

VICTORIAN CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY



**Victorian Certificate of Education
2004**

DRAMA

Solo performance examination

Monday 4 October to Sunday 31 October

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. The solo performance must not last more than **SEVEN MINUTES** and will be presented as a single uninterrupted performance.
5. If a performance goes over the **SEVEN MINUTES** time limit the student will be asked to stop. A timing device will indicate when the **SEVEN MINUTES** are over.
6. 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 restrictions.
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 in to 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. (See Terminology)
 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 Player

Stimulus

The life and times of Queen Elizabeth I

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of a Player during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. In January 1588, while entertaining the Court in the presence of the monarch with a performance of a morality play, the Player presents a scene which

- contrasts the world of commoners with the world of the Royal Court
- recreates events in Queen Elizabeth I's reign which prompted the creation of this morality play
- demonstrates strategies which could be used by the Queen to deal with the demands of opposing forces.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic, including aspects of morality plays

Theatrical conventions

Transformation of character, heightened use of language

Dramatic elements

Contrast, symbol

Reference material

<http://www.elizabethi.org/uk>

<http://www.beyondbooks.com/leu11/2h.asp>

PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 2**Character**

The persona of the bow of the Argo

Stimulus

The Greek myth of Jason and the Argonauts

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the persona of the bow of the ship Argo, the ‘Swift One’. A power surge to the interactive display at the archaeological museum where the Argo is on display causes the oracular oak beam to recreate for visitors

- events which led Argus, the master shipbuilder, to build the Argo
- contributions by the ship to the Argonauts’ quest
- the intervention(s) of the gods in the Argo’s journey.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic

Theatrical conventions

Transformation of character, disjointed time sequences

Dramatic elements

Climax, sound

Reference material

<http://www.pccc.cc.nj.us/asrc/readwrit/jason.html>

<http://www.winshop.com.au/annew/ArgoNavis.html>

PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 3

Character

Jung Chang

Stimulus

The newspaper article ‘Beyond the red boundary’

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the person Jung Chang, author of *Wild Swans*. While attempting to convince her publisher of the merits of a proposed biography of Chairman Mao, Jung recreates through a series of vignettes and dramatic images

- myths that were generated about Mao
- the nature of family life under his regime
- ‘valued freedoms’ she experienced after her arrival in Britain.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic

Theatrical conventions

Lyrical and symbolic, exaggerated movement

Dramatic elements

Contrast, sound

Reference material

The Age Review cover story, ‘Beyond the red boundary’, published 18 October 2003

Wild Swans by Jung Chang – Flamingo, HarperCollins Publishers, 1991. ISBN 0385425473

PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 4**Character**

Shaun

Stimulus

The picture book *The Lost Thing* by Shaun Tan

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of Shaun from the picture book *The Lost Thing*. On a walk with Pete around the city depicted in the book, Shaun recreates

- how he infiltrated the building of ‘The Federal Department of Odds and Ends’ and what he discovered there
- ways in which ‘Government Ministries and Agencies’ exert their control
- how a scientific discovery was manipulated and the impact this is having on humanity.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic, including aspects of theatre of the absurd

Theatrical conventions

Exaggerated movement, transformation of object

Dramatic elements

Mood, contrast

Reference material

S Tan, *The Lost Thing*, Lothian, South Melbourne (2000) ISBN 0734403887.
www.echoed.com.au

PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 5

Character

The Knight

Stimulus

The film *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of one of the ‘Knights who say Ni’ from the film *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. In an attempt to convince King Arthur that the Knight should become a Knight of the Round Table, he recreates

- heroic deeds he has performed while being a Knight who says Ni
- ways he assisted Merlin with the creation of Stonehenge
- plots he has overheard from King Arthur’s courtiers that suggest that all is not well in Camelot.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic, including aspects of Pythonesque comedy

Theatrical conventions

Caricature, exaggerated movement

Dramatic elements

Rhythm, sound

Reference material

The film *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, 1975, directed by Terry Gilliam and Terry Jones

The Age newspaper Goodweekend Magazine, 1 November 2003.

www.pythonline.com

www.britannia.com/history/h12.html

PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 6

Character

An Oompa-Loompa

Stimulus

The 1971 film *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of an Oompa-Loompa. Willy Wonka's chocolate factory, now owned by Charlie Bucket, is being down-sized. An Oompa-Loompa seeks alternative employment in the United Kingdom during the Thatcher era (1979–1990). The Oompa-Loompa recreates for a prospective employer

- life in Oompa-Loompa land prior to Willy Wonka's arrival
- skills acquired during the trialing of fantastic confectionary
- a song containing social commentary on some aspect of the impact of Thatcherism.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic

Theatrical conventions

Transformation of character, satire

Dramatic elements

Contrast, rhythm

Reference material

The film *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, 1971, starring Gene Wilder, directed by Mel Stuart
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Roald Dahl (any edition)

Any history of the United Kingdom which covers the years Margaret Thatcher was Prime Minister

PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 7

Character

The Diva

Stimulus

The life and times of Lola Montez

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the person Lola Montez. While on board a ship off the coast of Australia in the 1850s, Lola recreates for her fellow passengers

- some of her show business triumphs
- past scandals in which it is alleged she has been involved
- a memorable event from her recent tour of the Australian goldfields.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic

Theatrical conventions

Dance, disjointed time sequences

Dramatic elements

Symbol, conflict

Reference material

<http://www.zpub.com/sf/history/lola.html>

<http://www.uq.edu.au/~entjohns/spider.html>

PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 8

Character

The Freedom Fighter

Stimulus

The songs, poetry and dances of apartheid in South Africa

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of a Freedom Fighter in South Africa during apartheid. Following the 1976 Soweto student demonstration, a clandestine meeting takes place between foreign journalists and the Freedom Fighter. The Freedom Fighter recreates

- aspects of life under apartheid rule in South Africa
- how music and the toyi toyi helped in the peaceful revolution against apartheid
- examples of propaganda used by Verwoerd's government.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic

Theatrical conventions

Song, pathos

Dramatic elements

Conflict, rhythm

Reference material

The film *Amandla! A Revolution in Four-Part Harmony*, 2003 directed by Lee Hirsch

The film *Cry Freedom*, 1987, directed by Richard Attenborough

Any history of South Africa which includes Steve Biko, Nelson Mandela and Vuyisile Mini

www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/misc/mini.html

www.safrika.info/what_happening/arts_entertainment/amandla.htm

www.safricavoyage.com/soweto.htm

PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 9

Character

The Showman

Stimulus

The life of Harry Houdini

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the person Harry Houdini. In 1925, while manipulating the press for free publicity for his new show, Harry demonstrates his need for the thrill and the glory of ‘first adventure’ by recreating

- experiences he had growing up that led to his interest in performing illusions
- his part in the first controlled power flight in Australia
- highlights of new material he has developed.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic

Theatrical conventions

Exaggerated movement, transformation of place

Dramatic elements

Symbol, climax

Reference material

www.geocities.com/Broadway/Stage/3487/biography.html

www.magictricks.com/houdini/bio.htm

www.ctie.monash.edu.au/hargrave/houdini_bio.html

PRESCRIBED STRUCTURE 10

Character

Captain Holly Short

Stimulus

The novel *Artemis Fowl* by Eoin Colfer

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of Captain Holly Short. At a debrief after her latest mission involving Artemis Fowl, Holly recreates for Commander Julius Root

- how she discovered what the criminal Artemis Fowl was planning and why she broke protocol to pursue him back through time to approximately 800 BCE to the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus
- the significance to ‘the People’ and to Artemis, of the artefact he intended to steal from the temple site
- how Foaly’s technology assisted her in her attempt to prevent Artemis from succeeding.

Performance style

Non-naturalistic

Theatrical conventions

Transformation of place, disjointed time sequences

Dramatic elements

Climax, symbol

Reference material

Artemis Fowl, Eoin Colfer ISBN 0786817070

The Arctic Incident, Eoin Colfer ISBN 0786808551

The Eternity Code, Eoin Colfer ISBN 0786819146

<http://www.cleveleys.co.uk/wonders/templeofartemis.htm>

TERMINOLOGY

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

Non-naturalistic

This term is a broad category for all performance styles that are not dependent on the lifelike representation of everyday life. Non-naturalistic performance styles are not dependent on naturalistic characteristics to establish meaning. In non-naturalistic performance, the actor does not attempt to recreate on the stage life as it is lived. Non-naturalistic performance is characterised by a manipulation of time and space as well as the narrative elements of the drama.

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.

Theatre of the absurd

Dramatisations centred on the futility of life. Language is often clichéd or trite. Activity is repetitious and/or meaningless. Character(s) may be inappropriate to the given situation. The tone can be serious and at the same time comic and/or ironic.

Morality plays

A medieval play form in which characters represent human virtues and vices such as good, evil and so on. The overall intention of the play is to teach a moral lesson. The tone can be both comical and serious. In medieval times the plays were performed by acting troupes.

Pythonesque comedy

Denoting a type of British humour that is absurd, radical and zany. It tends towards the surreal and was first seen in the 1970s TV comedy show 'Monty Python's Flying Circus'. Sketches were often unpredictable and rarely had a punchline. The style included parodied figures of social classes, political and religious commentary.

Transformation of character

The actor manipulates expressive skills to create characters in performance. A change in character therefore requires modification of the focus and manner of use of expressive skills by the actors. Additions of mask or costume may enhance the character transformation but does not constitute transformation unless accompanied by communicable changes in the use of expressive skills.

Transformation of place

The actor creates more than one place or setting during the performance and does so without the use of scenery. The actor can communicate transformation of place to an audience through the context they create for the performance and/or through the use of objects and space in symbolic ways. Transformation of place can be achieved through the transformation of the properties (real and imagined) and/or through the use of expressive skills alone.

Transformation of object

An object(s) is endowed with a variety of meanings by the actor.

Dance

Physical movement used to express an emotion, idea or concept, usually rhythmic, and may be accompanied by music.

Song

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

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.

Pathos

Pathos is a state which evokes a feeling of pity or sadness in the audience, for example the power of stirring tender or melancholy emotion. Pathos may be associated with comedy and tragedy.

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.

Exaggerated movement

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

Satire

The use of sarcasm, irony and ridicule in denouncing, exposing or deriding vice, folly and abuse. Can be achieved through gesture, tone, word.

Caricature

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

Comedy

A dramatic style associated with such notions as amusement, jollity, gaiety, fun and humour. May include complex and sophisticated techniques sometimes referred to as 'high' comedy, or 'low' comic aspects such as slapstick and bawdiness.

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.

Vignettes

A short scene or sketch based around a character.



VCE Drama

Solo Performance Examination 2004

STATEMENT OF INTENTION

Student number

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Prescribed structure number

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 (for example, for use of costume, prop, accent, symbol)*

DO NOT SIMPLY REWRITE THE PERFORMANCE FOCUS

These comments should not exceed 100 words

3 copies of this completed form must be handed to the assessors on entering the examination room.

