

Drama

VCE Solo Performance Examination

Monday 7 October to Monday 28 October 2024

Guidelines for students and teachers

Performance examination conditions

1. The performance 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 performance examination venue is set annually by the VCAA.

Examination room conditions

1. Students will be allocated an examination room at the performance examination venue in which to perform. 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 vicinity of the examination room or with the student during the solo performance 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.
4. Two chairs will be provided in the examination room for students to use during the performance, if they wish. Any additional props, if required, must be carried into the examination room by the student alone and within the allotted time.
5. Students must ensure that all props and set pieces fit through a door of standard size, in order to allow efficient entry to and exit from the examination room. If a prop or set piece does not fit through the door, it cannot be used during the performance examination.
6. 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 performance.
7. 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 guns, swords, daggers or 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 pieces. 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.

8. Students must ensure that any props, costumes (including footwear) or other aspects of their performance do not, in any way, damage the performance space.
9. Students are not to wear their school uniform during the examination or use any props or other stagecraft that may identify them or their school.
10. 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 performance.

11. All student performances will be recorded. These audiovisual recordings will provide a valuable additional quality assurance measure. Recordings will not be used for any other purpose without first obtaining student consent.
12. Any updates to the conditions for the performance examination will be published in the *VCAA Bulletin*.

Format of the performance examination

1. Students are required to prepare a solo performance using one of the prescribed structures on pages 10–20. Marks will not be awarded for performances that do not use one of the prescribed structures.
2. Students are required to present their performance as a single uninterrupted performance that lasts **no more than seven minutes**.
3. If a performance exceeds the prescribed time limit, the student will be asked to stop. A timing device will indicate when the seven minutes have elapsed.
4. A total of **10 minutes** per student will be allocated for setting up, performance and clearing the performance space. No additional time is permitted. Students should be mindful of these time restrictions when preparing technical aspects, including theatre technologies, for the performance.
5. The emphasis during the performance must be on ‘action’ rather than ‘narration’; that is, ‘doing’ rather than ‘telling’ should be emphasised. Sustained use of realism/naturalism should be avoided; it is contrary to the use of the eclectic performance styles that are required for this examination.
6. Reading from a script or any written notes does not constitute a solo performance and will be considered off-task.
7. Where a plural is used in the wording of a structure, two or more moments/examples must be evident, unless a specific number is stated.
8. Students may choose to perform to the assessors as audience, to an imagined audience or to both.
9. Students must not walk behind and/or touch and/or approach the assessors during their performance examination.
10. A list of key terms is provided in the ‘Terminology’ section at the end of this examination. Students are advised to consult the ‘Terminology’ section for explanations of performance styles, conventions and dramatic elements, as prescribed in the examination.

The prescribed structures

Each prescribed structure is composed of the following: character, stimulus material, performance focus, performance style, convention and dramatic element, and resources. (Note: Some prescribed structures may include additional instructions and/or advice to teachers.) All parts of the prescribed structure must be addressed in the student's performance. There will be a direct impact on student scores for specific criteria and marks will be adjusted accordingly should any part of the prescribed structure not be addressed.

The following explanations should be used to help students prepare for their solo performance:

- **character** – The character is the central focus of the performance. Where the gender of a character is identified in the prescribed structure, the character must be portrayed in that gender.
- **stimulus material** – The stimulus material(s) is the specified source(s) of information that must be used in the development of the character and it must be referenced and evident throughout the performance.
- **performance focus** – The performance focus offers information that provides a context for the character. Students are required to present this information during their performance, incorporating the specific details that are identified in the opening sentences of each prescribed structure and the three accompanying dot points.

The opening sentences

- could provide background to the character
- could indicate when and/or where the performance takes place
- could establish the audience
- could provide insight into the emotional state or motivation of the character.

The three dot points

- To fulfil the requirements of dot point 1, dot point 2 and dot point 3, students can choose from scenes, dramatic images, montages and/or vignettes in the development and realisation of the performance.
- The stimulus material(s) must be evident in the student's interpretation of any or all of the dot points. In one or more of the dot points, students are invited to use their creative licence to create material that might or could have happened.

Students are not required to give each aspect of the performance focus equal emphasis during their performance. Unless otherwise indicated, aspects of the performance focus may be performed in any order.

All aspects of the performance focus must be included in the performance.

- **performance style** – The prescribed performance style(s) is explained for each prescribed structure. The prescribed performance style(s) must be evident throughout the performance. Where features are listed for a particular performance style, students may use some or all of the features listed, as appropriate to their performance.
- **convention** – The following conventions will be assessed in all performances: transformation of character, time and place, and application of symbol. The student will select one additional convention from the list of eight published each year in the examination and write it on the Statement of Intention. There is a suggested convention for each prescribed structure. This is a suggestion only, and students can select any of the eight listed. This selected convention must be integral to, and embedded in, the performance. Students may use additional conventions as appropriate.

- **dramatic element** – The student will select one dramatic element from the list of eight published each year in the examination and write it on the Statement of Intention. There is a suggested dramatic element for each prescribed structure. This is a suggestion only, and students can select any of the eight listed. This selected dramatic element must be integral to, and embedded in, the performance. The dramatic element will be selected from the following list: climax, conflict, contrast, mood, rhythm, sound, space and tension. Students may use additional dramatic elements as appropriate.
- **resources** – Students are expected to undertake a wide range of research when developing their solo performance. The resources provided are recommendations only. This list is not exhaustive. Note: If a resource is also listed under 'Stimulus material', this resource must be used in the development of the performance text and must be evident throughout the performance.

Statement of Intention

1. A template for the Statement of Intention is published on the VCAA website in April with the examination materials.
2. The purpose of the Statement of Intention is to:
 - indicate which convention and dramatic element the student has selected
 - highlight aspects of the student's interpretation that they would like to bring to the assessors' attention.
3. Immediately prior to their performance, students are required to present three printed copies of the Statement of Intention to the assessors. **The Statement of Intention must not exceed 180 words in total and is required to be written in point form.** Only areas relevant to the student's performance are required to be addressed. The Statement of Intention may include:
 - an explanation/clarification of decisions made in the student's interpretation of their selected prescribed structure
 - reasons for choices made (for example, for the use of costume, props, accent, application of symbol, etc.)
 - how and where a specific convention, dramatic element or dot point is demonstrated in the performance.
4. Students should not merely describe their character by rewriting the performance focus.
5. The Statement of Intention will not be assessed.

Notes

1. The VCE Drama solo performance examination is not a public performance and therefore is not subject to current community standards. Students are encouraged to consider all 10 prescribed structures before making a final selection, regardless of their own or a character's cultural background, race, gender or sexual orientation. Careful and sensitive consideration of the portrayal of any character should be paramount but not a deterrent when creating a solo performance.
2. While the VCAA considers all of the prescribed structures to be suitable for study, teachers should be aware that, in some instances, sensitivity might be needed where particular issues or themes are explored. Teachers should ensure that they consider and are aware of the issues and themes that are contained in the prescribed structures prior to the commencement of Unit 4, so that they can provide appropriate advice to students.
3. Schools and teachers are advised to check the local availability of required stimulus material(s) and resources prior to beginning Unit 4. Some materials may not be immediately or readily available.
4. Students and teachers should be aware that the websites provided as resources or stimulus material in the prescribed structures, including Wikipedia, may contain information that has been altered since the publication of the examination.
5. It is the VCAA that provides the advice on, and specifies the requirements of, the VCE Drama solo performance examination. Students are advised to refer to this examination throughout the development of their solo performance. Caution should be exercised when using information from other sources, including social media and blogs.
6. For additional advice, students should refer to the previous year's external assessment report.
7. Students and teachers are reminded that, in addition to the one convention selected for the prescribed structure, transformation of character, time and place, and application of symbol must be demonstrated in the student's performance.
8. The performance style(s), convention(s) and dramatic element(s) must be integral to, and embedded in, the performance. The use of the performance style(s), convention(s) or dramatic element(s) only once does not constitute compliance.
9. All prescribed structures must be informed by the stimulus material and additional research. The research must be clearly evidenced throughout the performance. The emphasis must be on 'action' rather than 'narration'; that is, 'doing' rather than 'telling'.
10. When the terms 'real', 'fictional' or 'historical' are used, it means that students are expected to choose known examples from history, from real life or from literary material, film, television, etc.
11. For any enquiries about the conduct of the examination, contact Anne Smithies, VCE Performance and Languages Oral Project Manager, Assessment Operations, telephone: (03) 9059 4145, email: <Anne.Smithies@education.vic.gov.au>.
12. 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>.

Assessment criteria

Students will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. Requirements of the prescribed structure

This criterion assesses compliance. Students must address all aspects of the prescribed structure to gain the maximum possible marks for this criterion and for the other criteria.

2. Development of a performance from the prescribed structure

This criterion assesses the extent to which students demonstrate skill in using all aspects of the prescribed structure to create and develop a character(s) within a solo performance. This development also involves making imaginative choices in the shaping and realisation of the performance text.

3. Research

This criterion assesses the extent to which students demonstrate evidence of using the stimulus material and resources as well as additional research to inform their solo performance. This research should be used and should be evident throughout the performance. The performance should demonstrate both depth and creativity in the use of a variety of sources.

4. Use of play-making techniques

This criterion assesses the extent to which students demonstrate skill in using a range of play-making techniques to develop ideas, roles, dramatic action, story and themes in the construction of a devised solo performance. The performance should demonstrate evidence of careful scripting, editing and rehearsing to create a coherent and refined response to the prescribed structure within the allotted timeframe.

5. Use of performance styles, including the performance style(s) in the prescribed structure

This criterion assesses the extent to which students demonstrate:

- an understanding of eclectic performance styles
- the ability to apply aspects of the prescribed performance style(s) consistently throughout the performance
- the ability to devise a performance with a specific purpose and intention for the audience using the prescribed performance style(s).

6. Use of conventions, including the convention selected for the prescribed structure

This criterion assesses the extent to which students demonstrate:

- an understanding of transformation of character, time and place, and application of symbol
- the ability to apply each of these during the performance
- an understanding of the additional convention selected by the student
- appropriate selection of convention consistent with the overall performance and the ability to apply the selected convention during the performance
- the ability to apply other conventions as appropriate.

7. Use of dramatic element selected for the prescribed structure

This criterion assesses the extent to which students demonstrate:

- an understanding of the selected dramatic element
- appropriate selection of dramatic element consistent with the overall performance and the ability to apply this dramatic element during the performance
- the ability to apply other dramatic elements as appropriate.

8. Use of expressive skills

This criterion assesses the extent to which students demonstrate understanding of, and skill in, the use of voice, movement, gesture and facial expression(s) to express and realise a character(s) within the context of the prescribed structure, including performance style(s) and conventions.

9. Use of performance skills

This criterion assesses the extent to which students demonstrate skill in portraying a character(s) through the memorisation of the performance text and the ability to make clear to the audience the presence of other (imagined) characters and/or objects in the space, as appropriate to the prescribed structure.

Students will be assessed on the extent to which they demonstrate understanding of, and skills in, focus, timing, energy and the actor–audience relationship throughout the solo performance. Students should integrate these skills throughout to create a dynamic presence in the performance and demonstrate a high level of commitment in the presentation of their work.

10. Application of production areas

This criterion assesses the extent to which students demonstrate understanding of, and skill in, the selection, use and manipulation of technical aspects, such as costume, props or sound design, to add a range of meanings to their performance. The application of production areas must be consistent with eclectic theatre, the prescribed performance style(s) and the selected convention.

Instructions

Select **one** convention and **one** dramatic element from the lists provided below and write each on your Statement of Intention. The selected convention and dramatic element must be integral to, and embedded in, your solo performance. Using the performance style(s), convention(s) or dramatic element(s) only once does not constitute compliance. There is a suggested convention and dramatic element for each prescribed structure. These are suggestions only and any of the eight listed below can be chosen.

Conventions

The conventions of transformation of character, time and place, and application of symbol must be used and will be assessed in every solo performance. In addition to these, students are required to select **one** convention from the following list and apply it throughout their solo performance:

- caricature
- exaggerated movement
- heightened use of language
- pathos
- puppetry
- satire
- stylised movement
- use of fact

Write your selected convention on your Statement of Intention.

Dramatic elements

Students are required to select **one** dramatic element from the following list and apply it throughout their solo performance:

- conflict
- contrast
- climax
- mood
- rhythm
- space
- sound
- tension

Write your selected dramatic element on your Statement of Intention.

Prescribed structure 1

Character The Detective

Stimulus material

<<https://www.gardnermuseum.org/about/theft-story>>

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of the Detective.

Frustrated that the police are ignoring the obvious evidence, the brash Detective approaches their former colleague, the Boston Police Chief, offering to do his job for him. Boasting of a tip-off about new evidence regarding the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum heist, the Detective claims they can solve the case within a week.

The Detective does this by:

- recreating the circumstances surrounding the theft of the priceless artworks
- showing highlights from the Detective's previous 'unsolvable' case
- creating a parallel to another real unsolved art theft.

Performance style

Eclectic with aspects of film noir*

Suggested convention

Use of fact (or choose one of the listed conventions on page 9)

Suggested dramatic element

Mood (or choose one of the listed dramatic elements on page 9)

Resources

<<https://www.gardnermuseum.org/about/theft-story>>

<<https://listverse.com/2022/07/09/10-thrilling-museum-heists-that-havent-been-solved-yet/>>

Understanding Film Noir, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zFkUbDQW1u4>>

*Film noir

Film noir is a cinematic style based on German expressionism but chiefly associated with Hollywood during the 1940s and 1950s. Film noir is exemplified by:

- a brooding and world-weary investigator, a *femme fatale* or an *homme fatal*, and cynical characters
- a sense of menace, sleazy settings and plots that involve twists and surprises
- use of flashbacks, voice overs and foreboding background music.

Prescribed structure 2

Character The Lorax

Stimulus material

The Lorax by Dr Seuss (any edition) and

2023 Victorian Tree of the Year Finalists: <<https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/2023-victorian-tree-of-the-year/>>

Choose a tree from the list above and write your choice on the Statement of Intention. The location of your tree is the setting for your solo performance.

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of the Lorax.

Upon seeing the Once-ler's descendants building a new factory next to your chosen tree, the Lorax comes out of retirement to speak once again on behalf of the trees. The Lorax rallies the tree's local community to realise its importance and save it from destruction.

The Lorax does this by:

- recreating the Once-ler's actions that caused the Lorax to originally 'pop out of the stump' and 'speak for the trees'
- showing moments of what your chosen tree has witnessed and/or been a part of throughout its lifetime
- creating a parallel to a real person or organisation who has fought for the protection of the natural environment.

Performance style

Eclectic*

Suggested convention

Heightened use of language (or choose one of the listed conventions on page 9)

Suggested dramatic element

Rhythm (or choose one of the listed dramatic elements on page 9)

Resources

2023 Victorian Tree of the Year Finalists: <<https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/2023-victorian-tree-of-the-year/>>

Book, *The Lorax*, by Dr Seuss (any edition)

<<https://www.victorianplaces.com.au/places>>

<<https://www.britannica.com/explore/savingearth/meet-the-activists>>

Prescribed structure 2 – continued

Character The Lorax

***Eclectic**

Eclectic theatre draws on a range of performance styles to devise performances that go beyond the reality of life as it is lived. It juxtaposes a number of performance styles to make dramatic statements and theatre that is innovative, transformational and creative. Eclectic theatre is devised with a specific purpose and intention for the audience.

Eclectic theatre draws on drama traditions and practice including:

- ritual and storytelling
- contemporary drama practice and performance styles
- the work of drama practitioners and associated performance styles
- a combination of any of the above.

Prescribed structure 3

Character Rosie of the North

Stimulus material

Film, *Rosies of the North* (Sheba Films), 2018, directed by Kelly Saxberg,

<https://vimeo.com/85115265>

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of Rosie of the North.

With the men returning to the factories at the end of World War Two, Rosie receives a redundancy slip terminating her employment. Wanting to continue to make a contribution and earn a solid pay-packet, and reluctant to return to home duties, Rosie confronts her male superiors, refusing to 'go quietly'.

Rosie does this by:

- recreating an experience(s) she had while working at Cancar and a person(s) she met during her time there
- creating a propaganda campaign from any time up until 2024, designed to show the importance of equal rights for women
- creating an example of another real woman who has achieved success in a male-dominated field.

Performance style

Eclectic with aspects of epic theatre*

Suggested convention

Use of fact (or choose one of the listed conventions on page 9)

Suggested dramatic element

Conflict (or choose one of the listed dramatic elements on page 9)

Resources

Film, *Rosies of the North* (Sheba Films), 2018, directed by Kelly Saxberg, <https://vimeo.com/85115265>

<https://www.verywellmind.com/how-does-propaganda-work-5224974>

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/male-jobs-pioneered-women_n_5681903

*Epic theatre

Epic theatre, sometimes called Brechtian theatre, is a style of theatre that seeks to tell a story, often on a large historical scale and including a number of people and events over time. It aims to engage the intellect rather than emotions and often uses devices that alienate the audience. Epic theatre is exemplified by:

- direct address and/or the use of narration and song as commentary
- use of placards, mask, stylised gesture and movement
- deliberate and conscious choices intended to remind the audience that they are watching a play.

Prescribed structure 4

Character The-altogether-unsuitable-to-be-a-knight Kevin

Stimulus material

Any production of *Spamalot*, musical by Eric Idle

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of the-altogether-unsuitable-to-be-a-knight Kevin. During his current quest, King Arthur stumbles upon the-altogether-unsuitable-to-be-a-knight Kevin, who unwittingly involves the King in an incident involving a feather and an onion. Kevin seizes this opportunity to fulfil his lifelong dream of becoming a Knight of the Round Table and eagerly offers his resume and skill set to the dubious King.

The-altogether-unsuitable-to-be-a-knight Kevin does this by:

- recreating the abilities of two (or more) Knights of the Round Table
- creating his past encounter with the witch Brenda of the Boondocks and her magical cat, Bruce, which showcases his suitability to become a knight
- showing an example of another person, either real or fictional, who has undertaken a quest.

Performance style

Eclectic with aspects of comedy*

Suggested convention

Satire (or choose one of the listed conventions on page 9)

Suggested dramatic element

Sound (or choose one of the listed dramatic elements on page 9)

Resources

Any production of *Spamalot*, musical by Eric Idle

<[https://www.montypython.com/liveshow_Monty%20Python's%20Spamalot%20\(from%202005\)/8](https://www.montypython.com/liveshow_Monty%20Python's%20Spamalot%20(from%202005)/8)>

<<https://www.toptenz.net/10-real-life-adventurers-who-make-indiana-jones-look-boring.php>>

*Comedy

Comedy is a performance style that is associated with amusement, fun and humour, and is intended to entertain, delight or invoke laughter.

Comedy is exemplified by:

- characters or situations that are often silly, ludicrous or absurd
- use of words, jokes or stories that have a punchline
- use of parody, farce, satire, caricature, visual or physical gags and other comedic styles.

Prescribed structure 5

Character The Puppet

Stimulus material

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/are-punch-and-judy-shows-finally-outdated-10599519/>

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of the Puppet.

With ‘Punch and Judy’ stories no longer seen as socially acceptable, the now-shelved Puppet decides to reinvent itself to remain employed and relevant to the modern world. Making it clear to its reluctant puppet troupe that they need to change their image, the Puppet pitches a contemporary interpretation of ‘The Willow Pattern’ story as the way forward.

The Puppet does this by:

- recreating key moments from the ‘Punch and Judy’ stories
- creating aspects of the Puppet’s updated version of ‘The Willow Pattern’ story that will wow modern audiences
- presenting an example of what else has needed to change in entertainment to reflect contemporary social values.

Performance style

Eclectic*

Suggested convention

Puppetry (or choose one of the listed conventions on page 9)

Suggested dramatic element

Conflict (or choose one of the listed dramatic elements on page 9)

Resources

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/are-punch-and-judy-shows-finally-outdated-10599519/>

<https://www.thepotteries.org/patterns/willow.html>

<https://apnews.com/article/entertainment-music-arts-and-entertainment-movies-3b753464a4e24746a59ffbed5682a4b6>

***Eclectic**

Eclectic theatre draws on a range of performance styles to devise performances that go beyond the reality of life as it is lived. It juxtaposes a number of performance styles to make dramatic statements and theatre that is innovative, transformational and creative. Eclectic theatre is devised with a specific purpose and intention for the audience.

Eclectic theatre draws on drama traditions and practice including:

- ritual and storytelling
- contemporary drama practice and performance styles
- the work of drama practitioners and associated performance styles
- a combination of any of the above.

Prescribed structure 6

Character Mulga Bill

Stimulus material

Poem, 'Mulga Bill's Bicycle' by AB Paterson, any version

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of Mulga Bill.

In 2024, while shopping with his wide-eyed grandchild, Mulga Bill is bewildered by a new-fangled contraption. As his grandchild demands he buy it, a sceptical Mulga Bill gently advises them to tread carefully, cautioning them about the seductive allure of trends.

Mulga Bill does this by:

- recreating moments from his own story that highlight his folly
- showing what the new-fangled contraption is and why it is so popular
- creating three or more examples of fads and crazes that have taken the world by storm since 1980.

Performance style

Eclectic with aspects of physical theatre*

Suggested convention

Exaggerated movement (or choose one of the listed conventions on page 9)

Suggested dramatic element

Space (or choose one of the listed dramatic elements on page 9)

Resources

Poem, 'Mulga Bill's Bicycle' by AB Paterson, any version

<https://www.bestproducts.com/lifestyle/g20106263/craziest-fads-over-the-years/>

Physical Theatre Compilation, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uOvVIEqN7YM>

***Physical theatre**

Physical theatre is a style of theatre that pursues storytelling primarily through physical means rather than the use of words or text. The primary focus is on the physical work of the actor through the use of the body. It is a highly visual form of theatre.

Physical theatre is exemplified by:

- use of mime/dance and exaggerated movement
- use of acrobatics/circus skills
- visual theatre.

Prescribed structure 7

Character The Wannabe (*Time* Person of the Year)

Stimulus material

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Time_Person_of_the_Year>

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of the Wannabe.

Following a stellar year in their individual career but having been overlooked yet again for *Time* Person of the Year, the annoyed and self-important Wannabe confronts the editors of *Time* magazine, demanding their place in history be acknowledged and celebrated.

The Wannabe does this by:

- recreating three or more previous winners of the award, since 1927, and their worthiness
- demonstrating moments from the Wannabe's life that, in their opinion, makes them worthy of becoming *Time* Person of the Year
- creating an example of a real philanthropic person or organisation who has contributed positively to society.

Performance style

Eclectic*

Suggested convention

Caricature (or choose one of the listed conventions on page 9)

Suggested dramatic element

Contrast (or choose one of the listed dramatic elements on page 9)

Resources

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Time_Person_of_the_Year>

<<https://time.com/3626016/person-of-the-year-faq/>>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_philanthropists>

*Eclectic

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Eclectic theatre draws on drama traditions and practice including:

- ritual and storytelling
- contemporary drama practice and performance styles
- the work of drama practitioners and associated performance styles
- a combination of any of the above.

Prescribed structure 8

Character The Drama Teacher

Stimulus material

Play, *Medea* by Euripides, any version

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of the Drama Teacher.

After a particularly stressful rehearsal of their musical adaptation of Euripides' *Medea*, the overly dramatic Drama Teacher storms into the principal's office, stating that they 'cannot work under these conditions'. Threatening to walk unless something changes, the Drama Teacher outlines their past achievements and how they think they are indispensable to the school.

The Drama Teacher does this by:

- recreating key scenes and/or rehearsals from their latest production, *Medea the Musical*
- showing a scene(s) from the Drama Teacher's previous 'successful' self-devised production
- creating a parallel to fictional or fictionalised teachers who have made a difference.

Performance style

Eclectic*

Suggested convention

Caricature (or choose one of the listed conventions on page 9)

Suggested dramatic element

Sound (or choose one of the listed dramatic elements on page 9)

Resources

Play, *Medea* by Euripides, any version

POV (Point of View) Trend, for example: Drama Teacher on the night of the school show,

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/pVBdDfNgSxE>

Drama teachers during a lunchtime rehearsal, https://www.youtube.com/shorts/Di2i8h_GkAQ

<https://www.aarp.org/entertainment/movies-for-grownups/info-2021/inspirational-films-teachers.html>

*Eclectic

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- ritual and storytelling
- contemporary drama practice and performance styles
- the work of drama practitioners and associated performance styles
- a combination of any of the above.

Prescribed structure 9

Character Norma Desmond

Stimulus material

Film, *Sunset Boulevard*, 1950, directed by Billy Wilder

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of Norma Desmond.

Convinced that the talkies are just a passing phase and silent films are forever, Norma Desmond insists that her latest script, *Salome*, be made into a silent film. After being rejected by Cecil B DeMille, a desperate and delusional Norma approaches a rival production company executive demanding that the film be produced, with herself in the title role, to announce her comeback.

Norma Desmond does this by:

- recreating the high(s) and low(s) of her life and career as a silent movie star
- creating an example(s) of the difference(s) between silent films and ‘talkies’
- creating a parallel to another person, either real or fictional, who has made a comeback.

Performance style

Eclectic with aspects of silent film*

Suggested convention

Pathos (or choose one of the listed conventions on page 9)

Suggested dramatic element

Climax (or choose one of the listed dramatic elements on page 9)

Resources

Film, *Sunset Boulevard*, 1950, directed by Billy Wilder

The Strange World of Early Sound Films, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FiuA5BfK6eM>>

A Beginner’s Guide to Silent Cinema, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0rqsqYaEFaE>>

<<http://www.thehypertexts.com/Famous%20Comebacks.htm>>

***Silent film**

Silent film is an early form of American and European cinema that had no synchronised recorded sound or audible dialogue. Narrative and emotion are conveyed visually but other plot elements such as setting, era or key lines of dialogue may be conveyed through the use of inter-title cards.

Silent film is exemplified by:

- actors’ use of exaggerated expressive skills, especially facial expressions, to convey emotion
- use of melodramatic acting style with use of pause and gestures
- heavily emotional non-diegetic sound (sound reflects the emotions of the characters), soundtrack and sound effects to drive narrative.

Prescribed structure 10

Character The Spirit of the Commonwealth Games

Stimulus material

The history of the Commonwealth Games

Performance focus

Create a solo performance based on the character of the Spirit of the Commonwealth Games.

With no takers to host the Games in 2026, King Charles summons the weary and ambivalent Spirit of the Commonwealth Games to Buckingham Palace, demanding the Spirit do whatever it takes to 'make the Games great again' and to ensure the continuation of the Commonwealth. The Spirit tries to educate King Charles as to the realities of the current state of the world.

The Spirit of the Commonwealth Games does this by:

- recreating highs and lows from the Commonwealth Games since 1930
- creating moments that show the issues and/or problems that hosting the Games may present
- showing a vision that demonstrates how the Commonwealth can remain relevant into the future.

Performance style

Eclectic*

Suggested convention

Stylised movement (or choose one of the listed conventions on page 9)

Suggested dramatic element

Tension (or choose one of the listed dramatic elements on page 9)

Resources

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commonwealth_Games>

<<https://blog.bham.ac.uk/cityredi/why-are-the-commonwealth-games-struggling-to-find-hosts/>>

<<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-commonwealth-remains-extremely-relevant>>

***Eclectic**

Eclectic theatre draws on a range of performance styles to devise performances that go beyond the reality of life as it is lived. It juxtaposes a number of performance styles to make dramatic statements and theatre that is innovative, transformational and creative. Eclectic theatre is devised with a specific purpose and intention for the audience.

Eclectic theatre draws on drama traditions and practice including:

- ritual and storytelling
- contemporary drama practice and performance styles
- the work of drama practitioners and associated performance styles
- a combination of any of the above.

Terminology

The explanations below provide direction for teachers and students in the development of the VCE Drama solo performance examination. This information should be read together with pages 9–12 of the VCE Drama Study Design 2019–2024.

Performance styles

Eclectic

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Comedy

Comedy is a performance style that is associated with amusement, fun and humour, and is intended to entertain, delight or invoke laughter.

Comedy is exemplified by:

- characters or situations that are often silly, ludicrous or absurd
- use of words, jokes or stories that have a punchline
- use of parody, farce, satire, caricature, visual or physical gags and other comedic styles.

Epic theatre

Epic theatre, sometimes called Brechtian theatre, is a style of theatre that seeks to tell a story, often on a large historical scale and including a number of people and events over time. It aims to engage the intellect rather than emotions and often uses devices that alienate the audience. Epic theatre is exemplified by:

- direct address and/or the use of narration and song as commentary
- use of placards, mask, stylised gesture and movement
- deliberate and conscious choices intended to remind the audience that they are watching a play.

Film noir

Film noir is a cinematic style based on German expressionism but chiefly associated with Hollywood during the 1940s and 1950s. Film noir is exemplified by:

- a brooding and world-weary investigator, a *femme fatale* or an *homme fatal*, and cynical characters
- a sense of menace, sleazy settings and plots that involve twists and surprises
- use of flashbacks, voice overs and foreboding background music.

Physical theatre

Physical theatre is a style of theatre that pursues storytelling primarily through physical means rather than the use of words or text. The primary focus is on the physical work of the actor through the use of the body. It is a highly visual form of theatre.

Physical theatre is exemplified by:

- use of mime/dance and exaggerated movement
- use of acrobatics/circus skills
- visual theatre.

Silent film

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Silent film is exemplified by:

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Conventions

Application of symbol

Application of symbol is used to create meaning that is not literal. Application of symbol allows actors to communicate ideas and themes through action, gesture, language, vocal or facial expression, object/prop, costume, set pieces and/or heightened movement. Application of symbol may assist transformations.

Caricature

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

Exaggerated movement

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

Heightened use of language

Heightened use of language is the poetic and exaggerated use of language. It includes a deliberate choice of words whose syntax, alliteration and rhyming patterns enhance the dramatic statement. The intended meaning is enhanced through the use of non-conventional dialogue.

Pathos

Pathos is a quality that evokes a feeling of sympathy, pity or sadness in the audience; for example, the power of stirring, tender or melancholic emotion. Pathos may be associated with comedy and/or tragedy.

Puppetry

Puppetry is the manipulation of puppets for use in performance. A puppet is a figure – human, animal or abstract in form – that is moved by the actor.

Satire

Satire refers to the use of wit and comedy to attack, denounce or deride a target. It exposes or questions the presence of vice, folly, abuse or pretence. It may be achieved through the manipulation of language, caricature, parody, parable or other comedic theatrical conventions. The satirist laughs at, punishes or questions a target and/or an audience. The target may be an individual or a system.

Stylised movement

Stylised movement refers to highly controlled whole or partial body movements that express an abstract idea through the manipulation of balance, speed, timing, positioning, use of levels, use of space, rhythm, stance or use of direction.

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 actor. Additions of mask or costume may enhance the character transformation, but this 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 may communicate transformation of place to an audience through the context that they create for the performance and through the use of objects and space in symbolic ways. Transformation of place may be achieved through the use of production areas and/or through the use of expressive skills.

Transformation of time

Performances can move around in time as well as in place. Sometimes, performances can occur in a linear or chronological timeline. Others move backwards and forwards in time from a central point.

Use of fact

This refers to research that is used to provide the basis for selective and informed scripting. This information should then become part of a cohesive narrative rather than be a summary of events and actions or a list of facts and related information. Facts should be presented in a variety of ways rather than just verbally.

Dramatic elements

Climax

Climax is the most significant moment of tension or conflict in a drama and often occurs towards the end of the plot. Multiple climaxes and/or an anticlimax may also occur. The action of a drama usually unravels after the climax has transpired but the work might finish with a climactic moment.

Conflict

Conflict generally occurs when a character cannot achieve an objective due to an obstacle. This obstacle may be internal or external and between characters, or between characters and their environment. Conflict may be shown in a variety of ways; for example, through physical, verbal or psychological means. Conflict may be embedded in the structure of the drama.

Contrast

Contrast presents the dissimilar or the opposite in order to highlight or emphasise difference. Contrast may be explored in many ways, and may include contrasting characters, settings, times, themes, elements, production areas and performance styles.

Mood

Mood is the overall feeling or emotion that a performance may evoke. This may be achieved through manipulation of acting, conventions or production areas.

Rhythm

Rhythm is a regular pattern of words, sounds or actions. Performances have their own rhythm that may be influenced by the emotional nature of the plot, the pace of line delivery, the dialogue (long and/or short lines), the pace of scene transitions and the length of scenes.

Sound

Sound is created live, by the actor, in the performance. Voice, body percussion and objects can be used individually or in combination to create sonic effects in performance and to enhance meaning. Sound may include silence or the deliberate absence of sound. Use of words only does not constitute the use of sound.

Space

Space involves the way in which the performance area is used to communicate meaning, to define settings, to represent status and to create actor–audience relationships. This may be achieved through the use of levels, proximity and depth. The use of space may be symbolic.

Tension

Tension is the suspense that holds an audience's attention as a performance unfolds. The release of tension may have a comic or a dramatic effect.