



# **Drama Stage 6**

## **Course Prescriptions**

Higher School Certificate  
2010 – 2012

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## **Foreword**

The HSC course prescriptions for Drama contain information pertaining to the Higher School Certificate in 2010–2012. Any amendments to requirements will be notified in the *Board Bulletin* Official Notices.

The HSC course prescriptions for Drama should be read in conjunction with:

- the *Drama Stage 6 Syllabus* and other support documents
- Official Notices in the *Board Bulletin*.

There are prescribed topics, texts and rubrics required for study in the Drama Stage 6 HSC course. The Board of Studies reserves the right to make changes to the prescribed topics, texts and rubrics listed in this document. As the prescribed topics, texts and rubrics are reviewed, the amendments will be published on the Board of Studies website <[www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au)> and in the Official Notices published in the *Board Bulletin*.

Curriculum advice may be obtained on:

phone (02) 9367 8030      fax (02) 9367 8476

Correspondence should be addressed to:

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## **Introduction**

The study of texts prescribed in any course for the Higher School Certificate examination may not begin before the completion of the Preliminary course. ‘Study’ here means teacher-directed study and does not apply to attending performances in the Preliminary course of any plays prescribed as HSC texts in Australian Drama and Theatre, Studies in Drama and Theatre, or the Design list for the Individual Project. Students should not be involved in productions of any of these texts during the Preliminary year. (Please note that this supersedes the direction in BOS 141/92).

When choosing topics and texts for study teachers should consider material that is appropriate to the needs, interests and abilities of their students and appropriate to the ethos and aspirations of their particular schools. If students are to perform extracts from scripts to an audience other than the drama class, the teacher should either ensure that the material is appropriate for the audience (as it may be unfamiliar with the texts and their themes) or distribute explanatory notes to the audience members.

Topics and texts should be taught experientially. These practical experiences should inform the students’ understanding and may be used in their HSC essays to show a personal response rather than a purely literary one.

## **Content**

The information contained in the following pages relates to:

- 1 Topic List – Group Performance
- 2 Text List – Individual Project: Design/Critical Analysis (Director’s Folio)
- 3 Topic List for Australian Drama and Theatre and Studies in Drama and Theatre.

Topic lists for Group Performance, Individual Project: Design/Critical Analysis (Director’s Folio), Australian Drama and Theatre, and Studies in Drama and Theatre may be changed in total or in part every three years.

## **Topic List – Group Performance**

ONE topic to be selected by each group from the following:

1. All clear
2. Ajax
3. Coq au Vin
4. Fly by night
5. 710 x 490cm
6. Finders – Keepers!
7. Boots
8. mlt.com

## Text List for Individual Projects

Students undertaking

### Individual Project: Critical Analysis (Director's Folio)

AND

### Individual Project: Design (Costume; Lighting; Promotion and Program; Set)

Must select ONE of the following as the basis of their work:

Brandon, James 1992, 'Sukeroku: The Flower of Edo' in *Kabuki, Five Classic Plays*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu.

Ionesco, Eugene 2000, 'Rhinoceros' in *Rhinoceros, The Chairs, The Lesson*, Penguin Classics, London.

Ellis, Ben 1996, *Falling Petals*, Currency Press, Sydney.

Rostand, Edmond 1998, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, Oxford World's Classics, OUP, London.

Shakespeare, William 2006, *The Tempest*, 2nd edn, Cambridge School Shakespeare, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne.<sup>1</sup>

Simon, Neil 2004, *Barefoot in the Park*, Samuel French Inc, London.

Enright, Nick & Clarke, Terence 1996, *The Venetian Twins*, Currency Press, Sydney.

Sondheim, Stephen & Weidman, John 1991, *Assassins*, Theatre Communications Group, New York.

Murray-Smith, Joanna 2008, *The Female of the Species*, Currency Press, Sydney.

Ibsen, Henrik 1961, 'The Wild Duck' in *Hedda Gabler and Other Plays*, Penguin Classics, London.

Shepard, Sam 1981, 'Buried Child' in *Sam Shepard: Plays 2*, Faber & Faber, London.

*This text list may be changed in total or in part every three years.*

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<sup>1</sup> It is not necessary to use this particular edition of this play.

## **Topics for Study**

TWO topics must be studied. ONE topic must be selected from Australian Drama and Theatre (Topics 1–2) and ONE topic from Studies in Drama and Theatre (Topics 3–9) .

Australian Drama and Theatre will be examined in a mandatory question that will be applicable to both topics.

Topics and texts should be taught experientially. These practical experiences should inform the students' understanding and should be used in their HSC essays to show a personal response rather than a purely literary one.

Australian productions of works chosen from Studies in Drama and Theatre may be relevant to the study of the topic.

Topics, texts or rubrics may be changed in total or in part every three to five years.

Explanations of dramatic terminology used in the descriptions of the topics for Australian Drama and Theatre and Studies in Drama and Theatre can be found in the *Drama Stage 6 Syllabus*. These explanations are intended to assist teachers and students in exploring topics. They are not intended to be prescriptive interpretations of the terms.

### **Australian Drama and Theatre (Core Study)**

The following rubric applies to both topics.

This topic explores, theoretically and experientially, the traditional and contemporary practices of Australian drama and theatre and the various ways in which artistic, cultural, social, political and personal issues and concerns are reflected in different contexts. Students investigate how different Australian practitioners use dramatic forms, performance styles, techniques and conventions to convey ideas and influence the ways in which audiences understand and respond to ideas and images presented in the theatre.

Students must study either Topic 1 or Topic 2. In the examination there will be a mandatory question applicable to both topics.

**Students must study at least TWO plays.**

Two plays must be selected from Dramatic Traditions in Australia

OR

Two plays from Contemporary Australian Theatre Practice.

**Topic 1: Dramatic Traditions in Australia**

Students must explore the topic using at least TWO of the following:

Davis, Jack 1991, *No Sugar*, Currency Press, Sydney.

Hewett, Dorothy 1997, 'The Chapel Perilous', in *Australian Women's Drama*, P Tait & E Schafer (eds), Currency Press, Sydney.

Buzo, Alex 1999, 'Norm and Ahmed', in *Plays of the 60's Volume 2*, Currency Press, Sydney.

Williamson, David 1993, *The Removalists*, Currency Press, Sydney.

**Topic 2: Contemporary Australian Theatre Practice**

Students must explore the topic using at least TWO of the following:

Cameron, Matt 2005, *Ruby Moon*, Currency Press, Sydney.

Harrison, Jane 2003, *Stolen*, Currency Press, Sydney.

Kemp, Jenny 2002, *Still Angela*, Currency Press, Sydney.

Futcher, Michael & Howard, Helen 2000, *A Beautiful Life*, Currency Press, Sydney.

<p>The study of Australian Drama and Theatre includes the above rubric in conjunction with the outcomes and content of the <i>Drama Stage 6 Syllabus</i>, pages 22–23 and 29.</p>
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## **Studies in Drama and Theatre**

Students must study ONE topic chosen from the following.

### **Topic 3: Tragedy**

This topic explores, theoretically and experientially, plays which give expression to a tragic vision of human experience. By comparing an ancient Greek tragedy to a modern tragic play, students will consider the essence of tragedy and the controlling nature of the protagonist's plight. In particular, the role of fate, suffering, hubris and moral responsibility in the experience of individual tragic heroines and heroes should be considered in light of the political, social and cultural aspects of that experience. Students will explore the dramatic forms, performance styles, techniques and conventions in the plays and consider the implications of staging these plays for a contemporary Australian audience.

TWO plays must be chosen, ONE from each list.

#### **List 1**

EITHER

Sophocles 2003, *Oedipus Tyrannus*, Cambridge University Press, Port Melbourne, Victoria.<sup>2</sup>

OR

Sophocles 2003, *Antigone*, Cambridge University Press, Port Melbourne, Victoria.

AND

#### **List 2**

EITHER

Miller, Arthur 1998, *Death of a Salesman*, Penguin Classics, London.

OR

Kushner, Tony 1993, *Angels in America (Part 1)*, Theatre Communications Group, New York.

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<sup>2</sup> Please note: *Oedipus Tyrannus* is also known as *Oedipus Rex* or *Oedipus the King*.

#### **Topic 4: Irish Drama**

This topic explores the political, cultural, social and historical contexts of Irish drama. Students explore, theoretically and experientially, the dramatic forms, performance styles, techniques and conventions used to represent the concerns of the Irish on stage. Students consider representations of Irish character, the vision or representation of Ireland presented in the plays and ways in which Irish drama might be relevant to an Australian audience.

TWO of the following plays must be studied:

Carr, Marina 2003, *The Mai*, Dramatists Play Service Inc, New York.

(or Carr, Marina 2000, 'The Mai', in *Marina Carr: Plays 1*, Contemporary Classics, Faber & Faber, London.)

Friel, Brian 1990, *Dancing At Lughnasa*, Faber & Faber, London.

McDonagh, Martin 1996, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*, Methuen, London.

Synge, John Millington 1997, *The Playboy of the Western World*, Nick Hern Books, London.

#### **Topic 5: Brecht**

This topic explores Berthold Brecht's artistic and political goals, epic staging and other dramatic techniques and conventions evident in his plays. Students must investigate, theoretically and experientially, the different ways Brecht sought to bring large and complex ideas and events onto the stage, and consider the implications for the performance of these plays in the contemporary world.

TWO the following plays must be studied:

Brecht, Berthold 1979, *Threepenny Opera*, Methuen, London.

Brecht, Berthold 1988, *Caucasian Chalk Circle*, Methuen, London.

Brecht, Berthold 1995, 'Mother Courage', in *Collected Plays 5*, Methuen, London.

Brecht, Berthold 1995, 'Life of Galileo', in *Collected Plays 5*, Methuen, London.

### **Topic 6: Site-specific, Street and Event Theatre**

This topic explores, theoretically and experientially, site-specific theatre including environmental, street and event theatre and significant community performance from the 1960s to the present. It investigates the chosen audience, techniques, artistic and social goals of the performance makers. Study must include examples of the work of Welfare State International in the UK from its beginnings to the present and Australian works from *Fire on the Water*, and may include additional examples of contemporary companies and practitioners. Study must include the student's participation in the process and performance of a substantial piece of site-specific theatre, drawing on processes of key practitioners.

Students must study BOTH texts:

Cameron, Neil 1994, *Fire on the Water*, Currency Press, Sydney.

Fox, John 2002, *Eyes on Stalks, Welfare State International*, Methuen, London.

### **Topic 7: Approaches to Acting**

This topic explores approaches to actor training in the 20th century and its realisation in theatre production or other forms of drama performance. The study involves the theoretical and experiential exploration of the philosophical and practical approaches to two practitioners' work and the manifestation of their techniques, process and specific exercises, for performance. Students must consider the aesthetics and expression of the actor's presence and its relationship to audience engagement. Specific examples from the practitioners' theatre work, contemporary theatre practice and the student's own experiential learning should be used to explore the topic.

TWO of the following practitioners and texts must be studied:

Augusto Boal: Boal, Augusto 2002, *Games for Actors and Non Actors*, 2nd edn, Routledge, London.

Jacques Lecoq: Murray, Simon 2003, *Jacques Lecoq*, Routledge Performance Practitioners, Routledge, London.

Vsevolod Meyerhold: Pitches, Jonathan 2003, *Vsevolod Meyerhold*, Routledge Performance Practitioners, Routledge, London.

Tadashi Suzuki: Suzuki, Tadashi 1986, *The Way of Acting*, J Thomas Rimer (trans), Theatre Communications Group, New York.

The following texts may be used in conjunction with or as a supplement to the texts above:

Babbage, Frances 2003, *Augusto Boal*, Routledge Performance Practitioners, Routledge, London.

Braun, Edward 1995, *Meyerhold: A Revolution in Theatre*, Methuen, London.

### **Topic 8: Verbatim Theatre**

This topic explores, theoretically and experientially, plays written using the words of people interviewed about an issue or event and the social context, which gave rise to these plays. Students consider notions of authenticity and authority derived from direct testimony and community involvement. In particular, by engaging with the performance styles, techniques and conventions of the plays, students will explore the tension between maintaining truth while creating dramatic shape, theatricality and audience engagement.

TWO plays must be studied:

#### **Compulsory text**

Kaufman, Moses, and Members of the Tectonic Theatre Project 2001, *The Laramie Project*, Vintage Books, Random House, New York.

#### **AND EITHER**

Brown, Paul 2001, *Aftershocks*, Currency Press, Sydney.

**OR**

O'Connell, Terence 2004, *Minefields and Miniskirts*, Currency Press, Sydney.

**OR**

Valentine, Alana 2007, *Parramatta Girls*, Currency Press, Sydney.

**OR**

Valentine, Alana 2007, *Run Rabbit Run*, Currency Press, Sydney.

## **Topic 9: Black Comedy**

This topic explores, theoretically and experientially, modern comic plays from different countries that deal with what is often uncomfortable or suppressed. Students must investigate the nature of comedy and use of humour to confront an audience with human experiences of pain, loss, the controversial or the taboo. In particular, by engaging with the forms, styles, techniques and conventions of the plays, students assess how audiences are affected and whether laughter provides a cathartic experience in this style of theatre.

TWO of the following texts must be studied:

### **Comedy**

McDonagh, Martin 2006, *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*, Methuen, London.

Pinter, Harold 1991, *The Homecoming*, Faber and Faber, London.

Wilding, Ian 2007, *October*, Currency Press, Sydney.

La Bute, Neil 2002, *The Shape of Things*, Faber and Faber, London.

**Effective: 2008 for the 2010–2012 Higher School Certificate**

**Contact: (02) 9367 8030**

## **Examinations**

Teachers and students are reminded that they are required to certify that any submitted work is the student's own and that any words, ideas, designs or workmanship of others have been acknowledged appropriately. Class teachers and principals must certify that the work has been done under the teacher's supervision, was the student's own work, and was completed by the due date.

### **Individual Project**

Students' Individual Project options may not be changed after mid-July. Before this date, any changes to students' Individual Project options must be notified in writing to the Board and must be countersigned by the principal. The Board's fax number is (02) 9367 8482, marked for the attention of the Drama Coordinator, Exam Support Section. Option changes will not be accepted after this date.

Students may not present an Individual Project: Performance in lieu of another unfinished project or resubmit work undertaken in the Preliminary course for the HSC.

### **Group Performances and Individual Performances**

For reasons of confidentiality, students are not allowed to see other students' examinations. Groups of students who have presented their Group Performance and individuals who have presented their Individual Project in Performance are not permitted to become part of the audience for subsequent groups and/or individuals. Group Performance will be examined by visiting examiners from the Board of Studies towards the end of Term 3 of the HSC year. The teacher may be present as part of the audience but will not be a member of the Examination Panel or perform any technical operations during the Group Performances.

All students involved in a Group Performance will be studying for the Higher School Certificate Drama examination. Where a school has fewer than three students attempting the examination or a member of the group is incapacitated by illness or misadventure, other students of the school (not attempting the Higher School Certificate examination) may be used to achieve the required numbers. These students should not be involved in the development of the Group Performance.

The use of students, other than HSC Drama students, must be approved by the Director, Assessment and Examinations.

## **Examination of the Group Performance**

The following checklist has been included to assist preparation for the examination for Group Performance. Paperwork, completed and available for examiners, should include the following:

- **Group performance certification forms** must be completed BEFORE examinations for each group, signed by students, the teacher and the principal. Certification forms should be retained at the school. The purpose of this form is to certify that the work is the student's own and has not been directed by any outside adviser or tutor.
- **Group photo sheets** must have student photos pasted onto sheets before the examination. Student numbers and role descriptions should also be included as well as the CENTRE NUMBER (not the SCHOOL NUMBER). Examiners collect these sheets. Along with the original, there must be two extra copies of these sheets for each group available to examiners.
- **A program of running order** is essential so that examiners are aware of the order of Group Performances. Student numbers should be included on programs rather than student names. Times for scheduled breaks should also be included. Some flexibility to the program may be required but will be negotiated by examiners where necessary. Total time allocated for examination of the Group Performance is 30 minutes, including the Performance and interaction.
- **Students who believe they are affected by illness/misadventure** should advise examiners before the Group or Individual performance. The student should then obtain an illness/misadventure form from the principal. This form should be completed and submitted within a week of the performance. Examiners should be informed of these on arrival and of any further misadventures at the time of the examination.

The following conditions apply to the Group Performance:

- **A supervised audience** of no more than 30 students from the school should be present. The audience should be aware of appropriate audience conventions and should be chosen by negotiation between the teacher and the examined students before the examination. Students who are HSC candidates in any subject are not permitted to form part of the audience. Members of the public may not be present as audience members. For reasons of confidentiality, groups of students who have presented their Group Performance are not permitted to become part of the audience.
- **The examination area** should be an indoor school venue such as a small- to medium-size room. The area should be conducive to performance, ie free of noise or interruption. Sectioning off the performance area will help to reduce interruptions.
- **A brief interaction** will take place between the examiners and the students at the conclusion of each Group Performance. This will be a standardised interaction for the purpose of confirming the examiners' impressions of the Group Performance. Interactions

may take place in the performance space or in a room nearby. It is imperative that there be no interruptions to this process. Following interactions with students, examiners need time to confer. Confidentiality during this time must be respected.

- **Examiners' requirements** when marking include the need for desks and sufficient light for writing during performances. Desks should be placed together in an area where examiners can see and hear effectively. Audience members should not be placed directly near examiners. There will be two examiners present who will at times be joined by a senior examiner.
- **Logbooks** for EACH student must be given to examiners in program order for Group Performances and for Individual Performances.
- **Recording devices** of any kind must not be used during examinations.
- **Student identification** occurs before each Group Performance. Students are asked to line up in the order of photographs on the group photo sheets. Examiners record descriptions of students before the performance begins. Students wearing the same costumes should attach something, eg a colour band, to assist identification by examiners during the performance.
- **Inappropriate items** in performances such as weapons, naked flames, implements which may endanger performers, audience members or examiners may not be used. Nudity is also inappropriate. Examiners will stop performances should any inappropriate items appear.
- **Production effects** such as costumes, sets, lighting, video, film, sound and technical support should be minimal and limited to those essential to the work's meaning. As available facilities and technical equipment vary in schools, external examiners will not award extra marks to any presentation dependent on technical and/or special effects.
- **Operation of technical equipment** such as lighting can only be carried out by other students in the school who are not HSC students. Teachers, or members of the public, are not permitted to operate technical equipment. A stage crew of students who are not HSC students may be used to set and remove props.
- **Time limits** must be adhered to. Students should be given several opportunities to perform their work before the examination to ensure work runs within time stipulations (Group Performance 8–12 minutes). Examiners will stop performances that go over time. Performances which are under time will not meet the criteria and will be disadvantaged.

## **Examination of the Individual Project: Performance**

Please note that the Checklist for Group Performance above applies to the Individual Project, Performance with the addition of the following. Paperwork, completed and available for examiners, should include the following:

- **Before the examination, students and the teacher should sign student/teacher Individual Declarations.** These forms certify that the work is the student's own and that the teacher has monitored the development of the project. Appropriate documentation should be completed if there is a question that the work is not the student's own. Examiners should be informed if forms have not been signed for this reason.
- **A program of running order** is essential so that examiners are aware of the order of Individual Performances. Student numbers should be included on programs rather than student names. Times for scheduled breaks should also be included. Some flexibility within the program may be required but will be negotiated by examiners where necessary. Fifteen minutes are allocated for the total time of examination of the Individual Performance, including the Performance and interaction.
- **The Rationale for Individual Project: Performance** should be on the last page of the Logbook to be referred to by examiners. For submitted Individual Projects, the Rationale will be sent in separately from the Logbook.
- **Logbooks** for EACH student must be given to examiners in program order for Individual Performances.

**Time limits** must be adhered to. Students should be given several opportunities to perform before the examination to ensure work runs within time stipulations (Individual Performance 6–8 minutes). Examiners will stop performances that go over time. Performances which are under time will not meet the criteria and may be disadvantaged.