

VICTORIAN CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY



**Victorian Certificate of Education  
2003**

**DRAMA**

**Solo performance examination**

**Monday 6 October to Sunday 2 November**

## INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS

### Performance examination conditions

1. The examination will be set and marked by panels appointed by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.
2. Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority examination rules will apply. Details of these rules are published annually in the *VCE Administrative Handbook*.
3. The performance venue is set annually by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.
4. 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 time restrictions.
5. The solo performance will be presented as a single uninterrupted performance and last not more than seven minutes.
6. If a performance goes over the prescribed time limit the student will be asked to stop. A timing device will indicate when the seven minutes is over.
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.
9. Students are **not** permitted to bring any objects (including actual or imitation weapons) or substances deemed hazardous or illegal into the performance examination venue. The use of such items is **not** permitted in the performance.
10. Only the panel of assessors will be allowed in the examination room with the student during the examination.
11. Students may choose to perform to the assessors as audience or to an imagined audience, or both.

### Statement of Intention

1. A pro forma for the Statement of Intention will be 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:
  - clarify 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 prescribed structures.
2. Students **must** select from the list of ten prescribed structures. Marks will not be awarded for performances that do not use one of the prescribed structures.
3. Each prescribed structure is made up of the following: character, stimulus, performance focus, performance style, theatrical conventions, dramatic elements, reference material.

**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.

**Performance focus:** information about the character that **must** be portrayed in the performance. This information is given in an opening sentence(s) and a series of dot points. All of this must be included in the performance. The dot points do not have to be given equal emphasis during the performance, nor do they have to be performed in the same order as in the prescribed structure.

**Performance style:** the prescribed performance style is explained in the Terminology section of the examination paper. The prescribed style must be used throughout the performance.

**Theatrical conventions:** two theatrical conventions are given for each prescribed structure and they must be used during the performance. Additional conventions may be added as appropriate.

**Dramatic elements:** the following dramatic elements will be assessed in all performances: focus, space, tension and timing. In addition two dramatic elements will be specifically **prescribed** for each character. The dramatic elements to be prescribed will be selected from the following list: climax, conflict, contrast, mood, rhythm, sound and symbol.

**Reference material:** resource(s) 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.

4. When a prescribed structure includes the word **recreates**, students are required to re-enact situations and conversations for an audience. The emphasis in the recreation 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.

## **PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 1**

### **Character**

The Stereotype

### **Stimulus**

The film *Dudley Do-Right*

### **Performance focus**

Create a solo performance that includes each of the following stereotypes from the film *Dudley Do-Right*: the hero (Dudley Do-Right), the villain (Snidely Whiplash) and the heroine (Nell Fenwick). While attempting to persuade the membership subcommittee of Theatrical Entities Inc. of the validity of stereotypes, and their right to join the organisation, the characters act out an entertaining and exciting plot which involves

- a potential environmental disaster
- a social commentary which mirrors the life and times of the society of the day
- a resolution which offers hope, as good always wins over evil.

### **Performance style**

Non-naturalistic, in the style of melodrama

### **Theatrical conventions**

Caricature, aside

### **Dramatic elements**

Climax, conflict

### **Reference material**

Any history of Victorian melodrama

The film *Dudley Do-Right*, starring Brendan Fraser, Universal Pictures 1999. Director: Hugh Wilson

**PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 2****Character**

The Public Servant

**Stimulus**

The novel *Skymaze* by Gillian Rubinstein

**Performance focus**

Create a solo performance based on the character of the Public Servant. While addressing an allegation of hacking into a restricted computer site, the embittered Public Servant recreates for a supervisor

- the trivial incident that led him/her to attempt revenge upon a colleague and how he/she planned to use the computer to do this
- the dangers and obstacles he/she experienced after being drawn physically into the world of the computer
- the changes in his/her understanding and behaviour which enabled him/her to be released by the computer.

**Performance style**

Non-naturalistic

**Theatrical conventions**

Transformation of place, exaggerated movement

**Dramatic elements**

Sound, climax

**Reference material**

*Space Demons* by Gillian Rubinstein – Omnibus Books 1986

*Skymaze* by Gillian Rubinstein – Omnibus/Puffin (Penguin Books) 1989

### **PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 3**

#### **Character**

The Double Agent

#### **Stimulus**

*The Age* newspaper article ‘Mrs Petrov’s death brings bizarre affair to end’

#### **Performance focus**

Create a solo performance based on the character of the Double Agent working in the Department of External Affairs. At a debriefing with his/her controller, the Double Agent recreates

- highlights of his/her training and secret life
- his/her involvement in the Petrov Affair where he/she found himself/herself in an unpredictable situation
- the wider implications of the Petrov Affair on Australian politics.

#### **Performance style**

Non-naturalistic, in the style of comedy

#### **Theatrical conventions**

Caricature, dramatic metaphor

#### **Dramatic elements**

Mood, contrast

#### **Reference material**

*The Age* newspaper article ‘Mrs Petrov’s death brings bizarre affair to end’ by Robert Manne, published 27 July 2002

[www.theage.com.au](http://www.theage.com.au)

Television shows such as *Get Smart* or films such as *True Lies*

## **PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 4**

### **Character**

Marvellous Melbourne

### **Stimulus**

The poem 'The Jubilee of Melbourne' by J F Daniell

*Here, fifty winters since, by Yarra's stream,*

*A scattered hamlet found its modest place:*

*What mind would venture then in wildest dream*

*Its wondrous growth and eminence to trace?*

*What seer predict a stripling in the race*

*Would, swift as Atalanta, win the prize*

*Of progress, 'neath the world's astonished eyes?*

### **Performance focus**

Create a solo performance based on the life of Melbourne in 1888. Using vignettes and dramatic images, recreate for a visiting painter

- actual events that occurred during 1888 that demonstrate fifty years of progress
- a person living in Melbourne in 1888 whose life has been affected by the Centennial International Exhibition
- an ideal that Melbourne is striving for in 1888.

### **Performance style**

Non-naturalistic

### **Theatrical conventions**

Lyrical and symbolic, use of fact

### **Dramatic elements**

Sound, mood

### **Reference material**

Any history of Melbourne

[www.marrinertheatres.com.au/prhistory.htm](http://www.marrinertheatres.com.au/prhistory.htm)

[www.ngv.vic.gov.au/collection/australian/painting/m/apa00046.html](http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/collection/australian/painting/m/apa00046.html)

## **PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 5**

### **Character**

Tenterfield Saddler

### **Stimulus**

The song ‘Tenterfield Saddler’ by Peter Allen

### **Performance focus**

Create a solo performance based on the following three people: George Woolnough, his son and grandson. Aspects of their lives are recreated for a music historian as he/she examines family memorabilia in 1973. The music historian sees

- George and some of the people he meets during his 52 years as a saddler
- George’s son, and his experiences after he ‘went off and got married and had a war baby’
- George’s grandson’s drive to move away from his home town, some of his subsequent experiences, and the need to return home in 1972.

### **Performance style**

Non-naturalistic

### **Theatrical conventions**

Song, pathos

### **Dramatic elements**

Rhythm, mood

### **Reference material**

Any biography of Peter Allen



**PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 6****Character**

Meyer Wolfsheim

**Stimulus**

The novel *The Great Gatsby* by F Scott Fitzgerald

**Performance focus**

Create a solo performance based on the character of Meyer Wolfsheim. After Gatsby's funeral, Wolfsheim summons Nick Carraway to his office and proposes a business 'gonnegtion'. To persuade Nick to accept his proposal, Meyer Wolfsheim recreates his involvement

- in the 'making' of Gatsby and Gatsby's fortune
- in the fixing of the 1919 world series baseball
- with prohibition and other illegal activities.

**Performance style**

Non-naturalistic

**Theatrical conventions**

Disjointed time sequences, satire

**Dramatic elements**

Climax, symbol

**Reference material**

Any history of the USA which includes the prohibition era

Any edition of *The Great Gatsby* by F Scott Fitzgerald

## **PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 7**

### **Character**

Mitsy Sennosuke

### **Stimulus**

The novel *The Divine Wind* by Garry Disher

### **Performance focus**

Create a solo performance based on the character of Mitsy Sennosuke. After her return to Broome in 1947, Mitsy explores the possibility of rebuilding a relationship with Hartley Penrose. To do this, she recreates for him

- aspects of her life growing up as an Australian born Japanese girl in Broome
- experiences she and her mother had during their internment
- how the Noh play *Ama (The Diver)* helped her to come to terms with her father's death.

### **Performance style**

Non-naturalistic – including aspects of Noh theatre

### **Theatrical conventions**

Disjointed time sequences, pathos

### **Dramatic elements**

Contrast, symbol

### **Reference material**

[www.kt.rim.or.jp/~snoo/](http://www.kt.rim.or.jp/~snoo/)

[www-staff.mcs.uts.edu.au/~don/pubs/noh.html](http://www-staff.mcs.uts.edu.au/~don/pubs/noh.html)

Any edition of *The Divine Wind* by Garry Disher

**PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 8****Character**

Gertrude Bell

**Stimulus**

*The Age* newspaper article ‘Queen of the desert’

**Performance focus**

Create a solo performance based on the person Gertrude Bell. Returning from a recent mission into Northern Arabia, Gertrude recreates for the Chief of Cairo Intelligence

- dangers she encountered while exploring the vast desert regions
- her involvement in Arabian affairs which include the ‘establishment of King Faisal’
- problems she experienced as a woman not typical of her time.

**Performance style**

Non-naturalistic

**Theatrical conventions**

Heightened use of language, disjointed time sequences

**Dramatic elements**

Conflict, contrast

**Reference material**

Any history of Arabia

*The Age* newspaper article ‘Queen of the desert’ by Alan Veitch, published 9 October 2002

[www.ralphmag.org/AG/new.html](http://www.ralphmag.org/AG/new.html)

## **PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 9**

### **Character**

Isabella of Castile

### **Stimulus**

The painting *Queen Isabella's Will* by Eduardo Rosales Gallina

Can be found at [www.mcu.es/prado/cason/48\\_eng.html](http://www.mcu.es/prado/cason/48_eng.html)

### **Performance focus**

Create a solo performance based on the person Isabella of Castile. After completing the dictation of her will she relives, for one of more of the people in the painting, moments from her past. She shows ploys and strategies that she used to succeed to the throne and to hold power which include

- her ongoing contest with the nobles and the turbulent times of the Inquisition
- the campaign to recover Granada
- her controversial patronage of Christopher Columbus.

### **Performance style**

Non-naturalistic, in the style of Epic theatre

### **Theatrical conventions**

Transformation of place, disjointed time sequences

### **Dramatic elements**

Symbol, contrast

### **Reference material**

[www.mcu.es/prado/cason/48\\_eng.html](http://www.mcu.es/prado/cason/48_eng.html)

[http://womanshistory.about.com/library/bio/blbio\\_isabella\\_I\\_spain.htm](http://womanshistory.about.com/library/bio/blbio_isabella_I_spain.htm)

Any history of Spain

**PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 10****Character**

Maria Von Trapp

**Stimulus**

The life of Maria Von Trapp

**Performance focus**

Create a solo performance based on the person Maria Von Trapp. While entertaining guests at the Trapp Family Lodge, Maria recreates

- aspects of her life working as a governess in 1926
- the struggle to escape from Austria through Italy and aspects of her life as a refugee in 1938
- her concerns with the making of the Hollywood film *The Sound of Music* in 1965.

**Performance style**

Non-naturalistic

**Theatrical conventions**

Disjointed time sequences, use of fact

**Dramatic elements**

Symbol, contrast

**Reference material**

[www.trappfamily.com/history.html](http://www.trappfamily.com/history.html)

The film *The Sound of Music*, starring Julie Andrews, 20th Century Fox 1965. Director: Robert Wise

## **TERMINOLOGY**

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

### **Non-naturalistic**

Non-naturalistic and non-realistic performance styles are not dependent on the lifelike representation of everyday life. In non-naturalistic performance, the actor does not attempt to recreate life as it is lived on the stage. Non-naturalistic performance is characterised by a manipulation of time and space as well as the narrative elements of the drama.

### **Non-naturalistic in the style of epic theatre**

A style of presentation which tells a story, usually historical, on a large scale, including a number of people in a series of events over a long time. It aims at the intellect rather than engaging the emotions and often uses devices such as ‘alienation’. Its episodic style may contain conventions such as narrative, songs, vocal sounds, signs, use of mask and movement.

### **Non-naturalistic in the style of 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.

### **Non-naturalistic – including aspects of Noh theatre**

A form of Japanese drama, Noh combines music, dance, and lyrics with a highly stylised and ritualistic presentation. Every aspect of the production, including costumes, masks, and a highly symbolic setting, is prescribed by tradition. Characters suggest the essence of the tale through simile or metaphor made visual. Some conventions of Noh include defined actor roles, specific character types, bare stage, use of mask, use of movement, chorus, and specified stage design. It is intended that aspects of Noh theatre are shown in part of the performance; they need not be shown throughout the entire performance.

### **Non-naturalistic in the style of comedy**

A performance style associated with amusement, jollity, gaiety, fun and humour. It may include complex and sophisticated techniques sometimes referred to as ‘high’ comedy (such as irony), or ‘low’ comedy (such as slapstick and bawdiness).

### **Recreate**

To re-enact situations and conversations for an audience. The emphasis in the recreation must be on action rather than narration; doing rather than telling.

### **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.

### **Transformation of place**

The actor creates more than one place or setting during the performance and does so without the use of scenery. This can also be achieved through the transformation of properties (real and imagined) and/or through the use of expressive skills alone.

**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.

**Caricature**

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

**Aside**

Words spoken by an actor directly to the audience, which are not 'heard' by other characters on stage during a play. This can reveal the character's thoughts, feelings and aspects of the story unknown to the audience.

**Lyrical and symbolic**

This requires that the student characterise the work with poetic motion. This may be done by the use of verse, dialogue or movement. It may also be achieved through the selection of imagery and action. It is allied to the use of symbol which provides definition for metaphors, gestures or objects and gives specific meanings to the written and performance texts.

**Use of fact**

Research is used to provide the basis for selective and informed scripting. The narrative should be shaped into a continuous piece and not consist of a list of facts.

**Song**

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

**Pathos**

A state which evokes a feeling of pity or sadness in the audience. May be associated with comedy and tragedy.

**Dramatic metaphor**

The endowment of a word, object or feeling with an intensity of meaning other than the literal. Emphasis is on isolating specifics within the performance that best provide an enhancement of meaning for the work, or at least indicate complexity of intended meaning.

**Exaggerated movement**

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

**Satire**

Satire is the use of sarcasm, irony and ridicule in denouncing, exposing or deriding vice, folly and abuse. Can be achieved through language, gesture and tone.

**Vignette**

A short scene or sketch based around a character.







# VCE Drama

## Solo Performance Examination 2003

### STATEMENT OF INTENTION

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Student number

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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:*

- *clarify decisions made in your interpretation of the prescribed structure*
- *give reasons for choices made (eg. for use of costume, prop, accent, symbol)*

**DO NOT SIMPLY REWRITE THE PERFORMANCE FOCUS**

*These comments should not exceed 100 words*

***This completed form must be handed to the assessors on entering the examination room.***

