



Drama

Stage 6

Course Prescriptions

Higher School Certificate
2006–2009

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Published by
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Sydney NSW 2001
Australia

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Fax: (02) 9367 8484
Internet: www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au

February 2005

ISBN: 1 7414 7242 3

2005116

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Foreword

The HSC course prescriptions for Drama contain information pertaining to the Higher School Certificate in 2006–2009. This information is relevant to students studying Preliminary courses in 2005–2008. 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 *Board Bulletin*
- examination and assessment reports.

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 and in the Official Notices published in *Board Bulletin*.

Curriculum advice may be obtained on:

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(fax inquiries are preferred)

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Introduction

The study of texts prescribed in any course for the Higher School Certificate examination may not begin prior to 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 BOS141/92).

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. Topics and texts should be taught experientially. 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.

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.

Examinations

Individual Project

Student's Individual Project options may not be changed after mid-July. Prior to this date, any changes to student's 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.

Group Performances and Individual Performances

For reasons of confidentiality, students are not allowed to see other student's 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 nor 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.

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 PRIOR to 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 prior to 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 prior to 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 prior to the examination. Students who are HSC candidates in any subject are not permitted to form part of the audience. Members of the public should not comprise the audience. 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 standardized 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 require 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** must not be used during examinations.
- **Student identification** occurs prior to each Group Performance. Students are asked to line up in the order of photographs on the group photo sheets. Examiners record descriptions of students prior to the performance commencing. 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 dependant 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, should not 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 prior to the examination to ensure work runs within time stipulations (Group Performance 8–12 minutes). Examiners will stop performances that go overtime. 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:

- **Students and the teacher, prior to the examination, 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 of non-signing of forms 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 to the program may be required but will be negotiated by examiners where necessary. Fifteen minutes is 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 prior to the examination to ensure work runs within time stimulations (Individual Performance 6–8 minutes). Examiners will stop performances that go overtime. Performances which are under time will not meet the criteria and may be disadvantaged.

Topic List – Group Performance

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

1. Comfort zone
2. Sweet and sour
3. Gladly
4. Once in a blue moon
5. 1815
6. Scrap it!
7. Is it a bird?
8. The glasshouse

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:

Churchill, Caryl, 'Top Girls', in *Caryl Churchill Plays 2*, Methuen, London, 1990

Coward, Noël, *Private Lives*, Methuen, London, 2000

Crawley, A C (ed), 'Everyman', in *Everyman and Medieval Miracle Plays*, Everyman, J M Dent, London, 1993

Nowra, Louis, *Visions*, Currency Press, Sydney, 1994

Enright, Nick & Clarke, Terence, *Summer Rain*, Currency Press, Sydney, 1994

Shakespeare, William, *As You Like It*, Penguin Classics, Ringwood Victoria, 1994

Sewell, Stephen, *Myth, Propaganda and Disaster in Nazi Germany and Contemporary America*, Currency Press, 2004

Thompson, Katherine, *Wonderlands*, Currency Press, 2004

White, Patrick, 'The Ham Funeral', in *Patrick White, Collected Plays, Volume 1*, Currency Press, 2000

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

Topics for Study

TWO topics are to 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.

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

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 and represented 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 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, *No Sugar*, Currency Press, Sydney, 1991

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

Lawler, Ray, *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, Currency Press, Sydney, 1985

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

Topic 2: Contemporary Australian Theatre Practice

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

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

Enoch, Wesley & Mailman, Deborah, *The Seven Stages of Grieving*, Playlab Press (3rd edn), Brisbane, 2002

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

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

The study of Australian Drama and Theatre includes the above rubric in conjunction with the outcomes and content of the *Drama Stage 6 Syllabus*, pages 22–23 and 29.

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, *Oedipus Tyrannus*, Cambridge University Press, Port Melbourne, Victoria, 2003¹

OR

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

AND

List 2

EITHER

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

OR

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

¹ (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:

Friel, Brian, *Dancing At Lughnasa*, Faber and Faber, 1990

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

O'Casey, Sean, *The Plough and the Stars*, Samuel French, 1960

Synge, John Millington, *Playboy of the Western World*, Nick Hern, 1997

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, *Threepenny Opera*, Methuen, 1979.

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

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

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

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

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

Topic 7: Approaches to Acting

This topic explores approaches to actor training in the 20th century and its realisation in theatre production. 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 on stage. 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, *Games for Actors and Non Actors* (2nd edn) Edition, London, 2002

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

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

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

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

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

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

Topic 8: American Drama

This topic explores, theoretically and experientially, American drama from Eugene O'Neill to David Mamet. It investigates the concerns, dramatic forms, performance styles, techniques, conventions and the social context of the plays. Students must explore the ways in which the plays extend realism through the use of Expressionist and Symbolist techniques and ways in which they might be produced on the contemporary stage.

TWO of the following plays must be studied:

Mamet, David, *Speed-the-Plow*, Methuen, London, 1989.

O'Neill, Eugene, 'Desire Under the Elms', in *Desire Under the Elms and The Great God Brown*, Royal National Theatre and Nick Hern Books, 1995.

Wilder, Thornton, 'Our Town', in *Three Plays: Our Town, The Skin of Our Teeth, The Matchmaker*, Perennial Classics, Harper and Row, New York, 1998.

Williams, Tennessee, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Heinemann, 1995.

Topic 9: Seventeenth-Century Comedy

This topic explores seventeenth-century English comedy and investigates the social and historical context of the plays and their original dramatic forms, performance styles, techniques and conventions. Students must explore, theoretically and experientially, the use of humour, satire and traditional character types from popular theatre traditions, which expose issues and follies of the times. Study should also include ways in which the plays might be relevant to an Australian audience and be produced on the contemporary stage.

TWO of the following texts must be studied:

Congreve, William, 'The Way of the World', in *Restoration Comedy: Three Plays* (Drama Collections) by Behn/Congreve/Wycherley, Nick Hern Books (through Currency Press) 2004

Behn, Aphra, 'The Rover', in *Restoration Comedy: Three Plays* (Drama Collections) by Behn/Congreve/Wycherley, Nick Hern Books (through Currency Press) 2004

Wycherley, William, 'The Country Wife', in *Restoration Comedy: Three Plays* (Drama Collections) by Behn/Congreve/Wycherley, Nick Hern Books (through Currency Press) 2004

Etherege, George, 'The Man of Mode', in *Three Restoration Comedies*, Penguin 1968.

Effective: 2005 for the 2006–2009 Higher School Certificate

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