



Victorian Certificate of Education 2011

SUPERVISOR TO ATTACH PROCESSING LABEL HERE

STUDENT NUMBER

Figures

Words

Letter

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THEATRE STUDIES

Written examination

Friday 18 November 2011

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 AND ANSWER 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 and answer book of 17 pages. There is a detachable insert for Question 4 in the centrefold.

Instructions

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

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

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Question 1

Read the **contextual background** and **scene** below and answer the questions. You are to answer **parts a., b. and c.**
Note: You are **not** expected to have prior knowledge of the **scene** or its **contextual background**. You may change the original time and setting of the scene to another appropriate context.

Contextual background

An actor is preparing for a monologue performance of the character **Rita** from the play, *Educating Rita*, by Willy Russell. The character of Frank is present during the monologue, but is **implied** in this performance.

Play:

Educating Rita by Willy Russell

Characters:

Rita – a 26-year-old hairdresser who, at the start of the play, is a narrow-minded, outspoken and socially inexperienced woman trapped by her working-class life. She is loud and informal. As the play progresses, she gradually changes, becoming more broad-minded and understanding of how people behave in different situations.

Frank – a middle-aged university professor. He is bored, unhappy and disappointed with teaching. He is twice Rita's age. He finds Rita an interesting challenge because she is completely unlike any of his other students.

Setting:

- Liverpool, England in the 1980s
- The entire play takes place in Frank's office at the university.

Information:

- This **monologue** is part of a larger scene in the play. Rita has come to Frank's office for a tutorial session, expecting feedback on her latest essay.
- The play is a Comedy/Drama. The comedy is in the dialogue between the two characters.
- The comical paradox¹ of the play is that Rita wants what Frank has (the culture, knowledge and life of those educated at university) while he wants the simple life of basic work and pleasures that Rita has. Neither of them values what they already have.
- The action of the play is a realistic representation of human interaction and behaviour.

Synopsis of the play:

Before the scene

- Rita, a hairdresser, lacks meaning in her life and thinks a university degree will change her life for the better.
- She enrolls in an Open University English Literature course.
- She thinks Frank, her tutor, can help her out of her current circumstances.
- She wants intellectual and social knowledge and confidence.
- Frank has invited Rita to a dinner party at his home but, although she goes to the house, she is unable to go inside because she feels out of place and embarrassed by her lack of social and conversational skills.

During the scene

- Frank confronts Rita about not coming to the dinner party.
- Rita is trying to explain her life and her motivation for wanting to be educated.

After the scene

- Rita leaves her husband (Denny), who has never understood her need for education.
- Rita grows away from her family and friends.

Themes:

The themes of the play include

- personal freedom and growth through education
- developing confidence
- happiness
- life changes
- finding meaning in life.

Scene:

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a. Describe how an actor could use **one or more** of the following areas of stagecraft when portraying the character of Rita in this scene.

- costume
- props
- make-up

4 marks

b. Explain how, when performing the role of Rita, an actor could use gesture **and/or** movement to communicate the meaning(s) of the scene.

4 marks

- c. The character of **Frank** is **implied** in the scene. Explain **two or more** ways the actor performing **Rita** could convey the presence of the other character in the scene.

6 marks

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Question 2

This question relates to the 2011 **Unit 3** prescribed playlist. Answer **one** of the following questions. Start your answer by stating the **number** and **name** of the play on which you are writing.

1. *The Laramie Project – 10 Years Later* by Moisés Kaufman and members of the Tectonic Theater Project, Australian Premiere at Red Stitch Actors Theatre

Analyse the interrelationships between the play in performance, the written playscript and **one or more** of its contexts.

In your response you should

- refer directly to both the written playscript and the play in performance
- discuss the relationships between the play in performance, the playscript and one or more of the historical and/or cultural and/or social contexts of the play
- use appropriate theatrical language, terminology and expressions.

OR

2. *A Comedy of Errors* by William Shakespeare

Analyse the similarities and differences between the written playscript and the play in performance.

In your response you should

- refer directly to both the written playscript and the play in performance
- discuss the similarities and differences between the written playscript and the play in performance
- use appropriate theatrical language, terminology and expressions.

OR

3. *Next to Normal* music by Tom Kitt, book and lyrics by Brian Yorkey

Analyse how the **theatrical style(s)** implied in the playscript was (were) interpreted in the performance.

In your response you should

- refer directly to both the written playscript and the play in performance
- discuss the style(s) implied in the playscript and the style(s) used in the performance
- use appropriate theatrical language, terminology and expressions.

OR

4. *I Take Your Hand in Mine* by Carol Rocamora

Evaluate the interpretation of the written playscript in the performance.

In your response you should

- refer directly to both the written playscript and the play in performance
- evaluate the interpretation of the playscript
- use appropriate theatrical language, terminology and expressions.

OR

5. *Sanctuary* by Chris Dickins

Analyse ways in which **two** areas of stagecraft were used to interpret the playscript in the performance.

In your response you should

- refer directly to both the written playscript and the play in performance
- discuss how two areas of stagecraft were used in the performance
- use appropriate theatrical language, terminology and expressions.

Question 3

This question relates to the 2011 **Unit 4** prescribed playlist. Answer **all three** parts, **parts a., b. and c.**, making reference to **one** of the following performances. Before you answer **part a.**, state the **number** and **name** of the play on which your answer is based.

You are to use appropriate theatrical language, terminology and expressions in your response.

- 1. . . . *waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett
- 2. *Julius Caesar* by William Shakespeare
- 3. *Namatjira* by Scott Rankin
- 4. *War Crimes* by Angela Betzien and Real TV
- 5. *The Maids* by Jean Genet, translated by Martin Crimp
- 6. *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare

Number and name of the play _____

- a. Describe **two or more** key characteristics of **one** of the characters in the performance.

3 marks

- b. Discuss how **one actor** used verbal **and** non-verbal language when portraying a character in the play.

3 marks

- c. **Briefly** analyse **one** actor's use of expressive skills to interpret the playscript in the performance.

3 marks

Question 4

- Detach the insert from the centre of this book.
- Read the material in the insert.

This material includes

- contextual background
- stimulus material
- two pictures of the Open Studio performance space.

Note: You are **not** required to have prior knowledge of the material contained in the insert.

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

You may use illustrations to support your answers.

Choose **one** of the following areas of stagecraft that you will apply to the interpretation of *The Birds*.

1. acting
2. direction
3. stage management
4. dramaturgy
5. set design
6. properties
7. costume
8. make-up
9. sound
10. lighting
11. multimedia
12. promotion (including publicity)

Number and **name** of selected area of stagecraft _____

You must use the **same** area of stagecraft in parts **a.**, **b.** and **c.**

Production planning

- a.** **Annotate** the following script excerpt from *The Birds* in **two or more** places, explaining how the verbal **and/or** non-verbal language of the play would inform your work within the selected area of stagecraft during the **Production planning** stage.

4 marks

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Insert for Question 4

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Contextual background

Play:

You are a member of a production team planning to present a performance of *The Birds*, a Greek Comedy by Aristophanes, in an Open Studio performance space.

Context:

This play was written in 400 BC, a time when many people were being sued and taken to court by spies in Athens, a Greek city. Athens was also fighting a war, which the politicians said was to spread democracy around the Greek world. *The Birds* is a comedy which makes fun of politicians and celebrities.

Themes:

corruption, manipulation, creating a utopia, revolution, power, the ridiculous nature of politics and the law, fairness

Plot elements:

- Two middle-aged men, HOPE and TRUSTY, are annoyed with the corruption in their native city and set out to look for the easy life they have heard exists among the birds.
- They meet EPOPS, an old friend. EPOPS is dressed unconvincingly as a Hoopoe bird.
- EPOPS calls his wife, THE NIGHTINGALE, to play the flute and to call on the CHORUS OF BIRDS.
- The CHORUS OF BIRDS, led by the LEADER OF THE CHORUS, is suspicious and attacks the men, who fight back, defending themselves with their cooking pots.
- By clever argument, HOPE convinces the birds that they should stop flying about like idiots and build a great city in the sky, called Cloud-cuckoo-land. He argues this city-kingdom would then have power over both men and gods.
- The birds build the city and demand a new set of laws, declaring war on the world.
- A succession of annoying human visitors comes singing about how they want to be a part of the new city and to have a say in how it is run: lawyers, poets, prophets, spies, engineers, crooks, salesmen and punks. HOPE gets rid of them all.
- Finally, the gods themselves are defeated and come to seek peace. They concede victory to Cloud-cuckoo-land and give up SOVEREIGNTY, the beautiful girl who manages the gods' treasure.
- HOPE is proclaimed king and the play ends with singing and dancing at the wedding of HOPE and SOVEREIGNTY.

Theatrical style(s):

Your production team has decided to incorporate the following conventions of the theatrical style of Greek Comedy.

- live music
- exaggerated masks, costuming and make-up
- physical comedy, acrobatics, exaggerated acting, stylised movement and direct audience-address
- chorus conventions of group unison, tableaux, singing and dancing
- use of set items and properties to indicate time, place and character

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These **stimulus images** are provided to the production team during the **Production development** stage for the interpretation of *The Birds*.



Stimulus image 1: *Gardens of the Human Condition*, Michael Leunig, 1991

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this material is not supplied.

Stimulus image 2: *When Worlds Collide*, Kenny Scharf, 1984

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Stimulus image 3: The Hoopoe Bird



Stimulus image 4: Dionysus, the Greek god of wine and parties

TURN OVER

These are two pictures of the **Open Studio performance space** that will be used during the **Production season** for the interpretation of *The Birds*.

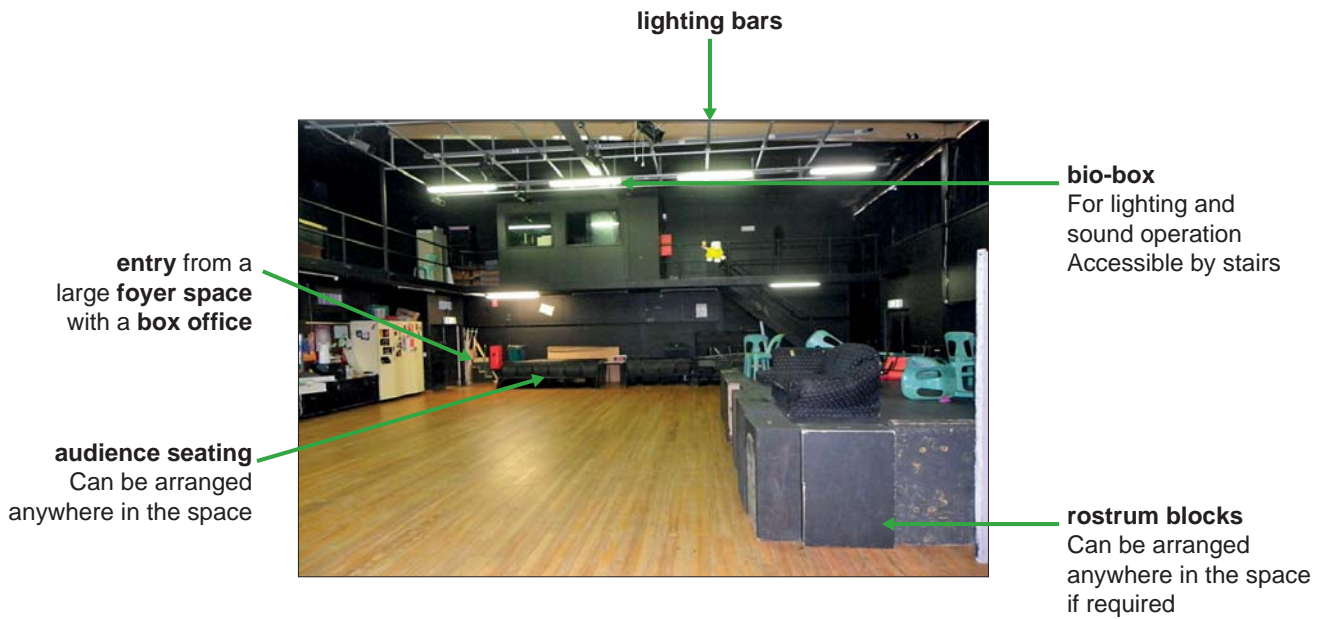


Figure 1. Open Studio performance space, seen from floor level

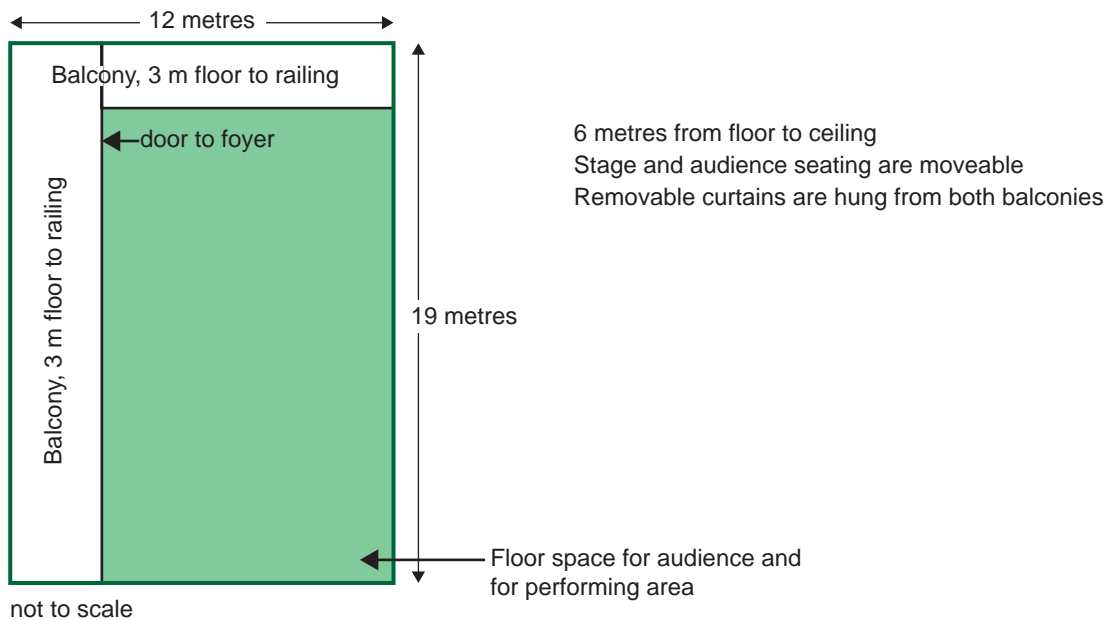


Figure 2. Bird's-eye view of the Open Studio performance space