

# VCE Theatre Studies

## 2019–2023

### Monologue examination – End of year

#### Examination specifications

##### Overall conditions

The examination will be undertaken at a time, date and venue to be set annually by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA). VCAA examination rules will apply. Details of these rules are published annually in the *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook*.

Examination time: 12 minutes  
(including time for student entry and exit from the examination room and transition between the two stages of the examination)

The examination will be assessed by a panel appointed by the VCAA.

The examination will contribute 25 per cent to the study score.

##### Content

Students will select and interpret one monologue from the prescribed monologues found in the monologue examination. The examination will be set annually by a panel appointed by the VCAA and published by the VCAA in April for the year in question. The *VCE Theatre Studies Study Design 2019–2023* is the document for the development of the examination. The examination will draw on the key knowledge and key skills from Unit 4, Outcomes 1 and 2.

The guidelines for the monologue examination are revised and published annually in the VCE Theatre Studies monologue examination.

**Students must interpret one prescribed monologue from the examination for the year in question or their work will receive zero marks for each assessment criterion.**

Students are expected to interpret their selected prescribed monologue in the production role of **either** Actor and Director **or** Designer. For the production role of Designer, any **two** of the following design areas must be applied: costume, make-up, props, set, lighting, sound.

## Format

The examination will comprise guidelines for students and teachers, 10 prescribed monologues and an Interpretation Statement template.

Students are to select **one** prescribed monologue for their monologue examination.

The examination will be in two stages:

- Stage 1 – Interpretation
- Stage 2 – Interpretation Statement

The guidelines for the monologue examination are revised and published annually in the VCE Theatre Studies monologue examination.

There will be **12 minutes** for the entire examination. Each stage of the examination will be timed. Students should spend no more than two minutes setting up their materials for the examination.

- Stage 1 – Interpretation will take place first and, as a guide, should not exceed six minutes.
- Stage 2 – Interpretation Statement will follow Stage 1 **without a break** and, as a guide, should not exceed two minutes.

Students will have **no more than eight minutes** to complete the two stages of the examination.

The remaining two minutes should be used to pack away materials, return the examination room to its original state and exit the room.

### Stage 1 – Interpretation

The interpretation will draw on the key knowledge and key skills developed across Unit 4, Area of Study 1 and Area of Study 2. Students are required to present an interpretation of their selected prescribed monologue that is informed by, and contextualised in relation to, the specified scene within the play and the world of the play.

Students are expected to interpret their selected prescribed monologue in the production role of **either** Actor and Director **or** Designer. For the production role of Designer, any **two** of the following design areas must be applied: costume, make-up, props, set, lighting, sound.

### Production roles

#### Option 1 – Actor and Director

- Students must select **one** prescribed monologue from the VCE Theatre Studies monologue examination for the year in question.
- Students are required to demonstrate the use of acting and directorial skills.
- All characters in the student's selected prescribed monologue must be portrayed or referred to in the gender identified. For gender-neutral monologues, students are permitted to portray the character as male, female or a non-specific gender.
- Students are required to deliver all spoken lines allocated to the specified character(s).
- Students are required to memorise the script of the monologue.
- Students may apply the stage directions as contained in the monologue or use them as a guide.
- Students should note that the performance space will be delineated in the examination room and will measure 5 m × 5 m. Students are required to present their interpretation within this designated area.
- Students must create an informed context. The interpretation may portray the existing contexts of the play or another appropriate context(s).
- Students must conduct dramaturgy to inform their interpretation of the monologue.

- Students are to present an interpretation that includes the realisation of a unified directorial concept to convey the contexts, plot, structure, language of the script, character(s), themes, images and ideas, theatre style(s), intended meanings, and theatrical possibilities of the monologue to the intended audience.
- Students are to perform their interpretation in the original theatre style(s) of the script or in another considered and informed theatre style(s).
- Students are required to use one or more elements of theatre composition for both actor and director to enhance the interpretation of the monologue. The same element or different elements may be used for both actor and director.
- Students are required to use verbal and non-verbal language in the interpretation of the monologue.
- Students are required to demonstrate an understanding of audience culture.

All of these requirements will influence the performance and should therefore be considered when developing the interpretation.

### **Guidelines for Option 1 – Actor and Director**

- As part of realising the unified directorial concept and/or to convey the contexts, plot, structure, language of the script, character(s), themes, images and ideas, theatre style(s), intended meanings, and theatrical possibilities of the monologue to the intended audience, the student may choose to apply design areas such as costume, make-up, props, set, lighting and/or sound to the interpretation.
- Students who select the production role of Actor and Director must not wear their school uniform during their monologue examination.
- Students are required to perform within the designated performance space of 5 m × 5 m.
- Any form of reading from the script of the prescribed monologue will be considered to be outside the specifications of the task.
- Students are not permitted to replay previously recorded lines from the monologue, dialogue from other characters or lines from any other omitted text.
- Students are not to sing to or recite to previously recorded song words/lyrics.
- If a student chooses to sing some or all of the song lyrics contained within a monologue, the melody must be consistent with the published score of the music. Any published version of the score is acceptable. Singing the song lyrics without enactment will not constitute a performance as required by the examination.
- Students will not be prompted during the delivery of the monologue. The unintentional act of missing a line(s) will not, necessarily, disadvantage a student.
- Students are required to make a clear distinction between the completion of Stage 1 – Interpretation and the commencement of Stage 2 – Interpretation Statement.

### **Option 2 – Designer**

- Students must select **one** prescribed monologue from the VCE Theatre Studies monologue examination for the year in question.
- Students are required to demonstrate the use of design skills.
- All characters in the student's selected prescribed monologue must be portrayed or referred to in the gender identified. For gender-neutral monologues, students are permitted to portray the character as male, female or a non-specific gender.
- Students may apply the stage directions as contained in the monologue or use the stage directions as a guide.
- Students should note that the performance space will be delineated in the examination room and will measure 5 m × 5 m. Students are required to present their interpretation within this designated area.
- Students are to create and memorise a presentation for Stage 1 – Interpretation.

- Students are required to interpret the monologue by selecting and applying any **two** of the following design areas:
  - costume
  - make-up
  - props
  - set
  - lighting
  - sound
- Students interpreting the monologue as a Designer and who select 'costume' as one of their design areas may choose to wear the costume or they may choose to wear theatre blacks and present the costume on a mannequin or on/by using another type of stand. Designers should not wear a costume(s) and/or make-up if these are not their chosen design areas.
- Designers are required to incorporate the following areas in any order:

1. Dramaturgy

Students are required to show evidence that their work in each of the two design areas has been informed by:

- dramaturgical research into the contexts of the monologue, the specified scene in which it is embedded and the world of the play
- themes, images and ideas, intended meanings of the monologue, the specified scene and the world of the play
- the structure and plot of, and the character(s) in, the script
- the language of the script
- influences on the playwright(s)
- previous productions
- the theatre style(s) of the monologue, the specified scene and the wider playscript
- an understanding of audience culture.

2. Elements of theatre composition

Students are required to show evidence of how one or more elements of theatre composition have been applied to each of the two design areas to enhance the interpretation of the monologue. The same element may be used for their work in both design areas.

3. Presentation

Students are to provide evidence of how their work in each of the two design areas:

- could be used by an actor when performing the monologue, as per the requirements of the examination
- is related to the contexts, plot, structure, language of the script, character(s), themes, images and ideas, theatre style(s), intended meanings, and theatrical possibilities of the monologue
- will convey the intended meanings of the monologue, the specified scene and the wider playscript for the intended audience
- accords with, and functions within, a performance of the monologue as per the requirements of the examination.

All of these requirements will influence the design interpretation and are required to be considered when deciding on the design concept for the interpretation.

### **Guidelines for Option 2 – Designer**

- Students should make direct references to the prescribed monologue, including directly quoting from two or more different sections of the monologue.
- Students should design for an actor performing the monologue to the intended audience.
- Students should design for a single clearly lit space and for the designated performance space of 5 m x 5 m.
- Students should not include an explanation of their developmental processes.
- When presenting their interpretation, students are required to demonstrate and verbally explain their design ideas.
- Students should not annotate their design materials. Students may label their design materials with a single word per label and with up to a total of seven labels per presentation. Labels may refer to a feature(s) of an image(s) and/or to a component(s) of the student's design. If used, the labels should be clearly visible to the assessors.
- Students are required to make a clear distinction between the completion of Stage 1 – Interpretation and the commencement of Stage 2 – Interpretation Statement.
- The two design areas selected by the student each constitute a production role. For example, set design constitutes the production role of set designer.
- Students may place greater emphasis on one design area but they must include two areas within both stages of the examination.
- Students may also include additional information, as appropriate to their design concept.

### **Stage 2 – Interpretation Statement**

- An Interpretation Statement template will be provided with the examination for the year in question. Students are required to deliver the Interpretation Statement orally after they have completed Stage 1 – Interpretation. When delivering the Interpretation Statement, students are permitted to refer to the notes they have written on their Interpretation Statement template. Speaker notes, other than those written by the student on their Interpretation Statement template, are not permitted.
- In Stage 2, students are to describe, explain and justify their interpretative decisions as demonstrated in Stage 1. Students can reference any one or more of the following: contexts, plot, structure, language of the script, character(s), themes, images and ideas, theatre style(s), intended meanings, theatrical possibilities, application of dramaturgy, application of production roles, elements of theatre composition, and understanding of audience culture. Students may also highlight and/or explain aspects of the interpretation that they have completed in Stage 1.
- Students will deliver their Interpretation Statement using specific terminology and expressions associated with their selected production role.
- The oral presentation given by the student must refer directly to their interpretation of the monologue. It must focus on the production role chosen by the student (**either** Actor and Director **or** Designer). Information about required content for the Interpretation Statement will be included in the monologue examination for the year in question.
- Students are required to address the points they have written on their Interpretation Statement template.
- The completed Interpretation Statement template used by the student during the delivery of Stage 2 must be given to the assessors at the conclusion of the examination.

## Examination conditions

- Students are required to adhere to the protocols of the examination centre.
- Students will be allocated an examination room at the monologue examination venue. Room changes will not be permitted. This restriction must be taken into consideration when students are preparing for the examination, irrespective of whether they have chosen the production role of Actor and Director or the production role of Designer.
- Only the student being assessed and authorised VCAA staff are permitted in the vicinity of the examination room.
- Students are required to ensure that their name and/or the name of their school is not visible on any of the materials they bring into the examination room.
- The examination will be conducted in a single clearly lit space. The lighting provided in the room for the purposes of examination cannot be altered. Any use of lighting by the student either for the production role of Actor and Director or for the production role of Designer will be in addition to the lighting state provided.
- The size of the examination room will vary depending on the venue. However, rooms are usually relatively small and they have a variety of floor coverings. Some rooms may be carpeted, whereas others may have wooden or tiled floors.
- Each examination room will have a power outlet. Any electrical equipment that the student intends to use in the examination room and that will be plugged into the power outlet must be tested and tagged beforehand.
- The performance space will be designated in the examination room and will measure 5 m × 5 m. This performance space will be delineated in the examination room. Students must work within the designated area and present their interpretation within this designated area.
- Two chairs will be provided in the examination room for students to use in the examination if they wish. Tables will not be provided. Any additional materials, if required, should be supplied by the student.
- The assessors' table is for assessment purposes. Students are not to place objects on the assessors' table or use the table in any way as part of their examination.
- In the examination room, the health and safety of both students and assessors is paramount. Students must not endanger, or be seen to endanger, either themselves or others. Students are not to use any materials, objects or substances in their performance that may cause, or that may be seen to cause, injury to themselves or others. Students must also ensure that any item used is not deemed to be hazardous by the assessors. Careful consideration must therefore be given to the selection of props and set items. Students are advised that if the use of any material, object or substance is deemed by any assessor to be potentially dangerous or hazardous, the student will not be permitted to use it. The decision of the assessors will be final.
- Students are not permitted to bring into the examination room objects or substances (including aerosols) deemed harmful, hazardous or illegal, actual or imitation weapons of any description (including laser lights, tasers, swords, daggers and knives of any type) and open flames (including candles and matches).
- Students are not permitted to bring into the examination room folios or other materials associated with their developmental processes.
- Students may bring into the examination room only items or materials that will directly assist them in communicating their interpretation.

- Students may bring a laptop, MP3 player, tablet or other such portable audio devices into the examination room. Recording functions on audio equipment must be disabled during the examination. Where a laptop is used, the student should direct the screen of the device towards the assessors. A mobile phone is permitted in the examination room if it is to be used as a prop or as an audio replay device. Note: The phone must be in 'flight mode' and wi-fi functions on any device must be disabled before the student enters the examination room.
- Students who choose the production role of Designer are permitted to bring models into the examination room but should not use an item that is so small that the assessors are unable to see relevant detail.
- Students must be able to carry all materials into the examination room on their own, without any assistance and within the allotted time.
- Students must ensure that any props, costumes (including footwear) or other aspects of their interpretation do not, in any way, damage the performance space.
- Students are responsible for cleaning up and removing, by the end of their allotted examination time, any materials they bring into the space for their examination.
- Students are not to wear their school uniform during their monologue examination.
- The assessors are the audience for the interpretation. In this context, the assessors are fulfilling the role of those for whom the interpretation is intended.
- Students must not walk behind and/or touch and/or approach the assessors during the examination.
- During the examination, students are not permitted to ask the assessors to touch design materials or other materials, such as props.

## Assessment criteria

All students will be examined against each criterion. The criteria will be applied to both stages of the examination. For assessment purposes, the interpretation of the monologue must be informed by the specified scene, the wider playscript and the world of the play.

Students will be assessed on the extent to which their response to the task demonstrates the following criteria.

### 1. Fulfilment of the requirements of the selected production role

This first criterion assesses whether or not the following requirements of the task have been met. The task requires that students have:

- selected a prescribed monologue from the VCE Theatre Studies monologue examination for the year in question
- presented an interpretation (Stage 1) of the monologue through the application of the selected production role (**either** Actor and Director **or** Designer)
- met the requirements of the selected production role (**either** Actor and Director **or** Designer)
- presented the Interpretation Statement orally (Stage 2)
- submitted a completed Interpretation Statement template at the end of the examination
- completed the examination within the allotted time.

## **2. Skill in undertaking and applying dramaturgy**

This criterion assesses the ability of the student to apply dramaturgy to their interpretation of the monologue. This may include research into the contexts of the prescribed monologue, the specified scene and the wider playscript, plot, structure, language of the script, character(s), themes, images and ideas, theatre style(s), intended meanings, theatrical possibilities, influences on the playwright(s), and previous productions of the play. Students are required to conduct dramaturgical research both within and outside of the script. Dramaturgy may include processes such as script-based research and/or workshops conducted during the development of the interpretation of the selected monologue.

## **3. Skill in working in the selected production role**

This criterion assesses the skill of the student in working in their selected production role of **either** Actor and Director **or** Designer. For the production role of Designer, any **two** of the following design areas must be applied: costume, make-up, props, set, lighting, sound. Students who select the production role of Actor and Director will be assessed on their acting and directorial skills. Students who select the production role of Designer will be assessed on their design skills.

## **4. Skill in conveying the interrelationships between the prescribed monologue, the specified scene and the world of the play**

This criterion assesses the ability of the student to convey the interrelationships between the prescribed monologue, the specified scene in which it is embedded and the wider playscript from which it is derived, and how these interrelationships inform the theatrical possibilities of their interpretation.

## **5. Skill in the development of a creative and an imaginative concept for interpreting the prescribed monologue**

This criterion assesses the ability of the student to develop a creative and an imaginative concept through the production role of **either** Actor and Director **or** Designer for the interpretation of the prescribed monologue. When developing the creative and imaginative concept, the student should be informed by, and take into consideration, the contexts of the prescribed monologue, the specified scene and the wider playscript, plot, structure, language of the script, character(s), themes, images and ideas, theatre style(s), intended meanings, theatrical possibilities, influences on the playwright(s), and application of dramaturgy.



## 6. Skill in conveying the contexts of the prescribed monologue

This criterion assesses the ability of the student to convey the contexts of the prescribed monologue through their work in the selected production role. Students may interpret the monologue within:

- its original context(s)
- OR**
- another considered and informed context(s). Any changes to the context(s) should be informed by the immediate context of the monologue, the specified scene in which it is embedded and the wider playscript.

For the production role of Actor and Director, contextual choices should be conveyed primarily through the application of acting and direction. The performance may be supported by costumes, make-up, props, set, lighting and/or sound. Some of the directorial choices behind the interpretation of the scene may not be apparent in the performance of the monologue. Rather, they may play an important role in the processes used to develop the interpretation of the monologue.

For the production role of Designer, the contexts should be conveyed through the application of design but should consider the requirements of the task. These requirements include that the contextual choices for the design should be suitable for an actor performing to the intended audience within the designated performance space of 5 m × 5 m.

If a student chooses to recontextualise the monologue, any changes to the context(s) must be appropriate for the selected prescribed monologue, the specified scene in which it is embedded and the wider context(s) of the world of the play.

## 7. Skill in applying theatre style(s)

This criterion assesses the student's knowledge of the theatre style(s) of the prescribed monologue and the student's ability to apply the theatre style(s) to their interpretation. An interpretation may draw on more than one theatre style, as well as variations of a particular style. Theatre styles are the practices and traditions of theatre that have come to be accepted as being conventional and are particular to specific times, places, peoples and cultures. Initially, the student should research the theatre style(s) intended by the playwright(s), using this as the basis for the development of the interpretation. A student may wish to vary the theatre style(s) from that of the original script. Changes to the theatre style(s) of the monologue are permitted, as long as these changes are not randomly applied and the changes are informed by the contexts of the original script, its plot, structure, language, character(s), themes, images and ideas, and theatrical possibilities.

## 8. Skill in the use of elements of theatre composition

This criterion assesses the ways in which the student has used the elements of theatre composition to interpret the prescribed monologue. The elements of theatre composition are cohesion, motion, rhythm, emphasis, contrast and variation. The elements can be applied individually or in combination and in any theatre style. The choice and application of one or more elements of theatre composition for each production role should be informed by the concept for the interpretation. Students are required to consider the contexts, plot, structure, language of the script, character(s), themes, images and ideas, theatre style(s), intended meanings, and theatrical possibilities.

### **9. Skill in demonstrating the interrelationship between the interpretation and the audience**

This criterion assesses the student's ability to demonstrate how their work in interpreting the prescribed monologue is informed by an understanding of audience culture. The student's work should demonstrate how aspects of the interpretation could enhance the experience of the intended audience. Consideration should be given to contexts, plot, structure, language of the script, character(s), themes, images and ideas, theatre style(s), intended meanings, and theatrical possibilities.

### **10. Ability to demonstrate, orally justify and explain interpretative decisions**

This criterion assesses the student's ability to demonstrate effectively, orally justify and explain their interpretation of the prescribed monologue. This applies to both stages of the examination (Stage 1 – Interpretation and Stage 2 – Interpretation Statement). The student will be assessed on their ability to demonstrate and discuss aspects such as the concept(s), application and presentation of their ideas.

## **Relevant references**

The following publications should be referred to in relation to the VCE Theatre Studies monologue examination:

- *VCE Theatre Studies Study Design 2019–2023*
- *VCE Theatre Studies – Advice for teachers 2019–2023*
- *VCAA Bulletin*

## **Advice**

During the 2019–2023 accreditation period for VCE Theatre Studies, monologue examinations will be prepared according to the examination specifications above. Each monologue examination will conform to these specifications.

A separate document containing a sample examination has been published on the 'Theatre Studies – Exams and Examination Reports' page on the VCAA website.