

Theatre Studies

VCE Monologue Examination

Monday 7 October to Monday 28 October 2024

Guidelines for students and teachers

Monologue examination conditions

1. The monologue examination will be set and assessed by panels appointed by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA).
2. [VCAA examination rules](#) will apply.
3. The monologue examination venue is set annually by the VCAA.

Examination room conditions

1. Students will be allocated an examination room at the monologue examination venue in which they will undertake their examination. Students and their teachers are not permitted to request a change of room.
2. Only the assessors and any personnel authorised by the VCAA will be permitted in the examination room with the student during the monologue examination.
3. The performance will use a single clearly lit space. No changes to the lighting grid, or to the lighting provided in the examination room, are permitted. Any use of lighting by the student for the production roles of **either** Actor and Director **or** Designer will be in addition to the lighting state provided.
4. The room will be equipped with a power outlet. Any electrical equipment that the student intends to use in the room and that will be plugged into the power outlet must be tested and tagged beforehand.
5. The student should interpret the monologue in such a manner that their performance uses an area no larger than 5 m × 5 m. This performance space will be delineated in the examination room and students must work within this designated area. Designers should design for an interpretation of the monologue that could be performed within this area. Students must not walk behind and/or touch the assessors during their monologue examination.
6. Two chairs will be provided in the examination room. Any other items, if required by the student, must be carried into the room, set up and removed from the room by the student alone, and within the allotted time.
7. Students must ensure that all materials and equipment fit through a door of standard size in order to allow efficient entry to and exit from the examination room. If any materials or equipment do not fit through the door, they cannot be used during the performance examination.
8. 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 monologue examination.
9. 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.
10. Students are not permitted to ask assessors to touch design materials or other items during their monologue examination.
11. Students are required to be aware of safe and ethical working practices associated with theatre production when interpreting the monologue. 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 permitted to bring into the examination room:
 - any 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)
 - open flames (including candles and matches).

Students are not to use any materials, objects or substances in their performance that may cause, or that may be perceived to cause, injury to themselves or others. In some cases, an object, material or substance that may be considered safe by the student may be considered hazardous in the actual performance. Consequently, careful consideration must be given to the selection of props or 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.

12. Students may bring into the examination room only props and materials that will directly assist them in communicating their interpretation. Students must only enter the examination room **once** with their props and materials. Once they are in the room students are not to leave until the completion of the examination.
13. Students must ensure that any props, costumes (including footwear) or other aspects of their performance do not, in any way, damage the performance space.
14. Students are responsible for cleaning up and removing, by the end of their allotted examination time, any materials, objects and substances they bring into the space for their examination.
15. Students may bring a laptop, MP3 player, tablet, mobile phone 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.
16. Students are not to wear their school uniform during the examination or use any props or other materials that may identify them or their school.
17. All student performances will be recorded. An audiovisual recording of all student performances will provide a valuable additional quality assurance measure. Recordings will not be used for any other purpose without first obtaining student consent.
18. Any updates to the conditions for this examination will be published in the *VCAA Bulletin*.

Format of the monologue examination

1. Students will select and interpret a 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.
2. There will be **no more than 12 minutes** for the entire examination. A timing device will be used during the examination.
3. The examination will be in two stages and these stages combined **must not exceed eight minutes**.
 - Students will have a maximum of two minutes to set up the materials for their monologue examination and this will be timed. If a student is still setting up at the two-minute mark, they will be instructed to commence Stage 1 – Interpretation. It is recommended that Stage 1 of the examination not exceed six minutes.
 - Stage 2 – Interpretation Statement will follow Stage 1 **without a break**. If a student is still undertaking their monologue examination at the eight-minute mark, they will be instructed to stop.
4. The two stages of the examination will be assessed against common criteria and a total mark will be awarded for both Stage 1 and Stage 2 combined.

Stage 1 – Interpretation

1. Students are required to develop an interpretation of **one** of the prescribed monologues in this document. The interpretation should be developed as part of Unit 4, Area of Study 1 and Area of Study 2.
2. Students **must** use the prescribed edition of the play as indicated in this document.
3. Marks will not be awarded for an interpretation that does not use one of the prescribed monologues in this document.
4. The monologue is the only aspect of the specified scene that is to be interpreted for the examination.
5. The interpretation should draw on the knowledge and skills developed in the interpretation of the scene, as well as knowledge of the wider contexts of the play. Students should ensure that the contexts of the monologue are presented in their interpretation and referred to in the oral Interpretation Statement.
6. The interpretation of the scene in Unit 4, Area of Study 1 and Area of Study 2, should inform the interpretation of the monologue presented in the examination, including contextualising the monologue within the scene and within the full script.
7. Other interpretative decisions may be relevant, and these may be mentioned in the Interpretation Statement.
8. Reading from notes is not permitted in Stage 1 of the examination. Students are also 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.
9. The singing of song lyrics contained within the prescribed monologue must be consistent with the published score of the music. For students interpreting the monologue as an Actor and Director, singing the song lyrics without enactment will not constitute a performance as required by this examination.
10. Students are required to make a clear distinction between the completion of Stage 1 – Interpretation and the commencement of Stage 2 – Interpretation Statement.
11. The VCE Theatre Studies monologue examination is not a public performance and therefore is not subject to current community standards. Students are encouraged to consider all 10 monologues before making a final selection, regardless of their own or their character's cultural background, race, gender or sexual orientation. Careful and sensitive consideration of the portrayal and/or reference to any specified character should be paramount but not a deterrent when interpreting a monologue.
12. Students are permitted to portray and/or refer to the gender of a specified character(s) according to the original text or to change the gender of a specified character(s). Any change to the gender of a character(s) from that in the original text will be considered a contextual choice.
13. Students may apply the stage directions as contained in the prescribed monologue or use them as a guide.
14. Students are expected to interpret their selected prescribed monologue in the production roles of **either** Actor and Director **or** Designer.
 - **Option 1 – Actor and Director**
 - Students interpreting the monologue as an Actor and Director are required to deliver all spoken lines allocated to the specified character(s). Students are not to deliver lines that are omitted. This may include the lines of other characters and, in some instances, lines from the specified character(s).

- Students interpreting the monologue as an Actor and Director will not be prompted during the delivery of the monologue in Stage 1 – Interpretation.
 - Students interpreting the monologue as an Actor and Director may choose to apply design areas such as costume, make-up, props, set, lighting and/or sound to their interpretation.
 - In addition to the lines, students interpreting the monologue as an Actor and Director may present actions, movements and gestures without words at any time once they commence the interpretation of the monologue. This can be before and/or during and/or after the delivery of the prescribed lines.
 - Timing of the examination begins once the student starts performing.
- **Option 2 – 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 interpreting the monologue as a Designer and who have selected ‘costume’ as one of their design areas may choose to wear the costume. Alternatively, they may choose to wear theatre blacks and present the costume on a mannequin or on another type of stand. Designers should not wear costume(s) and/or make-up if these are not their chosen design areas.
 - Students interpreting the monologue as a Designer are permitted to bring models into the examination room. However, they should not bring in an item that is so small that the assessors are unable to see relevant detail.

Stage 2 – Interpretation Statement

1. A template for the Interpretation Statement is published on the [VCAA website](#) in April with the examination materials.
2. Students are required to deliver the Interpretation Statement orally after they have completed Stage 1 – Interpretation.
3. Students are required to describe, explain and justify their interpretative decisions as demonstrated in Stage 1. Students can reference any one or more of the following: dramaturgy, application of production roles, contexts, elements of theatre composition, structure, plot, character(s), themes, images and ideas, intended meanings, theatre style(s), theatrical possibilities, language of the script, actor–audience relationship, and understanding of audience culture.
4. Students are required to identify two elements of theatre composition that are most evident in their interpretation of the monologue. Students selecting the production role of **Actor and Director** must identify one element of theatre composition for Actor, and one element of theatre composition for Director. Students selecting the production role of **Designer** must identify one element of theatre composition for **each** design area selected.
5. When delivering the Interpretation Statement, students are permitted to refer to the notes they have written on their Interpretation Statement. Speaker notes, other than those written by the student on their Interpretation Statement, are not permitted.
6. Once students have completed the delivery of their Interpretation Statement, they are to submit to the assessors a single hard copy of the Interpretation Statement that they used/referred to during the examination.

Notes

1. While the VCAA considers all of the plays on the list of prescribed monologues to be suitable for study, teachers are expected to be aware that, in some instances, sensitivity might be needed where particular issues or themes are explored.
2. While the VCAA has made every effort to ensure that no offensive language is used in the actual monologues, some plays contain a variety of suggestive and/or potentially offensive words and phrases. This language occurs with intermittent frequency. However, it may invite adverse comments from some areas of the community and may be considered offensive to some students.
3. Where a term may cause offence to students, this term may be removed from the dialogue. In songs, another appropriate word(s) may be used as a substitute.
4. Before selecting plays for study and prior to students reading the play and/or studying the script, teachers are expected to familiarise themselves with these issues. Information provided in this examination about themes and/or language used in specific plays is a guide only.
5. The prescribed monologues in this document should be used in conjunction with their full scripts to complete the work associated with Unit 4, Area of Study 1 and Area of Study 2. Where the version of the complete play is different from the version selected by the VCAA, care should be taken to ensure that the correct scene is studied.
6. Students must interpret the version of the prescribed monologue as set by the VCAA. No other versions will be considered.
7. Some of the plays containing the prescribed monologues may have limited availability. Teachers are required to check the availability of the prescribed monologues at the earliest opportunity. Where an ebook version of a play is available, this will be indicated on the prescribed monologues.
8. Teachers should consult the examination specifications (Version 3, January 2022) on the VCAA website for more details regarding the examination and the assessment criteria.
9. For any enquiries about the conduct of the examination, contact Anne Smithies, Performance and Languages Oral Project Manager, Assessment Operations, telephone: (03) 9059 4145, email: <Anne.Smithies@education.vic.gov.au>.
10. For any enquiries regarding the study design or the content of the examination, contact the VCE Curriculum Unit, email: <vcaa.vce.curriculum@education.vic.gov.au>.

Prescribed monologue 1

Play *FANGIRLS*

Playwright:	Yve Blake
Characters:	EDNA and HARRY
Synopsis:	The protagonist of this contemporary Australian musical comedy is Edna, a 14-year-old fan who is obsessed with Harry, the lead singer of the band True Connection. When the band tours her city, Edna makes plans to kidnap Harry and keep him in her bedroom, in the hope he will fall in love with her.

Monologue

From:	EDNA: They just love you 'cause you're famous but I don't care (page 52)
To:	EDNA: Don't you wish that you could just break free? (page 54)
Omitting:	The following lines are to be omitted
From:	HARRY: So ... can I go? (page 53)
To:	HARRY: We'd need ... money, we'd need transport, we'd need – (page 53)

Specified scene

From:	SCENE 4 – EDNA'S BEDROOM <i>EDNA wears latex gloves</i>
To:	<i>BRIANNA looks down at her thighs with devastation</i>
Page reference:	51–57
Note:	This monologue can be performed with or without some musical accompaniment. Refer to the cast recording for guidance. Acting/directing students can determine how they transition from one character to the next and how each is portrayed in a manner that distinguishes it from the other.
Prescribed edition:	Yve Blake, <i>FANGIRLS</i> , Currency Press, Strawberry Hills, NSW, 2021. ISBN: 978-1-76062-342-5 Also available as an ebook

Prescribed monologue 2

Play *Salt Creek Murders*

Playwright: Melissa Reeves

Character: NELLIE

Synopsis: This tragi-comic thriller is based on the true story of a series of murders that occurred in a remote town in South Australia in the 1850s. The victims all have a connection to a hotel run by Nellie Robinson, whose husband was the first to be killed. As the plot unfolds, the murderer is revealed and so is Nellie's connection to them.

Monologue

From: I never liked this house (page 18)

To: I can wait up by myself ... (page 20)

Omitting: All lines from JANE
NELLIE: Does she? (page 19)

Specified scene

From: SCENE 5

To: *NELLIE is silent and quite frightening as she stands behind the table*

Page reference: 14–21

Prescribed edition: Melissa Reeves, *Salt Creek Murders*, Australian Plays Transform, SKU: ASC-626, 2002
<https://apt.org.au/product/salt-creek-murders-2/>

Prescribed monologue 3

Play *Top Girls*

Playwright:	Caryl Churchill
Characters:	LOUISE and SHONA and WIN
Synopsis:	This play juxtaposes and interweaves the workers and clients of <i>The Top Girls Employment Agency</i> , in Margaret Thatcher's Britain during the 1980s, with notable women from history. Thematically, it focuses on the way women have been treated by men throughout history, including in the business world.
<i>Monologue (first part)</i>	LOUISE
From:	There you are, I've lived for that company (page 51)
To:	I have done so, I have proved – well (page 52)
Omitting:	All lines from WIN The following lines from LOUISE No I won't (page 52) Apart from the girls of course, yes (page 52)
Replacing:	'There was one' with 'Yes, there was one girl' (page 52)
<i>Monologue (second part)</i>	SHONA
From:	What I've been doing. It's all down there (page 62)
To:	Not exactly (page 63)
Omitting:	All lines from NELL SHONA: from 'I stay in various hotels' to 'Green salad. I don't like tomatoes' (page 63)
Adding:	'Not a word of this is true?' after 'How do you mean?' (page 63) 'Lying?' before 'Not exactly' (page 63)
<i>Monologue (third part)</i>	WIN
From:	Who's sitting in my chair? (page 64)
To:	They hope (page 65)
Omitting:	All lines from ANGIE and MARLENE The following lines from WIN That's good because I've only got one. Are you hungry? There's a café on the corner. 'No' before 'I was headhunted' from: 'Oh yes, all that, and a science degree' to: 'and Pepsi cola in China?' from: 'I lived with a fella' to: 'I've not been to see him too much this last year'
Adding:	'that I work here?' after 'How did you guess' (page 64)

Replacing: 'Your aunty's a smashing bird' **with** 'Your aunty Marlene's a smashing bird' (page 64)
'Not at the moment' **with** 'I don't think you could work here at the moment' (page 64)

Note: Acting/directing students can determine how they transition from one character to the next and how each is portrayed in a manner that distinguishes it from the other two.

Specified scene

From: Interview. WIN and LOUISE
To: MARLENE: She's not going to make it.
Page reference: 50–66

Prescribed edition: Caryl Churchill, *Top Girls*, Methuen Drama, Modern Classics 2001.
ISBN: 978-0-413-55480-2
Also available as an ebook

Prescribed monologue 4

Play *Bombshells*

Playwright: Joanna Murray-Smith
Character: MARY O'DONNELL
Synopsis: In this comical monologue, Mary is a teenager waiting for her turn in the school talent show. She is the 'talent' – competitive, judgemental and nasty. Her cruel comments towards the other competitors in the show demonstrate her mean attitude and distorted opinion of her own ability. Mary waits in the wings preparing to triumph in her performance.

Monologue

From: *No one* can sing, and dance like me. (page 15)
To: Am I going to be pipped at the post by Angela McTerry? NO, I AM NOT. (page 17)
Omitting: All lines from ANNOUNCER

Specified scene

From: *No one* can sing, and dance like me.
To: ANNOUNCER: Thank you, Mary. Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, the winner of St Brigid's Talent Show is –
Page reference: 15–19
Prescribed edition: Joanna Murray-Smith, *Bombshells*, Currency Press, Strawberry Hills, NSW, 2004.
ISBN: 978-0-86819-751-7
Also available as an ebook

Prescribed monologue 5

Play *The Notebook of Trigorin*, a free adaptation of *The Seagull* by Anton Chekhov

Playwright: Tennessee Williams, translated from the Russian by Ann Dunnigan

Character: TRIGORIN

Synopsis: American playwright Tennessee Williams was haunted by the play *The Seagull* by Russian playwright Anton Chekhov. Williams's 'version' premiered in Vancouver in 1981 and is recontextualised from Russia to America's deep south, yet preserves the Russian names. Of interest is what this change tells the audience about how Williams views the state of Tennessee. As the title implies, this is a memory-play seen through the eyes of Trigorin, Chekhov's discontented egocentric novelist. Williams's most radical change was to make Trigorin a bisexual who states that, as a writer, he 'needs a bit of both sexes in him'.

Monologue

From: You're a beautiful and very kind young girl. (page 31)

To: And I'd agree. (page 32)

Omitting: No lines are to be omitted

Specified scene

From: Beginning of ACT 2

To: End of ACT 2

Page reference: 22–34

Prescribed edition: Tennessee Williams, *The Notebook of Trigorin*, a free adaptation of Chekhov's *The Seagull*, New Directions Books, New York, 1997.
ISBN: 978-0-8222-1597-4

Prescribed monologue 6

Play *Hamlet*

Playwright: William Shakespeare

Character: HAMLET

Synopsis: A grief-stricken Prince Hamlet tries to make sense of and come to terms with the death of his father, the King of Denmark, and the hasty remarriage of his mother to his uncle (now King) Claudius. After discovering that his uncle had murdered his father, Hamlet arranges for a group of actors to play a scene that mimics the murder, to trick Claudius into revealing himself. Claudius tries to arrange to have Hamlet deported and killed but Hamlet returns to Denmark to face his uncle and his enemies at court in a brutal fencing match.

Monologue

From: Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue (page 135)

To: How now, my lord, will the King hear this piece of work? (page 139)

Omitting: All lines from PLAYER

Specified scene

From: HAMLET: Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue

To: HAMLET: No, good mother. Here's metal more attractive. [Hamlet takes a place near Ophelia]

Page reference: 135–143

Prescribed edition: <https://www.folger.edu/explore/shakespeares-works/hamlet/read/>

Prescribed monologue 7

Play *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

Playwright: Simon Stephens, adapted from the novel by Mark Haddon

Character: SIOBHAN

Synopsis: Fifteen year-old Christopher has an extraordinary brain and is exceptional at maths, but he is ill-equipped to interpret everyday life. He has never ventured alone beyond the end of his road. When Christopher investigates the killing of a neighbour's dog, something forbidden by his father, it takes him on a frightening journey that turns his world upside down. Siobhan, Christopher's teacher, is a mentor figure and confidant. In the play, Siobhan acts as a narrator of Christopher's story.

Monologue

From: I started by looking in the kitchen (page 36)

To: which meant that the letter was posted eighteen months after Mother had died (page 39)

Note: In the monologue, the persona of Judy is portrayed by Siobhan.

Omitting: All lines from CHRISTOPHER and ED

AND

From: SIOBHAN: 'There were seven shoes and a comb' (page 36)

To: SIOBHAN: 'And when I opened the shirt box I saw my book was inside it' (page 37)

Specified scene

From: ED: What is this?

To: JUDY: And I felt really lonely

Page reference: 33–44

Prescribed edition: Simon Stephens, adapted from the novel by Mark Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, London, 2012.

ISBN: 978-1-40817-335-0

Also available as an ebook

Prescribed monologue 8

Play *His Dark Materials*

Playwright: Nicholas Wright, based on the novels by Philip Pullman

Character: IOREK BYRNISON

Synopsis: In this coming-of-age story, Lyra and Will travel through multiple parallel universes in a quest to escape numerous enemies; and to find and rescue their loved ones. On their journey, they face many perils and cross paths with fantastical creatures including Witches, Spectres, Armoured Bears, Gobblers, Harpies, Angels, and Ghosts. Iorek Byrnison is one of them.

Monologue (first part)

From: Who are you? (page 47)

To: I want to get it now! (page 48)

Monologue (second part)

From: Farder Coram asked me to put his smoke-leaf tin into something stronger. Keep it for him. (page 54)

To: I must rest. (page 56)

Omitting: All lines by the other characters, and the following line by IOREK BYRNISON:
None (page 47)

Adding: 'There's metal lying around' **after** 'Because I've got no armour!' (page 48)
'By' **before** 'the humans of this town' (page 48)
'If you can find out where they've hidden my armour' **after** 'the people I've killed' (page 48)
'I was tricked by the people of Trollesund because I drank spirits' **after** 'No one can trick a bear' (page 56)

Replacing: 'done it already?' **with** 'freed Lord Asriel and taken back my throne already?' (page 55)

Specified scene

From: Trollesund. Unfriendly TROLLESUNDERS watch the GYPTIANS arrive.

To: They put a sack over LYRA's head and bundle her away.

Page reference: 45–57

Prescribed edition: Nicholas Wright, based on the novels by Philip Pullman, *His Dark Materials* (New Edition), Nick Hearn Books, 2004
ISBN: 978-1-85459-831-8

Prescribed monologue 9

Play *The Coffin is Too Big for the Hole*

Playwright: Kuo Pao Kun

Character: GRANDSON

Synopsis: In this satirical comedy, the burial of a beloved grandfather is cut short when the mourners discover that the coffin does not fit into the allocated hole. Panic ensues and the grandson tries to resolve the issue with the authorities and give his grandfather the funeral that befits his status.

Monologue

From: Yeah, can you imagine? Can you imagine that the coffin of your grandfather cannot get into the hole (page 2)

To: How can you have two graves for one coffin? (page 3)

Omitting: No lines are to be omitted

Specified scene The entire play

From: GRANDSON: I don't know why, but it keeps coming back to me

To: GRANDSON: I don't know ... I just don't know ... [*sic*]

Page reference: 1–9

Prescribed edition: *The Complete Works of Kuo Pao Kun, Volume 4, Plays in English*, The Theatre Practice/Global Publishing, 2012.

ISBN 978-9-81413-946-5

OR: Singapore library online edition:
https://eservice.nlb.gov.sg/flipviewer/data/booksg_publish/2/212d8af8-d8b0-48fc-b72a-27cb8608bc96/web/html5/index.html?opf=tablet/BOOKSG.xml&launchlogo=tablet/BOOKSG_BrandingLogo_.png

Note: The handwritten markings on the version of the PDF script should be ignored.

Prescribed monologue 10

Play *Ti-Jean and His Brothers*

Playwright: Derek Walcott**Character:** GROS JEAN**Synopsis:** Playwright Derek Walcott retells the story of three brothers (Gros Jean, Mi-Jean and Ti-Jean) who are challenged by the devil, who is striving to become human so he can enjoy the evil he has wrought firsthand. Ti-Jean, the swift and elegant hero who is but a boy, accepts the challenge. It is an Aeschylus-like adventure turned into a charming, poetic and romantic fable. Ti-Jean, like many heroes, is a fool. He passes through the tangled opinions of life, loosening knowledge and bearing it on his shoulders, half Ulysses, half Pentheus, with a final judgement belonging to the frogs and fireflies.*Monologue***From:** I have an arm of iron, and that's true (page 109)**To:** But me mother ain't bring me up so. After all, man, after all, a man have to rest man. Shime! (page 110)**Omitting:** No lines are to be omitted*Specified scene***From:** SCENE ONE**To:** DEVIL'S VOICE: *Bai Diable-là manger un'ti mamaille Un!***Page reference:** 102–114**Prescribed edition:** Derek Walcott, *Dream on Monkey Mountain and other plays*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1970.

ISBN: 978-0-374-50860-9

