



GENERAL COMMENTS

Most students displayed an understanding of the key knowledge and skills specified for each of the examinable outcomes, and the majority of students responded to all the questions on the examination paper. Students should aim to express their responses clearly using plain English and appropriate drama language and terminology. This approach allows assessors to focus on the knowledge and understanding being communicated.

Students who performed well on the examination generally demonstrated a good understanding of the key knowledge and skills embedded in the course, provided clear and concise responses to questions and used drama-specific terminology appropriately. It was also important for students to use effective and relevant examples to support their answers; however, some students' examples were not specific enough to adequately support their responses.

Weaker students demonstrated a limited understanding of dramatic elements and theatrical conventions. They often misunderstood drama-specific terminology and had a limited understanding of the key knowledge and skills embedded in the course. Students need to ensure they know the difference between dramatic elements, theatrical conventions and stagecraft elements

Students need to know the different requirements of the instructions 'describe', 'evaluate', 'analyse' and 'discuss' in order to answer the examination questions appropriately. Students should also pay careful attention to the stem of each question, and pay particular heed to any words in bold. During the examination, students should ensure that they allocate their time appropriately so that they can complete the entire paper. One way to do this is to note the allocation of marks for each question and use this as a guide to the appropriate depth and length required in their responses.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

The examination paper did not specify that a particular style of written response was required. Responses could be in essay, short answer or point form, or a combination of any or all of these forms. Illustrations, annotations and tables were also acceptable in responses and were used appropriately by some students to answer questions.

Students should be reminded that the examination does not have to be completed in the order in which it is set out.

Section A

Question 1

This question related to the ensemble performance in Unit 3.

Question 1a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	4	6	14	19	21	15	20	3.7

Question 1a. required students to focus on the development of their ensemble performance, and to describe the construction techniques used in the development of two characters. Many students chose to write about their own characters in the ensemble; however, students were also able to write about characters performed by other students.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a clear knowledge of how construction techniques could be used to create characters
- approximately equal discussion of the ways two characters were developed
- a focus on development rather than performance
- good choice of pertinent examples to support the response.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a lack of discussion about the development of characters
- listings of construction techniques without explanation
- generalised discussions without pertinent examples to support the response
- discussion of only one character
- poor understanding of how construction techniques can be used to develop characters
- misunderstanding of the term 'develop'
- a focus on performance rather the development stages of the ensemble.

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Question 1b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	3	8	18	22	22	14	14	3.5

Question 1b. required students to analyse the collaborative processes their group used to create the non-naturalistic style of their ensemble performance.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- an analytical, rather than descriptive, approach
- clear knowledge of non-naturalistic performance styles
- a good understanding of a range of collaborative activities and their application in an ensemble context.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- reference to naturalistic, rather than non-naturalistic, styles
- a descriptive, rather than analytical, approach.

Question 1c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	2	5	15	24	24	16	14	3.7

Question 1c. required students to discuss the decisions their group made about the relationship between performer and audience and to evaluate the outcomes of those decisions.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- sound knowledge of performer–audience relationships
- comprehensive discussion of decisions made by the group, supported by well-chosen examples
- clear evaluation of how the decisions made by the group affected the audience response.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a lack of understanding of performer and audience relationships
- generalised responses that lacked pertinent examples
- a lack of evaluation of the decisions.

Question 2

Students needed to base their responses to Question 2 on **one** play selected from the 2005 Drama playlist.

Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	13	12	24	16	35	2.5

Question 2a. required students to discuss **two** examples of how subject matter in the play was given meaning through non-naturalistic performance style(s). Students needed to discuss two different ways/processes that were used to give meaning to the subject matter, not two different elements of subject matter. Two marks were allocated for each example. Many responses to this question lacked clarity due to students' lack of understanding of the term 'subject matter' and/or misunderstanding about the characteristics of 'performance styles'.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a clear understanding of how subject matter can be given meaning in non-naturalistic performance style(s)
- two well-chosen and distinct examples of how subject matter was given meaning
- appropriate use of drama terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- discussion of only one example
- little or no reference to non-naturalistic performance style(s)
- inappropriate use of drama terminology
- confusion between naturalistic and non-naturalistic performance style(s)
- general discussions of subject matter without reference to non-naturalistic performance style(s)
- generalised statements that were not supported by examples.

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Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	5	3	10	17	22	18	25	4.0

Question 2b. required students to explain how three stagecraft elements were used to enhance non-naturalistic performance style(s) in the play. Two marks were allocated for the explanation of how each stagecraft element was used. Some students chose to use diagrams to assist them in answering this question, which often proved useful. Many students made only tenuous links to non-naturalistic performance style(s) or referred instead to naturalistic performance styles.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- clear explanations of how selected stagecraft elements were used to enhance non-naturalistic performance styles
- pertinent examples
- detailed examples used to demonstrate how each selected stagecraft element was used to enhance non-naturalistic performance styles in the play
- clear understanding of stagecraft elements and how they can be used non-naturalistically
- good knowledge of how stagecraft elements can be applied to performance.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a descriptive rather than explanatory approach
- a lack of understanding of the characteristics of non-naturalistic performance styles
- a lack of detail
- misunderstanding of the term 'stagecraft elements'
- discussion of less than three stagecraft elements.

Question 2c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	7	4	10	15	22	18	24	3.9

Question 2c. required students to select two characters and analyse how the actor(s) used expressive skills to represent these characters in the performance. Three marks were allocated to the analysis of each character. Some students chose to analyse one actor and how he/she used expressive skills to represent two different characters in the play. This was an acceptable response to the question. Students tended to be descriptive rather than analytical in their discussion of expressive skills.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a clear understanding of how actors use expressive skills to represent characters
- good knowledge of expressive skills: voice, movement and gesture
- pertinent examples to support the analysis
- either a very detailed response with few examples or a less detailed response with a wider range of examples
- use of appropriate terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a lack of knowledge of expressive skills
- a lack of appropriate terminology
- discussion of generic 'expressive skills' without specific references to voice, movement and/or gesture
- limited understanding of how expressive skills can be used by an actor to represent a character
- confusion between the actor and the character
- a descriptive, rather than analytical, response
- answers that were incomplete or lacking in detail.

Section B

Question 3

Question 3 related to the development of the student's solo performance in Unit 4. Students were asked to write the name of the character in their script books. A small number of students did not do this and in some cases the character could not be determined from their responses. Such answers could not be awarded any marks.

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Question 3a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	13	10	21	19	37	2.6

In Question 3a. students were asked to explain how they used the two prescribed theatrical conventions in the creation of their solo performance. Only half of the available marks could be awarded if the student discussed only one theatrical convention, or if one of the conventions discussed was not listed in the prescribed structure. If neither of the conventions discussed were in the prescribed structure, no marks were awarded. This question was generally well answered, and very few students used incorrect theatrical conventions.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a balanced explanation of both theatrical conventions
- clear examples of both theatrical conventions and how they were used in the creation of the solo performance
- good knowledge of how theatrical conventions can be used to develop a performance
- use of appropriate terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- no clear indication of which character was being discussed
- a list of theatrical conventions without explanation of how they were used
- a lack of knowledge of the characteristics of specified theatrical conventions
- no reference to the creation of the solo performance.

Question 3b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	15	7	14	16	20	15	14	3.2

In Question 3b. students were asked to analyse how they manipulated the two prescribed dramatic elements to enhance the non-naturalistic style of their solo performance. Students were required to analyse the prescribed dramatic elements from the prescribed structure chosen for their solo performance examination. If students did not use the dramatic elements from the prescribed structure, marks could not be awarded. Similarly, if only one dramatic element was from the prescribed structure, a maximum of three marks could be awarded. Very few students did not analyse the correct dramatic elements.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a balanced and analytical discussion that referred to both how dramatic elements were manipulated and why students chose to use the elements in that way
- knowledge of the prescribed dramatic elements and their application to performance
- a detailed understanding of how and why dramatic elements can be applied to enhance non-naturalistic performance styles
- an analysis of how the dramatic elements enhanced the non-naturalistic performance styles of the solo
- use of pertinent examples.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- confusion between dramatic elements and theatrical conventions
- brief answers that listed the dramatic elements used without analysing how or why they were used
- a lack of reference to manipulation
- a lack of knowledge about how dramatic elements can be applied to performance.

Question 4

Question 4 comprised three parts and related to the processes involved in the development of a solo performance. Students were required to read some brief written information regarding the Eureka Stockade, which occurred around the goldfields of Ballarat in 1854. The information included six dates and some brief details about the occurrences on each of those dates. In order to answer Question 4, students needed to draw on the key knowledge and skills acquired through the development of their own solo performance in Unit 4. A few students appeared to have run out of time and provided answers that were brief or incomplete. Questions 4b. and 4c. had the lowest mean marks for this examination. Some students seemed confused between their solo performance character and the task in Question 4. Some students discussed multiple characters rather than a solo performance, making their responses more in keeping with an ensemble performance. In answering this question, students needed to be clear that they were referring to a **solo** rather than an ensemble performance.

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Question 4a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	10	3	87	1.8

In Question 4a. students were required to select two dramatic moments from the information provided on the examination paper. Many students simply chose two dates from the provided list. This was acceptable, as long as the student explained why those dates gave rise to a dramatic moment. Other students took a more imaginative approach, choosing an event that took place, or may have taken place, on one or two of the dates. A few students identified themes rather than dramatic moments – these students could not be awarded any marks for this question. One mark was awarded for each dramatic moment chosen.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- two clearly listed moments, in either the student's own words or in the words on the examination paper.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a lack of understanding about what might constitute a dramatic moment.

Question 4b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	9	9	23	22	20	10	8	3.0

In Question 4b. students were required to select one of the dramatic moments they had chosen in Question 4a. and, using both transformation of place and of character, discuss how the chosen dramatic moment could be recreated. If only one of transformation of place or transformation of character was discussed, full marks could not be awarded.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- insightful and creative answers that discussed the information provided, the chosen dramatic moment and the conventions of transformation of place and character
- a clear understanding of transformation of place and character and how they could be used to add meaning to the solo performance
- appropriate choice of both transformations to enhance the solo performance
- reference to techniques of transformation and discussion of how the character would transform
- a balanced discussion about both transformation of place and transformation of character, including pertinent examples of their applications, to illustrate the student's knowledge and understanding
- appropriate use of terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- confusion between transformation of place, character and/or time
- reference to character transformation with little or no reference to transformation of place
- a lack of knowledge of transformation techniques
- poor or inappropriate choice of examples of transformation
- inappropriate application of transformations
- conflict between answers to Question 4a. and 4b.
- a lack of practical application of the knowledge acquired in Unit 4
- a discussion of transformation of place and/or character without evidence of its application to this solo performance
- a discussion of an ensemble performance rather than a solo performance
- answers that were lacking in detail or incomplete.

Question 4c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	14	8	21	20	18	11	8	2.9

Students were required to discuss how they would recreate the other dramatic moment in their non-naturalistic solo performance using the dramatic elements of climax and symbol. Most students dealt adequately with climax, but many failed to adequately address the dramatic element of symbol. Some students inappropriately equated symbol to transformation of object.

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Responses from students who scored highly in Questions 4b. and 4c. demonstrated evidence of development and consistency of ideas through both questions.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- insightful and creative answers that discussed the information provided, the chosen dramatic moment and the dramatic elements of climax and symbol
- a clear understanding of climax and symbol and how they can be used to add meaning to a solo performance
- appropriate and practical choices for use of symbol and climax
- pertinent and clear examples of how and why climax and symbol could be used to enhance the solo performance
- clear reasons to justify the choice of climax and symbol in relation to the chosen dramatic moment.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a poor understanding of how climax and/or symbol can be used to add meaning to a solo performance
- conflict between answers to Question 4b. and 4c.
- discussion of an ensemble performance rather than a solo performance
- use of naturalistic items as symbol
- impractical choices for both symbol and climax
- an unbalanced discussion, or confusion between symbol and climax
- brief or unfinished answers.