



## **GENERAL COMMENTS**

The 2007 Drama examination was based on the revised *Drama VCE Study Design*. The quality of work presented for the examination indicated that many students understood the demands of the paper and almost all students demonstrated understanding of the relationships between areas of study in the study design and questions on the examination paper. The majority of students responded to all the questions on the examination paper. Generally, students' handwriting and written expression was legible and clear. Students should aim to express their responses clearly using appropriate drama-specific terminology.

In the examination the following general approaches were followed in allocating marks.

- If a question asked for a specific number of examples to be given and a student provided more than the required number, only the prescribed number were assessed in the order presented. For example, if three responses were required and five responses were given, only the first three responses were assessed.
- If contradictory answers were given, full marks were not awarded.
- Responses that did not address the subject matter of the question were not awarded any marks.

### **Areas of strength and weakness**

#### **Strengths**

- a clear understanding of the examinable outcomes and the related key knowledge and skills, such as non-naturalistic performance style(s) and the ways that dramatic elements, theatrical conventions and stagecraft can be manipulated in performance
- the ability to describe, explain, discuss, identify, name, analyse and evaluate as required by individual questions
- the ability to provide clear and concise responses to questions
- the ability to use effective and relevant examples to support answers
- appropriate use of drama-specific terminology

#### **Weaknesses**

- a limited or inadequate understanding of aspects of the key knowledge, such as the differences between non-naturalistic performance style(s), drama practitioners and the theatrical techniques used by these practitioners
- a misunderstanding of key words or concepts
- providing a definition rather than a description or discussion of ways a technique might be applied
- an inability to allocate proportional time to the mark allocation for each question
- over-reliance on answers prepared in detail prior to the examination

Some common faults displayed by students included:

- difficulty in following the requirements of the questions; for example, discussing the realisation, rather than the development, of the ensemble performance
- a confusion about the manipulation of stagecraft and the dramatic elements of symbol and contrast
- a confusion or lack of knowledge about drama practitioners and the techniques they use.

### **Advice for students and teachers**

- Teachers and students should note that a revised Drama study design has been implemented for 2007–2011. The study design and information about the criteria and other requirements for the Drama written examination can be found on the VCAA website <[www.vcaa.vic.edu.au](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au)>.
- Students should carefully read each question, paying particular attention to words that are highlighted in bold.
- Students should be careful to look at the relationship between any questions that are linked; for example, a question with multiple parts.
- Students need to ensure they know the difference between drama practitioners and the techniques they employ, performance style(s), theatrical conventions, dramatic elements and stagecraft.
- Students must respond to the stimulus material provided rather than write about their own ensemble and solo performance work.
- Student responses should be concise. The space provided on the examination paper and the marks allocated should be used as a guide to the required length of the answer.



## SPECIFIC INFORMATION

### Section A

#### Question 1

This question required students to consider how they would use the photographic image and accompanying text provided on the examination paper as the stimulus for developing and performing a solo performance in a non-naturalistic style. Most students scored very well on this question.

To answer this question, students needed to draw on the key knowledge and skills acquired through the development of their own solo performances in Unit 4, Outcomes 1 and 2. Very few students confused their solo performance characters and the task in Question 1. Some students discussed multiple actors rather than a single actor performing as more than one character. Responses that referred to multiple actors were more in keeping with an ensemble performance. Students need to read the instructions carefully; the question clearly asked about a solo performance.

Students should have referred to the transformation of character techniques used by the actor to portray multiple parts in the performance.

#### Question 1a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	1	11	88	1.9

Question 1a. required students to identify a single tragic event to explore in their solo performance. Most students chose one event and briefly explored the narrative of someone being killed. Although this was not the most imaginative choice, it was a safe response. More imaginative responses drew on the stimulus material provided in the image and incorporated ideas about characters and set design. Examples included: an accident at a chair factory; an attack on a character due to their sexual preference or racial background; and a building collapse that traps several characters.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a brief description of a single tragic event that could clearly be gleaned from the stimulus material
- incorporating ideas from the stimulus material provided in the image and text.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a limited understanding about what might constitute a single tragic event
- a poor choice of event, which did not appear to be tragic or was not linked to the stimulus material.

#### Question 1b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	1	2	14	34	50	3.3

Question 1b. required students to explain how both the image and the text in the stimulus material shaped their decision about the single tragic event. Most students clearly referred to the stimulus material and explained how they had made their choices. Responses that discussed only one of 'image' or 'text' could not be awarded full marks.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- insightful answers that explained how both the image and text shaped their decision
- a clear understanding of the narrative content of this solo performance
- appropriate use of drama-specific terminology.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- references to the image only
- references to the text only
- repetitive explanations about the single tragic event with limited reference to the image and text
- a lack of detail or incompleteness.

#### Question 1c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	1	2	13	39	45	3.3

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In Question 1c. students needed to describe the role of one of the characters in their solo performance and how the single tragic event impacts upon this character. Responses that discussed only 'the role' or 'the impact' were not able to achieve full marks.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a clear outline of the role of the character in terms of purpose, motive, character interrelationships and/or function in the narrative
- a concise description of how the single tragic event impacts upon this character in terms of how the character is involved, narrative consequences and/or character status development
- creative answers that clearly explored character function in reference to the single tragic event.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- poor or inappropriate examples, such as characters who were not involved in or impacted upon by the single tragic event
- a description of only the character's role
- a description of only how the single tragic event impacts upon this character.

## Question 1d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	2	8	21	32	36	2.9

Question 1d. required students to describe how they would use expressive skills to transform from the character in Question 1c. to another character. Most students discussed how they would use expressive skills to perform the two required characters. Some students provided a brief outline of the role of two characters without discussing how they would use expressive skills to transform between them.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- pertinent and insightful examples of ways that a range of specific expressive skills could be used to transform between the two required characters
- a clear sense that this was a solo, not ensemble, performance
- an imaginative response that used appropriate, drama-specific terminology
- a clear sense of how transformation would occur between the characters, based on an explanation of how a transformation technique would be applied.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- reference to only one character
- a description of the roles of two characters with little or no discussion of how the actor would use expressive skills to transform between these characters
- limited or poor description of expressive skills.

## Question 1e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	2	2	10	22	37	18	9	3.8

In Question 1e. students needed to explain how they would use the theatrical conventions of transformation of place and transformation of object in their solo performance. Generally, most students understood these techniques well as concepts and were able to provide several examples. The better responses gave integrated or detailed explanations with clear references to when and how they would be used in the narrative. If only one of 'transformation of place' or 'transformation of object' was explained, full marks were not awarded.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a sophisticated level of understanding of how both conventions would be used in the narrative
- a clear understanding of how the actor would use these conventions in a solo performance
- highly pertinent and imaginative responses that linked ideas to other conventions and elements.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- responses that indicated this was an ensemble, not solo, performance
- a description of only transformation of place
- a description of only transformation of object

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- a lack of detail
- a descriptive, rather than explanatory, response.

## Question 1f.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	8	12	28	32	21	2.5

Question 1f. required students to discuss how the dramatic element of symbol would be manipulated to enhance the non-naturalistic style of their solo performance. Although the concept of symbol was quite well understood by many students, responses varied in their sophistication of how symbol would be manipulated.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a sophisticated and imaginative understanding of how symbol would be manipulated
- clear and pertinent examples of when and how symbol would be used to enhance the non-naturalistic style of the solo performance.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- poor or obvious choices of symbol
- an inability to explain 'manipulation'
- limited discussion of how the manipulation of symbol would be achieved in performance
- discussion of symbol used within a naturalistic style solo performance rather than a response to the question.

## Question 1g.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	8	8	27	34	23	2.6

In Question 1g. students needed to identify one aspect of stagecraft evident in the stimulus material and explain how it would be used to enhance the meaning of their solo performance. Many students repeated their responses from the previous question. Some students did not use correct terminology in identifying stagecraft. Most students selected stagecraft that was evident in the stimulus material.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- clear identification of stagecraft evident in the stimulus, using correct terminology
- creative and pertinent examples of how the stagecraft would be used to enhance the meaning of the solo performance
- clear examples of how the stagecraft would be manipulated within the narrative of the solo performance.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a lack of appropriate terminology
- repeating responses from the previous question
- identifying stagecraft not evident in the stimulus
- a limited explanation of how the stagecraft would be used to enhance the meaning of the solo performance
- confusion between stagecraft and dramatic elements.

## Question 2

This question required students to consider how they would use a cartoon image and the accompanying text provided on the examination paper as the stimulus for developing and performing an ensemble performance in a non-naturalistic style.

In order to answer this question, students needed to draw on the key knowledge and skills acquired through the development of their own ensemble performance in Unit 3. Very few students confused their own ensemble performance and the task in Question 2. Some students did not understand the concept of a drama practitioner or their associated techniques. This had a great impact on parts c. d. and e. of this question. Students needed to look at the whole question before they began their answers in order to identify the relationship between the questions.

It should be noted that techniques used by drama practitioners to develop non-naturalistic performances is part of the key knowledge for Outcome 1 of Unit 3. Students need to have knowledge of drama practitioners and their techniques.

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## Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	2	7	20	31	40	3.0

Question 2a. asked students to select a character from the list provided and describe how expressive skills would be used to realise this character within a non-naturalistic performance.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a clear understanding of how non-naturalistic performance styles can be used to create a character
- an insightful understanding of a range of expressive skills and their application
- linking of expressive skills to character purpose and role.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a description of expressive skills used to create a character within a naturalistic, rather than non-naturalistic, performance
- a list, rather than a description, of expressive skills
- a discussion the role of the character rather than the expressive skills that would be used.

## Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	4	14	51	30	2.1

In Question 2b. students had to explain how they would apply the theatrical convention of disjointed time sequences in this ensemble performance. Students needed to explain two examples of narrative in order to demonstrate the non-linear nature of this technique.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- an explanation of two clear examples of narrative that demonstrated disjointed time sequences
- reasons given for the narrative choices
- a description of a technique that would be used to demonstrate that disjointed time sequences would occur.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- two examples of narrative with no explanation or reasoning of when or how disjointed time sequences would occur
- two examples of narrative that were chronological.

## Question 2c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	12	8	26	54	2.2

Question 2c. required students to name a drama practitioner studied during the year and then briefly explain two of their techniques that would be appropriate to apply in this ensemble. Most students identified two techniques used in a specific performance style; however, many students were unable to correctly name a drama practitioner such as those listed in the revised *Drama VCE Study Design*. This greatly affected the marks awarded in parts d. and e. Some students did not answer parts 2c., d. or e. at all.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a clear and concise knowledge of a drama practitioner and two techniques that are characteristic of their performances
- a brief explanation of two techniques that would be appropriate to apply in this ensemble
- pertinent examples used to support the response.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- an inability to correctly name a drama practitioner who uses non-naturalistic performance styles
- an inability to correctly identify two of the techniques used by the practitioner
- a list, rather than an explanation, or two of the techniques used by the practitioner.

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## Question 2d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	18	11	26	27	17	2.2

In Question 2d. students needed to explain why each of these two techniques would be appropriate to apply in the development of this ensemble performance. Many students discussed the realisation, rather than development, of the ensemble performance and could not be awarded full marks. Some students confused Questions 2d. and 2e. Some students repeated their responses from Question 2c.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a clear and concise explanation of why each of the two techniques was appropriate to apply
- an effective understanding of the techniques and how they would be applied in the ensemble performance
- a clear understanding of how the techniques would be applied in the development of the ensemble performance.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- confusion or limited understanding about the two techniques
- limited explanation about why the two techniques would be appropriate
- responses that were repeated from the previous question
- an explanation of why the two techniques would be appropriate to apply in the realisation, rather than development of the ensemble performance.
- discussion of only one technique.

## Question 2e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	21	11	30	26	12	2.0

Question 2e. required students to describe how they would apply these two techniques in developing the ensemble performance. Some students confused this question with part d. Some students repeated their responses from part d. Many students discussed the realisation, rather than the development, of the ensemble and therefore could not be awarded full marks.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a clear and concise explanation of how each of the two techniques would be applied
- an effective and creative understanding of how the techniques would be applied in the development of the ensemble performance.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- confusion or limited understanding about the two techniques
- limited explanation of how the two techniques would be applied
- responses that were repeated from the previous question
- an explanation of how the two techniques would be appropriate to apply in the realisation, rather than development, of the ensemble performance
- discussion of only one technique.

## Question 2f.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	18	82	0.8

In Question 2f. students needed to name 'a parallel with other conflicts around the world' that the group could focus on for their ensemble performance.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- identification of another conflict around the world that was evident in current affairs, such as the war in Iraq.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- identification of a generic conflict/theme rather than a specific conflict.

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## Question 2g.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	18	18	32	32	1.8

Question 2g. required students to discuss how their group would use a play-making technique to explore this parallel with other conflicts around the world in this ensemble performance.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- clear identification and explanation of one play-making technique
- pertinent examples to explain how this technique would be used to explore the parallel with other conflicts around the world.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- responses repeated from the previous question
- one or more play-making techniques listed, with little or no discussion of how it would be used to explore the parallel with other conflicts around the world.

## Question 2h.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Average
%	3	1	2	2	5	6	9	11	21	14	12	8	8	7.7

In Question 2h. students were required to describe how they would manipulate the dramatic element of contrast in their non-naturalistic ensemble performance through the use of each of: language, sound, space and costume design.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a clear understanding of the dramatic element of contrast
- an understanding of how contrast could be manipulated within a non-naturalistic ensemble performance
- an insightful explanation of two examples that demonstrated contrast through each of the elements
- well-chosen examples used to support responses.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- confusion in the use of terms such as 'contrast', 'manipulate' and 'non-naturalistic style'
- limited use of examples
- use of examples that did not demonstrate contrast.

## Section B

Question chosen	None	3 <i>Checklist for an Armed Robber</i>	4 <i>Shrimp</i>	5 <i>Hoods</i>	6 <i>Exit the King</i>	7 <i>Destin</i>
%	1	11	6	37	28	18

i.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	4	2	4	7	10	14	15	14	13	7	11	6.0

ii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	6	2	5	9	13	15	15	13	9	6	8	5.5

This question related to the analysis in Unit 3 of a play from the 2007 Drama playlist. Students were required to select one play from the list and answer the two questions that related to their chosen play. This was the first year that specific questions were written for each play, rather than the generic questions used in previous examinations.

## Question 3i.

Question 3i. required students to discuss the ways in which two themes were given meaning through the parallel narrative of *Checklist for an Armed Robber*.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a sophisticated understanding of two themes evident in the play



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- a clear and concise discussion of how each of the two themes was explored through the parallel narrative (the Newcastle bookshop and Moscow theatre).

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a list of two or more themes
- a limited discussion of the two themes
- reference to only one of the narratives, rather than both.

## Question 3ii.

In Question 3ii. students needed to analyse the use of space and how mood was created to enhance the non-naturalistic style of *Checklist for an Armed Robber*.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a clear and concise understanding of how both space and mood were created to enhance the non-naturalistic style of the play
- more than one example of how each element was used within the non-naturalistic style
- a sophisticated understanding of how dramatic elements are used to create a non-naturalistic style
- use of pertinent examples to support the response.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- identification of space or mood without an analysis or explanation of how they were used
- discussion of only space
- discussion of only mood
- examples of how each element was used in a naturalistic style.

## Question 4i.

Question 4i. required students to evaluate the use of object transformation and costume in the performance of *Shrimp*.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a clear and concise evaluation of both object transformation and costume
- an evaluation of more than one example of how each element was used within the performance
- use of pertinent examples to support the response.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- identification of the use of object transformation or costume without evaluating or explaining how they were used
- discussion of only object transformation
- discussion of only costume
- limited evaluation.

## Question 4ii.

In Question 4ii. students needed to describe how the dramatic elements of contrast and sound were manipulated to enhance the non-naturalistic style of *Shrimp*.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a clear and concise understanding of both contrast and sound
- more than one example of how each element was manipulated to enhance the non-naturalistic style
- a sophisticated understanding of how dramatic elements are used to create non-naturalistic style
- use of pertinent examples to support the response.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- identification of contrast or sound without analysing or explaining how they were manipulated
- discussion of only contrast
- discussion of only sound
- limited understanding of the term 'manipulated'
- examples of how each element was used in a naturalistic style.





**Question 5i.**

For Question 5i. students needed to analyse and evaluate the actors' use of character transformation and disjointed time sequences in the performance of *Hoods*.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a clear and concise analysis and evaluation of both actors' use of character transformation
- a clear and concise analysis and evaluation of more than one example of disjointed time sequences
- a sophisticated understanding of how both elements were integrated to create non-naturalistic style
- use of pertinent examples to support the response.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- identification of the actors' use of character transformation or disjointed time sequences without analysing or evaluating how they were used
- discussion of only one actor's use of character transformation
- discussion of only disjointed time sequences
- limited analysis and evaluation.

**Question 5ii.**

In Question 5ii. students needed to discuss how the dramatic elements of language and sound were manipulated to enhance the non-naturalistic style of *Hoods*.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a clear and concise understanding of both language and sound
- more than one example of how each element was manipulated to enhance the non-naturalistic style
- a sophisticated understanding of how dramatic elements are used to create a non-naturalistic style
- use of pertinent examples to support the response.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- identification of language or sound without analysing or explaining how they were manipulated
- discussion of only language
- discussion of only sound
- limited understanding of the term 'manipulated'
- examples of how each element was used in a naturalistic style.

**Question 6i.**

Question 6i. required students to discuss the ways in which the performance style of absurdism gave meaning to the theme(s) of *Exit the King*.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a sophisticated and insightful understanding of the performance style of absurdism
- clear and pertinent examples of how the style gave meaning to the theme(s)
- accurate and appropriate references to characters, plot, actors and theatrical conventions.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- limited or confused discussion of the performance style of absurdism
- limited understanding of the theme(s)
- limited connection between the performance style and how it gave meaning to the theme(s)
- a brief discussion or list of the theme(s)
- limited or incorrect references to characters, plot, actors and theatrical conventions.

**Question 6ii.**

In Question 6ii. students needed to analyse the use of space and how the actor/audience relationship was manipulated in the performance of *Exit the King*.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a clear and concise understanding of both the use of space and the actor/audience relationship

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- a sophisticated understanding of how the two elements were connected and manipulated within the performance
- use of pertinent examples to support the response
- a clear understanding of how the two elements enhanced the performance style of absurdism.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- identification of the use of space or actor/audience relationship without analysing or explaining how they were manipulated
- discussion of only use of space
- discussion of only actor/audience relationship
- a limited understanding of the term 'manipulated'.

## **Question 7i.**

Question 7i. required students to analyse how two aspects of stagecraft were manipulated in non-naturalistic ways to communicate the performance style of gothic horror in *Destin*.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a sophisticated and insightful understanding of how two aspects of stagecraft were manipulated in non-naturalistic ways
- clear and pertinent examples of how the aspects of stagecraft gave meaning to the performance style of gothic horror
- accurate and appropriate reference to characters, plot, actors and theatrical conventions.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- limited or confused discussion of the performance style of gothic horror
- limited understanding of the stagecraft
- a brief discussion or list of the aspects of stagecraft without referring to the performance style of gothic horror
- confusion between stagecraft and dramatic elements or theatrical conventions.

## **Question 7ii.**

In Question 7ii. students needed to evaluate how the theatrical conventions of chorus and narrator were used to convey meaning in the performance of *Destin*.

High-scoring responses were characterised by:

- a clear and concise evaluation of both chorus and narrator
- a clear and concise evaluation of several examples of each theatrical convention
- a sophisticated understanding of how both theatrical conventions were integrated to create meaning
- use of pertinent examples to support the response.

Low-scoring responses were characterised by:

- identification of examples of chorus or narrator within the narrative without analysing or evaluating
- discussion of only chorus
- discussion of only narrator
- limited analysis or evaluation of how either theatrical convention conveyed meaning.