

# VCE Theatre Studies

## 2014–2018

### Written examination – End of year

#### Examination specifications

##### Overall conditions

The examination will be sat at a time and date 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*.

There will be 15 minutes reading time and 1 hour and 30 minutes writing time.

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

The examination will contribute 30 per cent to the study score.

##### Content

All outcomes in Unit 3, and Outcomes 2 and 3 in Unit 4 of the *VCE Theatre Studies Study Design 2014–2018* will be examined. All of the key knowledge and skills underpinning the outcomes are examinable.

##### Format

The examination will be in the form of a question and answer book. There will be an insert in the centre of the book. The insert will include stimulus material for Section C.

The examination will consist of three sections.

##### Section A: Unit 3 Outcome 3, Performance interpretation

Students will be expected to answer short- and/or extended-answer questions on one play from the Unit 3 playlist. This section will be worth 10 marks.

##### Section B: Unit 4 Outcome 3, Performance interpretation

Students will be expected to answer short- and/or extended-answer questions on one play from the Unit 4 playlist. This section will be worth 10 marks.

##### Section C: Application of stagecraft

Questions in the first part of Section C will require an interpretation of a previously unseen text or playscript. Questions in the second part of Section C will require the interpretation of a scene. Section C will be worth 30 marks.

There will be a combination of short- and extended-answer questions in the examination. Multiple-part questions may be used in each section of the examination.

Questions may require students to respond to stimulus material. The stimulus material may be presented in the following forms:

- theatre-related illustrations/designs
- other images, including photographs/designs/illustrations
- excerpt(s) of text, including stage directions and other information in addition to the dialogue/lines of the play from one or more playscripts.

The theatre-related illustrations/designs and/or other images will **not** require prior knowledge of a particular play, production or designer. The associated questions will require students to apply their knowledge of theatre production and stagecraft gained during the year.

In the insert provided in the examination, the excerpt(s) of text from one or more playscripts will **not** require any knowledge of the play(s) from which it is derived or of the context within the play(s). Excerpts will be selected from a broad range of theatrical styles and periods in theatre history. Students will be required to read the text(s) and apply their understanding of it by commenting on it and/or relating it to the application of stagecraft.

In each section, some questions may give students the option of using illustrations and/or diagrams either to answer a question or to support written answers.

Students will be required to provide answers to questions in the spaces allocated in the question and answer book. Space will be provided for students to include an illustration and/or diagram where relevant.

The marks allocated to individual questions may vary from year to year.

The total marks for the examination will be 50.

## **Approved materials and equipment**

In addition to normal stationery, students are permitted to bring the following into the examination room: coloured pencils, water-based pens and markers, protractors, compass, set squares and aids for curve-sketching.

## **Relevant references**

The following documents should be referred to in relation to the VCE Theatre Studies written examination:

- *VCE Theatre Studies Study Design 2014–2018*
- *VCE Theatre Studies Advice for Teachers 2014–2018*
- *VCE Theatre Studies Assessment Handbook 2014–2018*
- *VCAA Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET*

Teachers are reminded to check the VCAA website for updates to the *VCE Theatre Studies Study Design* and other information.

## **Advice**

During the 2014–2018 accreditation period for VCE Theatre Studies, examinations will be prepared according to the examination specifications above. Each examination will conform to these specifications and will assess a representative sample of the key knowledge and skills.

## **Sample examination questions**

The following sample examination questions are intended to provide an indication of the type and range of questions that students and teachers can expect on the VCE Theatre Studies written examination. The sample examination questions do not constitute a sample examination paper.

Answers to sample questions are not provided.

## **Notes on questions relating to the prescribed playlist**

The questions on the plays from the prescribed playlist may relate to individual plays and/or they may be questions that invite students to discuss a generic question(s) by referring to a play from the playlist. The playlist will change every year and is published on the VCAA website.

## Sample questions

### SECTION A

The questions presented in this document are provided to show a range of possible question types that teachers and students may expect, and are based on the Melbourne Theatre Company's (MTC) production of Arthur Miller's playscript, *All My Sons*.

Note: The examination will have **only one** question for each play in Section A. Alternative questions will **not** be provided.

In their response, students should be prepared to make direct reference to the playscript and to the play in production.

#### Question 1 (10 marks)

*All My Sons* by Arthur Miller, produced by the Melbourne Theatre Company (MTC)

#### Alternative 1

Discuss how the MTC has interpreted Arthur Miller's playscript, *All My Sons*. In your response, refer to the written playscript, the play in performance and the following stage directions.

*The stage is hedged ... and branches lie toppled beside it ...*

[Note: A complete extract from a playscript will be provided in the examination.]

Source: Arthur Miller, *View from the Bridge/All My Sons*, Penguin Books, England, 2000, p. 89

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**OR**



**Alternative 4**

In your response to each of the following questions, refer to both the written playscript and the play in performance.

- a.** Explain how the application of **one** area of stagecraft was implied in the written playscript. 3 marks

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- b.** Explain how the area of stagecraft discussed in **part a.** was realised in the performance. 3 marks

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c. Discuss the theatrical style(s) in the written playscript and the play in performance.

4 marks

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## SECTION B

The following questions present three examples of question types that teachers and students may expect based on the MTC's production of *Hamlet*. Students are required to make specific references to the play in performance, but they are not required to have knowledge of the written playscript.

Note: The examination will have **only one** question for each play in Section B. Alternative questions will **not** be provided.

### Question 2 (10 marks)

*Hamlet* by William Shakespeare, produced by the Melbourne Theatre Company (MTC)

#### Alternative 1

- a. Analyse how the actors used focus and the acting space in the MTC's production of *Hamlet*. 5 marks
- b. Analyse the interrelationship between acting and set design in the MTC's production of *Hamlet*. 5 marks

Question No.

Name of production \_\_\_\_\_

a. \_\_\_\_\_

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**OR**

**Alternative 2**

Answer each of the following questions.

- a.** Describe how **two** expressive skills were used by **one** of the actors in the production to realise their character(s).

3 marks

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- b.** Explain how **one** of the actors in the production used the acting space when interpreting their character(s).

3 marks

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c. Explain how the actors in the production established and maintained the actor–audience relationship.

4 marks

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## SECTION C

In this section of the examination, students are assessed on their ability to apply stagecraft. They are expected to demonstrate knowledge and skills in applying **two** areas of stagecraft developed from Units 3 and 4 of the study design.

### Question 3 (18 marks)

Select **one** area of stagecraft from the following list. You must **not** refer to the same area of stagecraft in your response to Question 4.

1. Acting
2. Direction
3. Design (costume)
4. Design (make-up)
5. Design (properties)
6. Design (set)
7. Design (sound)
8. Production management (publicity and marketing)
9. Design (lighting)
10. Theatre technologies
11. Production management (stage management)

**Number and name of selected area of stagecraft** \_\_\_\_\_

### Production planning

- a.** Explain **three** theatrical possibilities or ideas from at least **one** of the stimulus images provided in the insert that would inform your selected area of stagecraft in the production planning stage of *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*.

6 marks

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**Production development**

- b. Describe **two** activities that you would complete in your selected area of stagecraft during the production development stage to explore your ideas for the interpretation of *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*.

6 marks

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**Presentation**

c. Explain how you would apply your selected area of stagecraft during **one or more** of the following aspects of the presentation stage of *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*:

6 marks

1. Bump-in
2. Technical/dress rehearsal
3. Performances
4. Bump-out
5. Evaluation

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**Question 4** (12 marks)

Select **one** area of stagecraft from the following list. You must refer to a different area of stagecraft from the one you referred to in Question 3.

1. Acting
2. Direction
3. Design (costume)
4. Design (make-up)
5. Design (properties)
6. Design (set)
7. Design (sound)

**Number and name of selected area of stagecraft** \_\_\_\_\_

- a.** Annotate the following excerpt from *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* in **three or more** places to demonstrate how the dialogue for THE ANNOUNCER would inform the development of your area of stagecraft.

6 marks

**THE ANNOUNCER**

Friends, tonight we're going to show –  
 Pipe down, you boys in the back row!  
 And, lady, your hat is in the way! –  
 Our great historical gangster-play  
 Containing, for the first time, as you'll see  
 The truth about the scandalous dock  
 subsidy.  
 Further we give you, for your betterment  
 Dogborough's confession and testament.  
 Arturo Ui's rise while the stock market fell.  
 The notorious warehouse fire trial. What a  
 sell!  
 The Dullfeet murder! Justice in a coma!  
 Gang warfare: the killing of Ernesto Roma!  
 All culminating in our stunning last  
 tableau:  
 Gangsters take over the town of Cicero!  
 Brilliant performers will portray  
 The most eminent gangsters of our day.  
 You'll see some dead and some alive  
 Some by-gone and others survive  
 Some born, some made – for instance, here  
 we show  
 The good honest Dogsborough!  
 (*Old Dogsborough steps before the curtain*)  
 His hair is white, his heart is black.  
 Corrupt old man, you may step back.  
 (*Dogsborough bows and steps back*).

A large rectangular box containing 18 horizontal lines for student annotation.

Source: Bertolt Brecht, *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, Ralph Manheim (trans.), Methuen Drama Student Edition, London, 2007

- b. Explain how you would apply your area of stagecraft to convey the intended meanings of the monologue in the presentation to an audience.

6 marks

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