



Victorian Certificate of Education 2008

THEATRE STUDIES

Written examination

Monday 17 November 2008

Reading time: 9.00 am to 9.15 am (15 minutes)

Writing time: 9.15 am to 10.45 am (1 hour 30 minutes)

QUESTION BOOK

Structure of book

<i>Number of questions</i>	<i>Number of questions to be answered</i>	<i>Number of marks</i>
4	4	50

- Students are permitted to bring into the examination room: pens, lead and coloured pencils, water-based pens and markers, highlighters, erasers, sharpeners, rulers, protractors, compass, set squares and aids for curve-sketching.
- Students are NOT permitted to bring into the examination room: blank sheets of paper and/or white out liquid/tape.
- No calculator is allowed in this examination.

Materials supplied

- Question book of 10 pages. There is a detachable insert for Question 4 in the centrefold.
- One or more script books.

Instructions

- Detach the insert from the centre of this book during reading time.
- Write your **student number** in the space provided on the front cover(s) of the script book(s).
- You **may** support **any** of your answers with illustrations.
- All written responses must be in English.

At the end of the examination

- Place all other used script books inside the front cover of one of the used script books.
- You may keep this question book.

Students are NOT permitted to bring mobile phones and/or any other unauthorised electronic devices into the examination room.

Question 1

Read the **Contextual background** and **Scene** below and answer the **questions**.

Note: You are **not** expected to have prior knowledge of **the scene** or its **contextual background**.

You are to answer both parts a. and b.

a. Discuss how **one or more** of the following areas of stagecraft could be applied to emphasise the humour within the scene.

- acting
- costume
- direction
- make-up
- sound

You **may** apply **any** theatrical style(s) to the interpretation of the scene.

You **may** change the original time and setting of the scene to another appropriate context.

6 marks

b. Explain two ways in which your application of stagecraft in **part a.** was informed by the **contextual background** provided.

6 marks

Total 12 marks

Contextual background**Play:**

Blithe Spirit by Noel Coward. It was first performed in the West End of London in 1941.

Synopsis:

- Writer Charles Condoman decides to research the supernatural for a novel he is writing.
- Following a séance¹ at his home he is visited by the ghost of his first wife, Elvira.
- Elvira is determined to destroy Charles' second marriage to Ruth.
- Ruth cannot see Elvira's ghost and believes her husband is tricking her or has gone mad.
- Elvira damages the brakes on Charles' car hoping to kill him so that he will be with her. However it is Ruth who is killed by accident.
- Ruth returns to the house as a ghost with Elvira and the two 'ghost wives' compete for Charles' attention.
- Charles attempts to get rid of both ghosts with another séance.
- Following the séance the ghosts seem to have disappeared.
- At the end of the play Charles leaves to start a new life as the ghosts destroy his home.

Theatrical style(s):

Comedy of manners – a form of drama that is generally characterised by

- satirical humour which mocks the social rules and attitudes of the period
- an attack upon shallowness and materialism²
- characters who please themselves and who are caught up in problems as a result of complicated situations.

¹ **séance** – a meeting of people who attempt to communicate with the dead

² **materialism** – importance is given to comfort, money or possessions

Setting:

Late evening in the sitting room of the Condoman's comfortably middle-class country house in Kent, England
1941

Themes:

Jealousy, fantasy versus reality, the social rules of marriage

Characters:

CHARLES, RUTH and ELVIRA – Charles is in his early forties and Ruth her mid thirties. It is Charles' second marriage and the couple have been married for five years. Elvira, his first wife, is a ghost and has been dead for seven years.

Staging:

The scene is to be interpreted in a theatrical space where the arrangement of the stage area and seating is flexible.

Scene:

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³ **immoral** – not acceptable

⁴ **guinea-pig** – a person used as a test or trial case

⁵ **incensed** – angrily

⁶ **guttersnipe** – a person of the lowest class

Question 2

This question relates to the **2008 Unit 3 prescribed playlist**. Answer **one** of the following questions **only**. Start your answer by stating the name of the play on which you are writing.

As You Like It by William Shakespeare

Evaluate the interpretation of the written playscript in performance.

OR

Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare

Discuss the similarities and differences between the theatrical style(s) in the playscript and the play in performance.

OR

Tartuffe adapted by Louise Fox from the original by Molière

Analyse ways in which the historical and/or social and/or cultural contexts of the written playscript were interpreted in performance to an audience.

OR

Shirley Valentine by Willy Russell

Evaluate how two people, working in different areas of stagecraft, contributed to the interpretation of the written playscript in performance.

OR

Through the Looking Glass composed by Alan John, adapted by Andrew Upton from the novel by Lewis Carroll

Analyse the application of acting **and** one other area of stagecraft to develop the written playscript for performance.

9 marks

TURN OVER

Question 3

This question relates to the **2008 Unit 4 prescribed playlist**.

Answer **all four** of the following questions, **parts a., b., c. and d.**, making reference to **one** of the following performances.

Start your first answer by stating the **name** of the play on which your answer is based.

Performances

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof by Tennessee Williams

Chrysalis by Dina Ross

Three Short Absurd Plays: *The Lesson* by Ionesco, *Picnic on a Battlefield* by Fernando Arrabal and *Le Professeur Taranne* by Arthur Adamov

The Time is Not Yet Ripe by Louis Esson

3 Oaks by Monica Raszewski

Wicked – The Untold Story of the Witches of Oz by Winnie Holzman (book) and Stephen Schwartz (score)

- a. Identify two** characteristics of **one** character from the play. 2 marks
- b. Analyse** the motivation(s) of **one** character from the performance. 3 marks
- c. Compare** how **two** actors in the performance used the acting space. 3 marks
- d. Briefly evaluate** how **one** actor established and maintained an actor–audience relationship. 3 marks

Total 11 marks

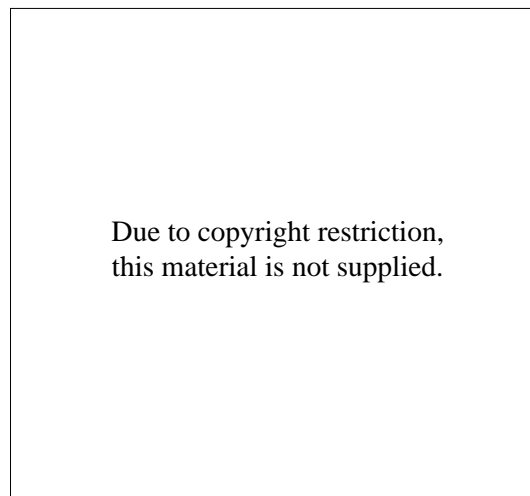
Question 4

- detach the insert (stimulus materials) from the centre of this book
- look at the stimulus materials
- read the Contextual background
- answer the question that follows

Note: You are **not** required to have prior knowledge of the play, the contextual background or stimulus materials.

Contextual background**Staging:**

The play will be performed in a theatre at a community centre. A **thrust** stage is to be used (see image below).



Example of a thrust stage

Play:

The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui was written by Bertolt Brecht in 1941, during World War II. It was first performed in the late 1950s in Germany.

Themes:

The rise and destructive power of dictators¹, power and corruption, ethical versus unethical behaviour, the power of big business

Play setting:

Most of the play is set in locations in and around Chicago, including the financial district, a country house, a bookmaker's² office, City Hall, Ui's suite at the Hotel Mammoth, offices of the 'Cauliflower Trust' and a restaurant.

Key character types:

Vegetable traders, businessmen/businesswomen, gangsters³, newspaper journalists, City Hall officials, shipyard workers, police

Theatrical style(s):

This play was originally written and performed as a piece of Epic theatre. Bertolt Brecht was a leading exponent of this style. It is intended when watching an Epic theatre play that the audience remains detached from the action on stage and is encouraged to make rational judgments based on the social/political/moral arguments presented. The fictional characters and events in Epic theatre often parody⁴, or comment on, real people and incidents from history. Comedy, song and music may accompany the more serious dramatic moments.

Synopsis:

Set during the Great Depression⁵ in America in the 1930s, the play centres on a corrupt business deal involving local vegetable traders, the Chicago City Council and a local shipyard. This fictional tale is based on the real circumstances of Hitler's⁶ rise to power in Europe before and during World War II.

The main plot elements are as follows:

- In 1930s Chicago, business is bad for the 'Cauliflower Trust' (a group of vegetable traders). In order to get the money to survive, the trust tricks a well-respected businessman called **Dogsborough** to help get a loan from City Hall.
- A local gangster, **Arturo Ui**, uses his knowledge of the corrupt business deal to rise to power. **Ui** makes **Dogsborough** a proposal. He and his henchmen³ protect **Dogsborough** from any investigation into his financial dealings. In return, **Dogsborough** protects **Ui** and his illegal activities from the **police**.
- **Ui** then moves into the vegetable trade requiring the **vegetable traders** to pay him protection money. His **henchmen** force the **vegetable traders** to pay up.
- Anyone who opposes **Ui**, including his own assistant, **Ernesto Roma**, is killed.
- **Newspaper journalists** report on **Ui's** actions and he has a love-hate relationship with them.
- Once he has control of the vegetable trade in Chicago, **Ui** moves his attention to another city, Cicero. There he meets **Mrs Betty Dullfeet**, a **vegetable trader**, and her husband, a journalist, **Ignatius Dullfeet**.
- **Ui** orders **Ignatius Dullfeet's** murder because **Ui** is worried that **Dullfeet** will publish anti-gangster articles about him.
- Having gained control of Chicago and Cicero, **Ui** announces plans to take over the vegetable trade across the country.

¹ **dictator** – someone who has total control over a country or state, often ruling in a harsh or oppressive way

² **bookmaker** – one who accepts and pays off bets, such as on a horse race

³ **gangster/henchmen** – member(s) of a criminal gang

⁴ **parody** – to send up or ridicule, often for comic effect

⁵ **the Great Depression** – a worldwide economic collapse which resulted in many people being unemployed and many businesses closing

⁶ **Hitler** – a dictator who founded the German Nazi party and whose actions led to World War II in Europe

Select **one** area of stagecraft below and complete the accompanying tasks.

In your response you must

- refer to **two or more** stimulus materials **and two or more** images/ideas from the contextual background
- start by naming the area of stagecraft.

You may change the original time and setting of the play to another appropriate context.

Acting

- Choose **one** character from the play and describe two key characteristics.
- Describe **three** strategies you could use to develop the character.
- Explain **two** ways you might interpret this character.

OR

Costume OR Make-up OR Properties

- Explain your design concept(s) for this production.
- Create **three** designs that could be appropriate for your design concept(s) for this production.
- Annotate **two** of the three designs.

OR

Set

- Explain your concept(s) for the set design for this production, including how the set design will be appropriate for the stage **and/or** venue to be used for the production.
- Draw a set design for **three** dramatic moments in your interpretation of this production.
- Annotate **two** of the three designs.

OR

Lighting

- Explain your design concept(s) for this production.
- Identify **three** dramatic moments in this production and describe the lighting you would apply to each one.
- Create **two** annotated illustrations to support your written response.

OR

Sound

- Explain your design concept(s) for this production.
- Identify **three** dramatic moments in this production and describe the sound you would apply to each one.
- Create **two** annotated illustrations to support your written response.

OR

Multimedia

- Explain your multimedia design concept(s) for this production.
- Describe in detail **three** key elements of your multimedia design.
- Create **two** annotated illustrations to support your written response.

OR

Direction

- Explain your directorial vision for this production.
- Based on your directorial vision, describe **three** dramatic moments in this production.
- With reference to your directorial vision for this production, explain **two** ways in which your work as a director would enhance the work of **another** stagecraft area.

OR

Dramaturgy

- Identify **one other** stagecraft area and briefly describe how your work in **dramaturgy** could assist the person(s) working in that area of stagecraft.
- Explain **three** ways your dramaturgical concept would be influenced by the contextual background and/or stimulus materials.
- Describe **two** ways you would contribute to the production planning stage of this production.

OR

Promotion (including publicity)

- Explain the promotional management strategy plan that you would develop for this production.
- Describe how you would apply **three** aspects of the promotional management strategy.
- Create **two** annotated illustrations to support your written response.

OR

Stage management

- Identify the most important challenge this production is likely to pose for you working as a Stage Manager.
- Describe **three** strategies and/or tasks that you, as Stage Manager, could apply to address this challenge.
- Describe **two** ways your work as a Stage Manager could enhance this production during the production development stage.

6 + 6 + 6 = 18 marks

Insert for Question 4

Please remove from the centre of this book during reading time.

Select **two** or more of these stimulus materials when responding to Question 4.

STIMULUS 1



STIMULUS 2



STIMULUS 3



1930s Chicago

STIMULUS 4



STIMULUS 5

BETTY (to UI): Your murders
 Come from the heart. Your blackest crimes are
 As deeply felt as other men's good deeds.
 As we believe in faith, so you believe in
 Betrayal.

From *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* by Bertolt Brecht,
 page 89

STIMULUS 6

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STIMULUS 8

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STIMULUS 9

UI: Who is for me?

And just in passing let me add: If anyone's
Not for me he's against me and has only
Himself to blame for anything that happens.
Now you may vote.

From *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* by Bertolt Brecht,
page 97

STIMULUS 7



STIMULUS 10

