, dramatic elements and stagecraft.
- Students should recognise the different ways that play-making techniques, theatrical conventions, stagecraft and dramatic elements can be used in both the 'development' and 'presentation' stages of performance.
- Students need to have a clear understanding of ways the conventions of transformation of character, time and place can be manipulated through the use of stagecraft, 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, and repetition of dialogue.
- 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 required length of the response.
- When using the extra space provided at the end of the book, students should carefully label the response as being continued at the back of the 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 errors resulting in a total less than 100 per cent.

Section A

Question 1

For Question 1, a detachable insert of an extract of text, some images and contextual information was provided as stimulus material to develop and perform the character of The Rat or The Mole for a non-naturalistic solo performance.

To answer this question, students needed to draw on the key knowledge and key 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 three characters. Students needed to ensure their discussion

2013 Examination Report



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. High-scoring students explained how they would transform between characters by using phrases such as ‘I would snap transition from The Mole into The Rat by...’ or ‘I would slowly morph my expressive skills to transform from The Rat into the god, Pan by ...’.

Question 1a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	3	24	73	1.7

Students were asked how they would use one idea from the stimulus material to develop this solo performance. This idea could be conceptual, thematic or literal. It could be a description of an element from one of the images, accompanying character descriptions or text extract, or it could be more complex lateral thought. Most students were able to discuss an idea taken from the stimulus material. However, students who discussed ideas that were not related to the stimulus material or the context of the solo performance were not awarded any marks. Some students discussed an idea taken from the stimulus material without referring to how it would be used to develop this solo performance.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- an outline of one idea (conceptual, thematic or literal) taken from the stimulus material with clear reference to how it would be used to develop the solo performance
- descriptions that incorporated ideas about symbolism and character/narrative development from the stimulus material.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- little or no outline of the idea, instead listing the idea taken from the stimulus material
- no reference to how the idea would be used to develop the solo performance.

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

The quote “the place the music played to me” provides me with inspiration to develop how I can give the location a mystical sense. I will improvise different styles of music, such as violins or ‘pan-pipes’ playing at different volumes to develop the location of the river.

Question 1b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	1	7	31	35	25	2.8

Students were asked to describe how they would transform the space to create the two contrasting environments. The more successful students made thoughtful choices about how a solo performer would transform the space to create two distinct and contrasting environments. This usually involved the use of stagecraft, such as a prop and/or sound production (as an area of stagecraft) and a clear explanation of how the stagecraft and expressive skills would be manipulated by the actor to assist in the transformation of place.

The less successful students made poor choices about how they would demonstrate the two environments, or gave a description of how the two environments would contrast with limited discussion of how the solo performer would transform the space. Some students talked about multiple actors in the space, which is evidently an ensemble performance. These students could not be awarded full marks.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- reference to choices derived from ideas inspired by the stimulus material
- a clear and concise explanation of how relevant stagecraft and expressive skills would be used to create the two contrasting environments
- a clear demonstration of how an actor would manipulate stagecraft and their expressive skills to transform place to create the two contrasting environments
- clear and pertinent examples of how the actor would create two distinct environments through the application of stagecraft and their expressive skills
- an imaginative understanding of how stagecraft and expressive skills would be manipulated in non-naturalistic ways to create the two contrasting environments
- a clear sense of how the two contrasting environments would help to convey other elements of the narrative such as themes, character development and the intended actor–audience relationship
- the appropriate use of drama-specific language and terminology.

2013 Examination Report



Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- a poor choice of stagecraft, which limited the student’s ability to respond in detail
- a limited understanding of how non-naturalistic performance styles and conventions can be manipulated to transform place
- a generalised description of how the environments would contrast, rather than a specific description of how the solo performer would transform the space to create two distinct environments
- a brief or limited discussion of when stagecraft would be used to create one environment
- limited contrast between the two locations.

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

I will split the stage symbolically and on the right side perform in the “quiet dawn” and on the left; “the forest”. Whilst on the right stage, I will use my prop, pan pipes to play a slow mellow tune which is soft and quiet. I will sit with crossed legs hardly moving portraying this setting as a calm, relaxing place. I would then spin in a clockwise motion with my arms spread and travel stage left and loudly bang the two pan pipes together creating a loud, repetitive, heightened beat building tension while I yell out “OTTER!” in a frantic voice. My exaggerated frantic movements, loud booming voice and harsh sound adds to contrast the quiet dawn on the river and create a contrast in the space.

Question 1c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	5	5	24	37	31	2.9

Students were given a table with dialogue to be annotated as a working script for the development of this solo performance. This question assessed students’ key knowledge from Unit 4 Outcome 1 – the stages of the creative process, such as developing a working script. In their responses, students had to refer to how they would apply two expressive skills and the dramatic element of tension. Most handled this question well and annotated how two expressive skills and tension would be applied. However, a common error was for students to discuss more than two expressive skills and/or not clearly explain how tension would be applied. Some students misunderstood what expressive skills were and discussed dramatic elements instead. Some students referred to multiple characters appearing simultaneously in the scene, which gave the impression of an ensemble rather than a solo performance. In each of these cases, the students were not awarded full marks.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- clearly annotating how two expressive skills and one or more moments of tension would be applied
- a clear reference to how two expressive skills and tension would be created within the context of a solo performance
- incorporating ideas inspired by the stimulus material
- appropriate use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- a very brief annotation of how one expressive skill or one moment of tension would be applied
- a general narrative with little reference to how two expressive skills or tension would be applied
- only annotating how two expressive skills or tension would be applied
- a sense that this was an ensemble rather than a solo performance.

Question 1d.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	6	33	61	1.6

This question asked students how they would use one transformation technique to create the dramatic moment when they transformed from The Mole into the character of The Rat. It was anticipated that a range of techniques or methods of transformation would have been explored during students’ work in Unit 4, as part of their study of how the conventions of non-naturalistic performance styles can be manipulated to develop and enhance performances of devised drama.

Most students handled this question well. They succinctly explained how they would manipulate the conventions; for example, through the use of one transformation technique, such as morphing/melding, snapping, symbolic use of stagecraft or gesture, use of dialogue, use of a sound, use of an action, calling and answering, hiding and revealing, action and reaction, in exploring the speed of transition to transform from The Mole into The Rat.



Some students mistakenly discussed a different character transformation. For example, they discussed the transition from The Rat into The Mole or from The Rat into the god, Pan. In these cases they were not awarded any marks. Some less successful students also explained the differences between the two characters without discussing how they would effect the transformation.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- a succinct explanation of how the dramatic moment when the actor transforms from The Mole into The Rat would be created/effected
- a clear description that synthesised the process used to create the specific moment when transforming between characters
- a clear sense of how the transformation would occur in a solo performance.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- a description of the roles of the two characters with little or no discussion of how the actor would transform from The Mole into The Rat
- a list of expressive skills to differentiate between the two characters, with little discussion of how the transition from one character to the other would occur
- a limited understanding of techniques or methods that can be used to transform between characters.

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

Beginning as the Mole, I would be cowering with me body slouched in a defensive stance, my body shaking. I would use a snap formation in the moment after mole says, "Are you afraid?", where I snap to an upright standing position, my head high and my eyes focus on the point where Pan would stand, thus showing the initial bravery shown by the character of the rat.

Question 1e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	3	6	29	37	25	2.8

This question informed students that the next dramatic moment in their solo performance would be when The Rat meets the god, Pan. They were asked to analyse how they would use an object and language to transform from The Rat into the god, Pan. The more successful responses demonstrated a clear sense of how a seamless character transformation would be shown, and they provided some explanation of the intended meaning behind their application of language and object transformation.

A common error in weaker responses was only discussing object transformation and/or misunderstanding the definition of language (verbal and vocal sounds). These students instead discussed body language, which is an aspect of the expressive skill of gesture. Another mistake was to discuss the characterisation of The Rat and/or the god, Pan, rather than explain how the transformation would occur through the application of language and an object. It was pleasing to see a continued improvement in students' understanding of ways transformations can be achieved – for example, through use of transformation techniques – with many responses discussing the use of snap and morph transitions.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- a synthesis of the process used to create the dramatic moment when transforming from The Rat into the god, Pan
- pertinent examples of how an object and language would be used to create a seamless character transformation
- a clear sense of how the transformation would occur in a solo performance
- an explanation of the intended meaning behind the application of language and object transformation
- a clear sense of the impact the character transformation would have on differentiating between the two characters and/or the actor–audience relationship this would establish
- an imaginative approach that used appropriate, drama-specific language and terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- misunderstanding of terminology, particularly what constitutes language (verbal and vocal sounds)
- discussing only object transformation
- discussing how an object would be used by each of the two characters without describing how it would be manipulated to transform between the characters
- reference to only one character

2013 Examination Report



- a description of the roles of the two characters with little or no discussion of how the actor would use an object and language to transform between the two characters
- limited use of drama-specific language and terminology.

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

Object – a short stick. When playing the rat, the stick will act as the rolled up map which led them to this part of the forest. Rat will speak very fast in a reflection of his self-confident nature, speaking in a slightly British accent. I would use a slow motion transformation to change into the god, Pan, following Rat’s statement that he is afraid, he tries to run. I would slowly transform to Pan by stopping suddenly and bending down slowly as though picking something up. I will pretend to pick up the ‘rat’ in one hand while raising the pan pipes to my lips (the transformed object) telling the rat in a slow drawn out voice, using a made up language of the god, Pan’s, telling the Rat to be calm, before playing the “panpipes”, whistling to create a sound, and pretending to put him to sleep.

Question 1f.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	1	8	34	57	2.5

Students were required to explain how they would use facial expressions and movement to present the character of the god, Pan. Generally, students handled this question well. Many ideas for the application of the two expressive skills were inspired by the text excerpt provided in the stimulus material. Better responses made appropriate use of drama-specific language and terminology to demonstrate how two expressive skills could be applied to present a character. Weaker responses demonstrated confusion about movement. Instead, they discussed gesture and/or gave a general description of the god, Pan, taken directly from the stimulus material rather than explaining how the character would be presented through the application of the two expressive skills.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- pertinent examples of how the two specific expressive skills would be employed to present the character
- a clear sense of how the god, Pan, would be characterised and the actor–audience relationship this would establish
- appropriate use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- reference to only one of the listed expressive skills
- a limited description of two expressive skills, with little or no discussion of how they would be used to present the character
- an incorrect or confused description of expressive skills
- a description of the character taken directly from the stimulus material provided with limited explanation of the expressive skills that would be used to present the character.

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

As Pan my facial expression will involve a ‘half-smile’ and furrowed brows that at first appear frightening but represent Pan’s age and wisdom. I will present Pan as a powerful character using exaggerated movement – my arms will stretch wide when speaking to suggest muscles. I will walk with a limp and slow timing to present Pan as an old character. When playing with the pan-pipes my movement will be large and stylised to show his magic presence.

Question 1g.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	5	27	44	24	1.9

Students were instructed that the next dramatic moment in their solo performance would be the disjointed time sequence used to show when the god, Pan, found the baby otter. Students were asked to discuss how they would manipulate one of the listed areas of stagecraft (props, puppetry, mask, sound production, costume) to show the audience this disjointed time sequence. Better responses discussed how the transformation of time would be clearly demonstrated through the application of the selected area of stagecraft. Some answers were too general and did not make a link to the narrative. Most students understood how to discuss the application of the area of stagecraft in two different timeframes, but many did not explain how the transformation of time would be shown to an audience.

2013 Examination Report



High-scoring responses were characterised by

- a thorough understanding of how an actor can use an area of stagecraft to demonstrate a transformation of time
- a clear and pertinent discussion of how an area of stagecraft would be manipulated to demonstrate a disjointed time sequence
- a discussion of how the transformation/transition would be achieved to show that time had shifted; for example, use of techniques such as freeze-frames, slow motion, morphing, montages, split stage and when these techniques would be used to denote a change of scene
- imaginative ideas about how the disjointed time sequence would have an impact on other aspects of the performance such as narrative development, themes, dramatic elements (tension, timing and climax) and the actor–audience relationship
- appropriate use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- briefly discussing how the area of stagecraft would be used, with no reference to the disjointed time sequence
- a limited explanation of how the area of stagecraft would be used to show the disjointed time sequence
- a limited understanding of how an actor can manipulate an area of stagecraft to demonstrate that a transformation of time has occurred
- limited or incorrect use of drama-specific language and terminology.

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

I will employ sound production skipping from my track of the flute to the eery sounds with a base pulse and loop of layered creaking and popping sounds by pressing next on the remote in my pocket. This will signify a movement through time and will be accompanied by a physical gesture of being transported through time. Once this sound stops Pan will look at his pocket-watch and smile mischievously, looking around the space before spotting the baby otter downstage right. The soundtrack will repeat after a rehearsed timed gap and Pan will be transported back to the present where he is looking over the baby otter, smiling once again.

Question 2

This question required students to consider how they would use the stimulus material to develop and present an ensemble performance in a non-naturalistic style. The stimulus material was a construction device in the form of a brainstorm/mind map. The images, text, themes, scenario and character list provided were intended to evoke particular moods and implied styles. Most students embraced these ideas and wrote about concepts and situations that were clearly linked to the stimulus material.

To answer this question, students needed to draw on the key knowledge and skills acquired through the development, presentation and evaluation stages 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 and are advised to use reading time to do this. 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 Outcomes 1 and 2 of Unit 3. Students, therefore, need to have a thorough knowledge of these concepts.

Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	16	84	0.9

Students were asked to select one non-naturalistic performance style to use in this ensemble performance. Most students correctly identified an appropriate non-naturalistic performance style, such as those listed in the *VCE Drama Study Design*. Students were not awarded marks if they did not correctly identify a non-naturalistic performance style, if they only named a drama practitioner or if they gave a contradictory answer. Most students selected Epic Theatre, Poor Theatre, Comedy or Absurdism. Other popular choices included Musical Theatre, Farce and Magic Realism. When selecting an appropriate style to apply in the ensemble performance, students are advised to be guided by the stimulus material provided in the examination. Theatre of Cruelty was an inappropriate choice of style to apply since the audience for this ensemble performance were primary school children.

2013 Examination Report



Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	7	13	50	29	2

Students needed to describe how their group would apply one theatrical convention from the chosen non-naturalistic performance style to develop this ensemble performance. Weaker responses described theatrical conventions that were not relevant to the chosen style, or demonstrated confusion about the theatrical convention and instead described a dramatic element. Many students did not explicitly describe how the theatrical convention would be used to develop the ensemble, instead referring to how it would be applied in the presentation of the ensemble performance. Some students described a convention that was not used in their selected non-naturalistic performance style. These students were not awarded any marks.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- a clear understanding of one theatrical convention from the selected non-naturalistic performance style and how it would be applied to develop this ensemble performance
- pertinent examples used to support the response
- a clear and concise understanding of how the convention would help to convey ideas inherent in the stimulus material such as themes, character/narrative development or the intended actor–audience relationship
- imaginative ideas expressed with appropriate drama-specific language and terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- an inability to correctly identify one theatrical convention from the selected non-naturalistic performance style
- naming or giving a definition of a theatrical convention rather than describing how it would be used to develop the ensemble performance
- confusion or limited understanding about a theatrical convention
- a description of how the convention would be used to present instead of develop the ensemble performance.

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

Direct address – each of the ensemble members will take turns in coming in front of the other, in a form of improvisation, as we vent our inner frustrations and thoughts. This may be useful in exploring the different characters status and motivation within the piece. We will then move this to in front of a mirror and thus develop our expressive skills as we practice directly addressing the audience – e.g. Susie Snivel “Did you hear about Baron’s new romance?”

Question 2c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	1	14	46	39	2.3

Students were instructed to select one of the listed characters to be their focus in the ensemble performance. They had to explain how this character would establish and manipulate an appropriate actor–audience relationship. Many students outlined the character’s role within the ensemble performance when explaining their ideas about the actor–audience relationship. Popular choices were direct address, creating pathos, audience interaction, breaking the fourth wall and alienation.

The more successful students identified an actor–audience relationship that was appropriate to the selected non-naturalistic performance style. They explained tangible ways the character would manipulate the actor–audience relationship through eye contact, positioning within the acting space and the impact this would have on the audience. The less successful students made inappropriate choices about the actor–audience relationship, often ignoring the fact that the specified audience were primary school children.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- clear choices about the character’s relationship with the audience that were appropriate to the selected non-naturalistic performance style
- an explanation of clear and pertinent techniques that would be used to manipulate the relationship with the audience
- a concise description of this character’s relationship with the audience in terms of how the character is involved, narrative consequences and/or character status development
- a clear sense of how the character might be portrayed to help to convey other elements of the narrative such as pathos, tension and the intended actor–audience relationship
- appropriate use of drama-specific language and terminology.

2013 Examination Report



Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- poor choices about the actor–audience relationship that were inappropriate to the selected non-naturalistic performance style
- limited explanation of the character’s relationship with the audience
- generalised ideas about the character’s role rather than a specific way the actor–audience relationship would be manipulated.

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

Baron Bignose will establish a strong actor-audience relationship as the cheeky involved character who will interact and communicate with the audience. He will begin sitting amongst the audience discussing with them the opening scene thus building a rapport. He will manipulate this by directly addressing the audience during moments of tension to ask their opinion. This will continuously remind the audience they are watching a play, not real life.

Question 2d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	4	21	35	40	2.1

Students were asked to explain how they would use one play-making technique to explore their character’s role during the development of this ensemble performance. Improvisation and research were the most popular play-making techniques discussed. The most common error that students made was not correctly identifying a play-making technique, instead discussing activities such as hot-seating, workshopping, blocking and mind maps. Some students explained the character’s role without discussing a play-making technique.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- a concise explanation of how one play-making technique would be used to explore the character’s role during the development of the ensemble performance
- an explanation of how the play-making technique would be used to explore the dramatic potential of the character’s role
- a clear explanation of how the character’s role would be explored through the play-making technique during the ‘development’ rather than the ‘presentation’ of the ensemble performance. This would be done by making references such as trialling and experimenting with ideas, making editing choices and using the rehearsal process
- appropriate use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- a limited understanding of a play-making technique
- a very brief discussion or listing of a play-making technique, with little or no reference to how it would be used to explore the character’s role
- a brief explanation of how the character’s role would be explored, with no discussion of a play-making technique
- an explanation of the ‘presentation’ rather than the ‘development’ of the ensemble performance.

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

We will improvise a scene of climax where we will trial different scenarios of Baron Bignose breaking the fourth wall, or butting in and interrupting and thus breaking the tension with comedy. We will apply improvisation to explore how the character would react to this high point of tension and then construct the character from here, understanding now his motivations and relationships.

Question 2e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	2	4	15	22	25	20	12	3.7

This question instructed students to name a place their group would create within Imagi-Town or within the Heeby-Geeby’s hometown. Students were then asked to explain how the actors would use rhythm through language and gesture to create this place in the final performance. The more successful responses made use of the rhyming language in the stimulus material, using it as the springboard for creating rhythm.



Weaker responses misinterpreted what language was (verbal and vocal sounds to enhance dramatic meaning) and instead discussed body language, which is an aspect of the expressive skill of gesture. Some students misinterpreted what gesture was and instead discussed movement, and others were confused about what rhythm was. The less successful students' responses tended to be narrative-driven, with a description of what the place would look like, rather than an explanation of how it would be created by the actors in the final performance.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- references to choices that were inspired by the stimulus material
- a clear and concise explanation of how the actors would use rhythm through language and gesture
- the appropriate use of examples
- an understanding of how the application of rhythm through language and gesture would help to convey other elements of the ensemble performance such as creating mood, developing tension, creating a sense of time and place, narrative and character development, and the intended actor–audience relationship.
- an appropriate use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- a poor choice of examples that limited the student's ability to respond in detail
- a limited understanding of language and/or gesture and/or rhythm
- a generalised description of the place, rather than specific examples of how the place would be created in the final performance
- a perfunctory description of the application of language and/or gesture.

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

Within Imagi-Town: Susie Snivel's home. Susie's home will comprise of Susie sitting centrally with the other actors running around her as servants. These servants will each have a specific gesture created through exaggerated movement. One actor may raise one arm in the air as if dusting a area of Susie's house and another actor may move his arm backwards and forwards pointing to the ground as if vacuuming. This same gesture will be overstated, drawn larger than life, but repeated as to create a sense of place – Susie's immaculate house. These servants will repeated these actions (each actor with specific gesture) to a rhythm that matches Susie's direct address and rants to the audience. This dialogue would be Dr Seuss style with each sentence containing two rhyming words such as "Knox on fox" or "socks in box". This rhythm of her language would further highlight the eccentric gossiping nature of this character (Susie) and also draw comedic potential for the piece creating a fun mood for the young audience. In addition, the rhythm through language would be timed with the other actors gestures, further accentuating the sense of place, as Susie Snivel is in charge and all commanding in her home.

Question 2f.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	5	7	31	35	23	2.6

Students were asked to analyse how their group would use one area of stagecraft as a symbol to create the climactic moment when the stolen magic is found. Popular choices of stagecraft were lighting and sound production. The more successful students made thoughtful choices about their use of stagecraft, clearly analysing how it would be applied as a symbol to create the climactic moment. Weaker students did not clearly identify the chosen area of stagecraft or analyse the magic being stolen rather than found. Another common error was to analyse how the stagecraft would be used as a symbol, without referring to how it would be used to create the climactic moment.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- identifying the climactic moment and clearly explaining how one area of stagecraft would be used as a symbol to present this moment
- pertinent examples that explained how the actors would use the area of stagecraft as a symbol to create the climax
- an appropriate use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- an inability to identify the climactic moment, or a perfunctory reference to the end of the performance
- a narrative description of the climactic moment, rather than an explanation of how it would be presented
- an inability to clearly identify an area of stagecraft
- analysing how an area of stagecraft would be used as a symbol, without discussing the climactic moment.



Section B

Question chosen	none	<i>Beached</i>	<i>Boxman</i>	<i>Button</i>	<i>Cut Snake</i>	<i>No Child</i>	<i>School Dance</i>
%	0	30	7	3	22	20	18

This section related to the Unit 3 analysis of a play from the 2013 Drama Playlist. Students were required to select one play from the list and answer the four questions that related to their chosen play. For each play, parts a., b. and c. were the same short-answer question, while part d. differed for each individual play and was an extended-answer question.

Question a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	2	18	34	46	2.3

Students had to describe how one actor used movement to represent one character in the performance. Most students handled this question well. The less successful students confused the actor with the character or referred to the actor's use of gesture rather than movement.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- a good understanding of how one actor used movement to represent one character
- pertinent examples used to support the response
- a concise description of how movement was used to represent a character and give meaning to other aspects of the play such as the themes, character and narrative development, or the actor–audience relationship.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- confusion between the actor and the character
- a limited or confused understanding of movement
- an ambiguous description of gesture instead of movement
- limited discussion of the character in general terms
- incorrect references to other aspects of the play such as the themes, character and narrative development, or the actor–audience relationship.

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

No Child

Nilaja Sun used movement to portray the character of Ms Tam by; using a small, shuffling gait to show the characters timid nature; establishing a stooped, curved over posture to show the character's closed off body language and her self-conscious quality; using slow, legato movements when moving her head and arms, turning to address other characters to further display her docile nature.

Question b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	10	21	33	36	2

This question asked students to discuss how one theatrical convention was used to convey a theme in the performance. Some students did not understand the themes and mistakenly discussed the performance style. Some students confused theatrical conventions with dramatic elements or areas of stagecraft. The more successful responses made a good choice of theatrical convention to discuss, clearly explaining how it elucidated the theme.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- an appropriate choice of a theatrical convention and theme
- a good understanding of the play
- a clear discussion that was well supported by pertinent examples
- appropriate use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- a poor choice of a theatrical convention and theme
- limited or confused understanding of theatrical conventions and/or themes
- limited understanding of the play.

2013 Examination Report



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

Cut Snake

Direct address assisted in communicating the theme of ordinary vs extraordinary. We were immediately placed in this world when Kevin Kiernan-Molloy welcomed the audience directly in a vaudevillian style “place one hand like this and the other like this and smack them together.” Direct address then again portrayed this them after Bob had been wrenched from his world of science and discovered time travel. Julia Billington turned directly towards the audience altering the focus and said “now we all know how time travel works.” This contrast to Bob’s rigid ways enhanced the theme of extraordinary as this created non-naturalism – thus augmented a world of strange magic.

Question c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	5	14	33	47	2.2

Students were required to explain how symbol was applied in a specific dramatic moment in the performance. Most students understood the application of symbol, although some did not focus on one specific dramatic moment. The more successful students clearly explained the meaning behind the symbol used in a specific dramatic moment. The less successful students tended to be confused about what constituted a symbol, or missed the requirement to link their explanation to a specific dramatic moment.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- a good understanding of how symbol was applied in a specific dramatic moment
- a clear explanation
- a pertinent example
- a concise discussion of how symbol was used in a dramatic moment in terms of how it gave meaning to other aspects of the play such as the themes, character and narrative development, or the actor–audience relationship.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- a limited or confused understanding of symbol
- an inability to identify a specific dramatic moment within the performance
- an ambiguous description of a moment within the performance without referring to how symbol was used
- limited or incorrect references to other aspects of the play such as the themes, character and narrative development, or the actor–audience relationship.

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

Beached

In the final scene of the play “Beached” a symbolic gesture is made when Arty, having finished his interview on the live reality show, takes a big bite out of a chocolate bar. This gesture is particularly symbolic as it represents the far greater issue than just the physical hazards of obesity. By featuring this brief moment, this reveals to the audience that even after such a painful surgery Arty is still not completely happy and is still ‘empty’ of meaning in his life. The use of symbolic moment shows that the obesity crisis is just as much a psychological problem as a physical one.

Question d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Average
%	2	2	8	15	17	19	17	10	5	4	4.8

The key word ‘evaluate’ was the discriminating factor for students in this question. To ‘evaluate’, students needed to make a judgment or critique the performance. They may have discussed the play’s effectiveness, successes and weaknesses, or what worked and what didn’t.

Many students wrote very strong analyses of the plays, but could not score highly if they did not evaluate the performance. The less successful students demonstrated a limited understanding of the play in performance, made poor choice of examples and had limited or confused use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Question 1d.

Students had to evaluate how multimedia projections and caricature were applied to enhance the non-naturalistic performance style of *Beached*. The more successful students demonstrated a thorough and insightful understanding of the performance, and clearly evaluated how multimedia projections and caricature were applied. The less successful



students struggled to identify how caricature was applied and demonstrated a limited understanding of how the multimedia projections were used.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- an evaluation of how multimedia projections and caricature were applied to enhance the non-naturalistic performance style
- a thorough and insightful understanding of multimedia projections, caricature and the non-naturalistic performance style
- clear and perceptive explanations
- the pertinent use of examples
- an accurate and appropriate reference to characters, plot, actors, theatrical conventions, etc.
- appropriate use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- limited or no evaluation
- a limited or confused discussion of the use of multimedia projections and/or caricature
- a limited understanding of the non-naturalistic performance style
- a discussion of only multimedia projections
- a discussion of only caricature
- limited use of examples
- limited or inaccurate references to characters, plot, themes, actors, theatrical conventions, etc.
- limited or confused use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Question 2d.

Students were asked to evaluate how a heightened use of language and set design were applied to create mood in the performance of *Boxman*. Many students were confused about what constitutes heightened use of language and mistakenly discussed vocal delivery of volume, tone and accent. These are not elements of heightened use of language. Heightened use of language is the poetic and exaggerated use of language. It includes a deliberate choice of words where syntax, alliteration and rhyming patterns enhance the dramatic statement.

Intended meaning is enhanced through the use of non-conventional and non-naturalistic dialogue. To evaluate how heightened use of language was applied in *Boxman*, the more successful students referred to elements of language such as repetition, alliteration, rhyme, the bilingual text of African language and the use of African song. Most students handled the discussion of set design well, although some of the less successful students were confused about the application of set design, and instead discussed the use of lighting and props.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- an evaluation of how heightened use of language and set design were applied to create mood in the performance
- a thorough and insightful understanding of heightened use of language, set design and mood
- clear and perceptive explanations
- the pertinent use of examples
- an accurate and appropriate reference to characters, plot, actors, theatrical conventions, etc.
- appropriate use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- limited or no evaluation
- a limited or confused understanding of how heightened use of language and set design were applied to create mood
- a limited understanding of what constitutes heightened use of language
- a limited understanding of set design, and discussion of only heightened use of language
- a discussion of only set design
- a discussion of only mood
- a limited use of examples
- limited or inaccurate references to characters, plot, themes, actors, theatrical conventions, etc.
- limited or confused use of drama-specific language and terminology.



Question 3d.

Students were required to evaluate how dance and disjointed time sequences were used to enhance the non-naturalistic performance style of *Button*. Most students were able to correctly identify moments within the performance where dance and disjointed time sequences were used. The more successful responses evaluated how dance and disjointed time sequences illuminated the themes of friendship, ageing and loss. Weaker responses reflected a limited understanding of the use of disjointed time sequences and dance.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- an evaluation of how dance and disjointed time sequences were used to enhance the non-naturalistic performance style
- a thorough and insightful understanding of how dance and disjointed time sequences were used to elucidate the themes and enhance the non-naturalistic performance style
- clear and perceptive explanations
- the pertinent use of examples
- an accurate and appropriate reference to characters, plot, actors, theatrical conventions, etc.
- an appropriate use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- limited or no evaluation
- a limited or confused explanation of how dance and disjointed time sequences were used
- a discussion of only disjointed time sequences
- a discussion of only dance
- limited use of examples
- limited or inaccurate references to characters, plot, themes, actors, theatrical conventions, etc.
- a limited or confused use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Question 4d.

Students needed to evaluate how caricature and the use of physical theatre style were applied to enhance the non-naturalistic performance style of *Cut Snake*. Most students understood how caricature was applied in the performance, although some did not understand what the term 'physical theatre style' meant. Better responses evaluated how caricature was applied and how a series of sequences displayed through the physical theatre style communicated the themes. The more successful students used examples of how physical movement within the performance was used to convey the story through mime and text. The less successful students were confused about what constituted physical theatre, with some discussing the set design instead.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- an evaluation of how the caricature and the use of physical theatre were applied to enhance the non-naturalistic performance style
- a thorough and insightful understanding of the play
- clear and perceptive explanations
- the pertinent use of examples
- accurate and appropriate references to characters, plot, actors, theatrical conventions, etc.
- an appropriate use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- limited or no evaluation
- a limited or confused understanding of caricature
- a limited or confused understanding of physical theatre
- a limited use of examples
- limited or inaccurate references to characters, plot, themes, actors, theatrical conventions, etc.
- a limited or confused use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Question 5d.

Students were required to evaluate how timing and character transformation were used to enhance the non-naturalistic performance style of *No Child*. The more successful students evaluated how successfully the actor, Nilaja Sun, used timing to create transformations of time, place and character, and how this created shifts in the mood and pace of the performance. They also evaluated how effective Nilaja Sun was in using a variety of techniques to transform and



differentiate between characters. The less successful students struggled to identify how timing was applied and demonstrated a limited understanding of how the actor transformed characters.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- an evaluation of how timing and transformation of character were used in the performance
- a thorough and insightful understanding of timing, character transformation and the non-naturalistic performance style
- clear and perceptive explanations
- a pertinent use of examples
- accurate and appropriate references to characters, plot, actors, theatrical conventions, etc.
- appropriate use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- limited or no evaluation
- a limited or confused discussion of the use of timing and character transformation
- a discussion of only timing
- a discussion of only character transformation
- a limited use of examples
- limited or inaccurate references to characters, plot, themes, actors, theatrical conventions, etc.
- limited or confused use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Question 6d.

Students were asked to evaluate how sound and exaggerated movement were applied to enhance the performance style of comedy in *School Dance*. The more successful students provided a fully integrated response that showed a thorough understanding of how comedy was demonstrated through the application of sound and exaggerated movement, and how this elucidated the themes in the performance. The less successful students appeared confused about what constituted the dramatic element of sound and the theatrical convention of exaggerated movement.

High-scoring responses were characterised by

- an evaluation of how sound and exaggerated movement were applied to enhance the performance style of comedy
- a thorough and insightful understanding of sound, exaggerated movement and comedy
- clear and perceptive explanations
- the pertinent use of examples
- accurate and appropriate references to characters, plot, actors, theatrical conventions, etc.
- appropriate use of drama-specific language and terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by

- limited or no evaluation
- a limited or confused explanation of the use of sound and exaggerated movement
- little understanding of comedy
- a discussion of only sound
- a discussion of only exaggerated movement
- a limited use of examples
- limited or inaccurate references to characters, plot, themes, actors, theatrical conventions, etc.
- limited or confused use of drama-specific language and terminology.

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

No Child

Nilaja Sun effectively performed a non-naturalistic performance through the transformation of character and manipulation of timing. Nilaja used unique expressive skills to non-naturalistically snap between characters. Shondrika, for example, was performed with her hand behind her head in a gesture that symbolised her attitude. Transforming into a range of characters allowed Sun to apply caricature, a non-naturalistic technique. While Shondrika was a caricature of students with 'sassy' attitude, Sun's inaudible voice and drooping expression as Phillip represented students with disabilities. Moreover, teachers including Mrs Projetsky, who had an exaggerated screaming voice and firm stance, were transformed into by Sun to convey an image of powerless teachers. In juxtaposition to Mrs Tam and Mrs Projetsky, Sun transformed into Ms Sun using relaxed yet

2013 Examination Report



excited facial expressions. By transforming into Ms Sun using gestures such as arms outstretched and speaking to the audience, Sun suggested that Ms Sun was speaking to the students on an equal basis.

The caricatures and the characterisation of Ms Sun as a kind and forgiving teacher was used by Sun to non-naturalistically communicate how the play was focusing on society and real issues as the caricatures were based on Nilaja's real experiences. The transformation between characters, using distinctive movements and accents and a snapping technique allowed Sun to convey these characters effectively.

Sun manipulated her timing to successfully perform differing characters and non-naturalistically change location. As Janitor Baron, Sun's timing was slow as she limped across the stage and frequently stopped moving to rest on a broom. This change in timing from the fast snap transitions for class room scenes helped portray the Janitor as a unique character that had significant commentary to offer. Moreover, the change in timing helped distinguish how Sun had transformed into a new location, the school corridor, outside the action of the play.

The timing of the school scenes involved fast transitions with an energetic rhythm, At times Sun only said one line as a student before speaking in a contrasting slow timing for Ms Sun. Such skilful timing allowed the audience to suspend disbelief, as we believed there were other characters in the play.

Timing enhanced the non-naturalistic transformations in timing and place, as Sun communicated the world of United States public schools for the audience to consider and question.