



HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

1996

DRAMA

2 UNIT

(40 Marks)

*Time allowed—One hour and a half
(Plus 5 minutes' reading time)*

DIRECTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- Attempt TWO questions, ONE from each Section.
- All questions are of equal value.
- Answer each question in a *separate* Writing Booklet.
- You may ask for extra Writing Booklets if you need them.

SECTION I
DRAMA AND THEATRE IN AUSTRALIAN
SOCIETIES AND CULTURES

(20 Marks)

Attempt ONE question.
All questions are of equal value.

QUESTION 1. Contemporary Aboriginal Theatre

EITHER

- (a) *The Keepers* and *The Dreamers* dramatise situations and incidents which appear to be exaggerated in their violence and emotion.

Discuss this statement.

OR

- (b) *The Keepers* and *The Dreamers* present a nostalgic vision of the Aboriginal past.

Discuss.

QUESTION 2. David Holman

EITHER

- (a) David Holman is able to mix conventional theatrical structures and forms with devices children use while playing.

Discuss how this mixture operates in EITHER *No Worries* OR *The Small Poppies*.

OR

- (b) Holman's plays are energetic, enthusiastic, and fast-paced.

Do these characteristics of the plays allow issues and ideas to be presented successfully?

QUESTION 3. State or Regional Theatre Companies

EITHER

- (a) Analyse the responses of the state or regional theatre company that you have studied to major changes in government funding and policy decisions in recent years.

OR

- (b) Many theatre companies attempt to increase and diversify their audience.

Discuss the ways in which the state or regional theatre company that you have studied has attempted to extend its reach.

QUESTION 4. Community Theatre in Australia

EITHER

- (a) Community theatre has the freedom to create original and exciting theatre.

Discuss this statement with reference to the work of a community theatre group that you have studied.

OR

- (b) A community theatre group must restrict itself to performances that are directly relevant to the community it represents.

Discuss this statement.

QUESTION 5. Nineteenth-Century Australian Melodrama

EITHER

- (a) Describe some of the conventions of dialogue used in nineteenth-century Australian melodrama, and discuss their influence on performance.

OR

- (b) Both *The Sunny South* and *Robbery Under Arms* have bushrangers as central figures. Discuss the different ways these characters are presented and the theatrical conventions that underlie their presentation.

QUESTION 6. Alma de Groen

EITHER

- (a) Discuss the ways in which the style and structure of *The Rivers of China* reflect Alma de Groen's view of Mansfield as an innovator and experimenter.

OR

- (b) How is the idea of gender identity explored in EITHER *Vocations* OR *The Girl Who Saw Everything*?

QUESTION 7. Contemporary Women's Comedy

EITHER

- (a) Explain how ONE current Australian woman comedian whom you have studied has achieved wide recognition by developments in her material and performance style.

OR

- (b) Originally, female comics based their material on self-criticism, laughing at experiences that are exclusively female. Thankfully, the last decade has seen that emphasis change.

Do you agree? Base your response on the work of at least TWO Australian female comics.

SECTION II
DRAMA AND THEATRE IN SOCIETIES AND CULTURES
OTHER THAN AUSTRALIAN

(20 Marks)

Attempt ONE question.
All questions are of equal value.

QUESTION 8. Greek Tragedy

EITHER

- (a) In crafting their tragedies, the Greek playwrights were as much concerned with staging and performance as they were with words and song.

Discuss this statement with reference to the overall theatrical effect of EITHER *Antigone* OR *The Bacchae*.

OR

- (b) Discuss the ways in which the attitudes of the chorus influence the audience's perception of EITHER *Antigone* and Creon in *Antigone* OR Dionysus and Pentheus in *The Bacchae*.

QUESTION 9. Ibsen: The Realist Phase

EITHER

- (a) In EITHER *The Wild Duck* OR *A Doll's House*, how do the sets and costumes reflect the lives of Ibsen's characters?

OR

- (b) In *A Doll's House*, what dramatic use does Ibsen make of the minor characters—Mrs Linde, Krogstad, and Dr Rank?

QUESTION 10. Dada Theatre*EITHER*

- (a) Dada was never really a coherent movement with a clear set of principles. It was a collection of devices, and a desire to provoke, used in the service of a wide range of attitudes and beliefs.

Discuss.

OR

- (b) 'A merry black song interrupted by the chords of a reveille. Curtain. The Guard, in full moonlight, with a burning lantern. A gong sounds five times. Flashes of light.

'The last of the trumpet breaks off croakingly. The Guard, frightened, straightens up, crows, saluting to all sides.'

WALTER MEHRING, *Simply Classical*
Mel Gordon 9ed), 'Dada Performance', © 1987, p67. The Johns Hopkins University Press.

What elements in this description of a performance are characteristically Dada? In your answer, refer to other Dada performances you have studied.

QUESTION 11. Peter Brook*EITHER*

- (a) Describe some of the most striking features of Brook's production of EITHER *A Midsummer Night's Dream* OR *King Lear*. Comment on them in relation to Brook's views on theatre, life, and Shakespeare.

OR

- (b) Look carefully at this photograph of the guillotine sequence from Brook's production of the *Marat/Sade*.

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Using this photograph as a starting point, discuss how Brook used the inmates in *Marat/Sade* to achieve the characteristic effect of his production.

QUESTION 12. Wole Soyinka*EITHER*

- (a) 'I do not believe that the function of the writer is to ignore the tragic aspect of human experience.'

WOLE SOYINKA

'Six plays', Wole Soyinka, Methuen London 1984, p.xviii

How does Soyinka use dramatic conventions in *The Road* and *A Dance of the Forests* to explore the tragic aspects of human life?

OR

- (b) Soyinka's works draw heavily on the traditional rituals, beliefs, and customs of Nigeria, as well as dealing with the contemporary social and political issues of that country. Do you think this blend of elements could lessen the impact of his dramas on western audiences?

QUESTION 13. Augusto Boal*EITHER*

- (a) Discuss Augusto Boal's plan for transforming spectator into actor, and comment on the strategies he proposes to achieve the transformation.

OR

- (b) 'Theatre is a form of knowledge; it should and can also be a means of transforming society.'

AUGUSTO BOAL

'Games for Actors and non-actors' Routledge, London, 1992, pxxxii

Discuss the extent to which Boal's practices reflect this statement.

QUESTION 14. Commedia dell'arte*EITHER*

- (a) An actor in a commedia dell'arte troupe had unlimited freedom in performance.

Do you agree? Discuss this statement in the light of your knowledge of commedia dell'arte.

OR

- (b) Discuss the relationships between masters and servants in commedia dell'arte. How were these relationships expressed in performance?