



**B O A R D O F S T U D I E S**  
NEW SOUTH WALES

**2003**

**HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE  
EXAMINATION**

# Drama

## General Instructions

- Reading time – 5 minutes
- Working time –  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours
- Write using black or blue pen

**Total marks – 40**

**Section I** Page 2

**20 marks**

- Attempt Question 1
- Allow about 45 minutes for this section

**Section II** Pages 3–6

**20 marks**

- Attempt ONE question from Questions 2–8
- Allow about 45 minutes for this section

## Section I — Australian Drama and Theatre (Core Study)

20 marks

Attempt Question 1

Allow about 45 minutes for this section

Answer the question in a writing booklet. Extra writing booklets are available.

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In your answer you will be assessed on how well you:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre relevant to the question
  - express your point of view and use appropriate supporting evidence
  - present a sustained, logical and well-structured answer to the question
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### Question 1 (20 marks)

‘The weakness of Australian drama is that it relies on stereotyped characters to explore serious social and personal issues.’

Discuss this statement, considering the challenges and opportunities for people staging productions of the plays you have studied.

In your answer you should refer to AT LEAST TWO texts set for the topic you have studied.

#### Topic 1: Bush and City in Australian Drama

Texts set for study:

Ray Lawler, *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*

Louis Esson, *Mother and Son*

Katharine Susannah Prichard, *Brumby Innes*

Betty Roland, *The Touch of Silk*

OR

#### Topic 2: Contemporary Australian Theatre

Texts set for study:

Wesley Enoch and Deborah Mailman, *The Seven Stages of Grieving*

Jack Davis, *No Sugar*

Debra Oswald, *Gary's House*

Suzanne Spunner, *Running Up a Dress*

## Section II — Studies in Drama and Theatre

**20 marks**

**Attempt ONE question from Questions 2–8**

**Allow about 45 minutes for this section**

Answer the question in a SEPARATE writing booklet. Extra writing booklets are available.

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In your answer you will be assessed on how well you:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre relevant to the question
  - express your point of view and use appropriate supporting evidence
  - present a sustained, logical and well-structured answer to the question
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### Question 2 — Theatre of the Absurd (20 marks)

‘Human interactions are central to Absurdist drama, but the plays show that these are ultimately meaningless.’

Discuss this statement, showing how the performance of the plays you have studied might present optimistic and pessimistic images of the human condition. In your answer, refer to *Waiting for Godot* and TWO other plays set for study.

Texts set for study:

Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot* – **Compulsory text**

and TWO of the following:

Arthur Adamov, *Professor Taranne*

Edward Albee, *Zoo Story*

Eugene Ionesco, *The Bald Prima Donna*

Harold Pinter, *The Dumb Waiter*

**OR**

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In your answer you will be assessed on how well you:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre relevant to the question
  - express your point of view and use appropriate supporting evidence
  - present a sustained, logical and well-structured answer to the question
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**Question 3 — Irish Drama (20 marks)**

‘Irish theatre always deals with conflicting ideas about what it means to be Irish.’

Discuss this statement, showing how the plays you have studied could be staged so as to produce a range of ideas and images of Ireland and the Irish. In your answer, refer to TWO of the texts set for study.

Texts set for study:

Brian Friel, *Dancing at Lughnasa*  
Martin McDonagh, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*  
Sean O’Casey, *The Plough and the Stars*  
John Millington Synge, *Playboy of the Western World*

**OR**

**Question 4 — Brecht (20 marks)**

‘Brecht’s theatre was designed to prevent the spectators from remaining passive observers.’

Discuss how Brecht used his practice of epic staging and other dramatic techniques to jolt audiences into thought and action. In your answer, refer to TWO of the plays set for study.

Texts set for study:

*Threepenny Opera*  
*Caucasian Chalk Circle*  
*Mother Courage*  
*Life of Galileo*

**OR**

**Question 5 — Environmental, Street and Event Theatre (20 marks)**

‘Festivity and fun are more important than social and political goals in environmental, street and event theatre.’

Discuss this statement in relation to the work of the performance makers you have studied, and your own experience.

**OR**

**Question 6 — Meyerhold (20 marks)**

‘Meyerhold worked to tear down the boundaries that separate theatre from life.’

Discuss this statement, highlighting the ongoing relevance of Meyerhold’s theatrical innovations for the contemporary stage.

**OR**

**Question 7 — American Drama (20 marks)**

‘American drama has always found new theatrical forms to explore the changing American identity.’

Discuss this statement, showing how dramatic techniques can be used to present images, on the stage, of living in America. In your answer, refer to TWO of the plays set for study.

Texts set for study:

David Mamet, *Speed-the-Plow*

Eugene O’Neill, *Desire Under the Elms*

Thornton Wilder, *Our Town*

Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire*

**OR**

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In your answer you will be assessed on how well you:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre relevant to the question
  - express your point of view and use appropriate supporting evidence
  - present a sustained, logical and well-structured answer to the question
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**Question 8 — Seventeenth Century Comedy (20 marks)**

‘The sets, costumes and characters in seventeenth-century comedy closely reflected the places, dress and people in the daily lives of the original audiences.’

Discuss this statement, and the challenges faced by a production that aims to make the different world of seventeenth-century comedy meaningful for a contemporary Australian audience. In your answer, refer to *The Misanthrope* and ONE other play set for study.

Texts set for study:

Molière, *The Misanthrope* – **Compulsory text**

and ONE of the following:

Aphra Behn, *The Rover*

George Etherege, *The Man of Mode*

William Wycherley, *The Country Wife*

**End of paper**

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